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Exeter School
Lafayette, R.I.
MCC-CPS # 117

✓ NOV 19 1943

TO: Mr. J. N. Byler, Director, MCC Hospital Units.

FROM: Theodore Neff, Unit Leader, CPS # 117, Exeter School, Lafayette, R.I.

SUBJECT: First Weekly Report.

As the Exeter School unit, CPS # 117, is approximately one week old today, I deem it fitting that I submit this report to you to give you an overall picture of just what our situation is composed of here.

To date nine men are here and on duty. The last Luray man will report this coming Friday. The Howard, R.I. men will arrive here as soon as replacements arrive there. I was over to the Howard institution last week, had a constructive and informative discussion with the unit leader there, Earl Heise, and interviewed the Howard men that are to be transferred here. For the most part I find those men quite above average and I'm sure they will be a valuable addition to the men already here.

It has been my pleasure to enjoy excellent relations with Dr. Ladd, the superintendent, and Dr. Goldstein, the assistant superintendent. I find them most cooperative in almost every instance and I'm sure they are doing their utmost to make our work and life here as pleasant as possible. They are sensitive to our needs, of all kinds, and are always of help in arranging matters that I think will be conducive to our better working and living conditions. Dr. Goldstein, as head of the personnel work here, is especially anxious that our men do a good job as he has ideas that he thinks our men are especially fitted to carry out.

Our public relations with the majority of the regular employees could not, in most cases, be better. Of course, there is some restraint which is natural in a new and unique situation such as this. But we are quite confident that as time brings about a greater degree of familiarity the division between the two groups, at least on a working basis, will be in a great measure dissolved.

In my estimation, our greatest problem will lie in the area of relations with supervisors that have been here for years who are imbued with what I would choose to call "institution routine". Our men, naturally, have new ideas, enthusiasm, and in most cases show an aptitude and willingness to see some changes brought about. We are hoping and trusting that we can inject our enthusiasms and ideas in such a manner as not to overtly detract from the time honored prestige of some of the supervisors.....of which position they are naturally jealous. Dr. Goldstein is behind us in our efforts as he is very much interested in bringing about progressive methods and techniques.

As to our group life here, that is a matter that the future will have to answer in detail. Thus far we are a cohesive group to a rather fair degree and plans will go forward to develop this to more satisfying and abundant degree. Our living quarters are very comfortable and modern. At present all of us are living in one *dormitory* but when the unit reaches full strength at least four of the men ^A

will have to be quartered in a building at least a half mile away from the center of activity, both of the institution and our group life. This is not an ideal situation but for the present I don't see how it can be overcome. In the main dormitory (Doyle Hall) we have been given a room to use for our informal meetings, class work, discussion groups, etc. This room is used to some extent by the other employees. In another part of the same building we have been given a room that will be devoted to our use exclusively. This will be our reading room and library, and we have rather extensive plans under way to build up a rather adequate library. Then we have complete freedom to use the institution chapel for our more formal religious meetings.

The food is beyond comparison to anything that most of us have experienced in these days of food rationing, the service excellent, the atmosphere pleasant, and the institution from beginning to end, from top to bottom, is spotless.

The institution is lacking ~~far~~ inside recreational facilities but I think we will be able to procure a ping pong table. As the institution is located in a remote section, and as the grounds are conducive to a various types of outside recreation, weather permitting, I do not think we will lack a great deal in this respect.

Plans are going forward for our religious, recreational, and educational life. However, the program will be hampered because of the length and extent of the working hours. Those working in the wards must be up at 5:30 AM in time to report for duty; they then have three hours off sometime during the day, and then continue on duty until 8:00PM. By that time most of them are mentally and physically exhausted. So I can predict fairly well that our group work and life will be somewhat limited. Nevertheless I am going ahead with plans for a formal Sunday evening service and a mid-week inspirational-type service on a more informal basis. I am encouraging and continually drawing attention to the fact that each man will more and more have to draw upon his own religious resources for the type of situation we face. Then in the way of an educational program I have made rather definite plans with Dr.'s Ladd and Goldstein to conduct a class relating to the type of work here, methods, techniques, etc. As some of our men are comparatively new in CPS I am planning to see that they have the Core Course; also First Aid instruction. Just what other fields of an educational program can be developed I'm not at all sure at the present, due to the uncertainty as to how their work schedule will affect the men's off-time energies and initiative.

The nearest town of any size that is readily accessible to the institution is Providence which is 25 miles distant, so it is evident that our isolated situation throws a tremendous responsibility on the satisfactory function of our group-life activities.

Much more could be said as to CPS # 117 but succeeding reports will, I trust, amplify and verify in detail this preliminary report. I shall be grateful for any advice, criticisms, or suggestions that you may have to make. And I trust that you will soon be able to visit us.

Respectfully Submitted;

Theodore Neff
Theodore Neff, Unit Leader