

Mar 23, 1944

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Dear Mr. Nash

This seems to be a time of frictions and misunderstandings which is indeed regrettable. Somehow I feel there is danger that what some of us have been trying to establish in the way of good relations with the institution is about to end in failure. From the very beginning we have meant good and not evil toward anyone. We have endeavored to cooperate unselfishly. The requests that were made were either based on Conscience or a desire to better fit ourselves physically, mentally and spiritually for duty. We have endeavored to cultivate a sense of loyalty and devotion to the work at hand.

My greatest joys during a year of service have come from being able to help the children, endeavoring to contribute something to the welfare of their lives. While I shall probably not work with feeble-minded children longer than this C. P. S. experience requires still I have learned to appreciate something of their situation in life. All this experience should be a help to me in working with more normal children which I anticipate.

In the matter of my request for change to farm work I wish to make it clear that my attitude is not one of insistence. It came from the feeling that the boys here could profit from the oversight of an older couple and from

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my own desire to cultivate some other personal interests. But really my basic desire is to work where you see best. Rest assured of my continued cooperation.

From what I hear a lot has been said lately regarding the financial policy of the institution (somewhat of fact, somewhat of fancy probably). In one sense this should be no concern of ours but in another sense it is a deep concern in view of the fact that our services are a gift and of our interest in the general well-being of children and employees. Some (outside C.P.S.) have gone so far as to say, "This is a real racket." If I felt that such were the case I would immediately resign rather than suffer through cooperation the qualms of a guilty conscience. I am afraid financial ambition has deprived the institution of greater values within its power to realize.

Being such an amateur I hesitate to suggest any steps for possible internal improvement of the Training School but from a sense of devotion and duty here are a few thoughts:

I Discipline - A better system is badly needed for the more active boys. The "O.K." slip means little. Practically no corrective measure is available but talk and more talk. (So I have found it with my 38 active adolescent boys here at Robison Ct.)

Robinson

II. Recreation - Equipment is short and nothing available as a "gym" to use up excess energy on long winter evenings in particular. This would go part way in solving the discipline problem.

III. Supervision - Personell to adequately stimulate games, handicrafts, entertainment and such like in the cottages or on the grounds would be appreciated by the children and a big boost to good conduct and morals.

IV. Religious Education - The results of a lack are especially evident here on Robinson floor where a former attendant taught by example swearing, smoking, anger and anti-God attitudes. It would be interesting to see the results of religious teaching and influence over a period of years. Undoubtedly they would be gratifying.

V. Working Conditions

a. For the children it might be well to have a greater work incentive as this too has suffered through disuse of the "O.K."

b. For the employees I do feel those laboring are justly entitled to one days rest in seven. I feel too that opportunity should be provided for attendants and others to attend Church services at least every other Sunday if they so desire thus to better prepare them spiritually for the tasks at hand.

VI. Personell - It would appear a healthy

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sign for the institution if there were more substantial qualified workers on the grounds giving their talents toward the progress of the institution.

While the apparent financial policy has made me consider strongly resigning from the unit still I want to be constructive in criticism and cooperative during my stay. Thanking you for past favors and privileges I remain,

Respectfully yours

Chester L. Wenger

[C.P.S. 92

The Training School
Vineland, N. J.]