

The PTA In Post-War Education

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From the material chaos and moral and spiritual blackout left us by the war, the immediate postwar problems of education are self-evident: in the material field, we have the reconstruction of school buildings and construction of new ones; the repair and replenishment of school equipment; the replenishment of books and educational materials. In the human field, we have the rehabilitation of the children's health to the end that they may regain their former vigor and buoyancy of spirit; the restoration of confidence in and respect for their elders, for law, for human and property rights, and for those in authority; the stabilization of character and emotional life to the end that there be calm instead of hysteria; that there be a feeling of security instead of fear; love for humanity instead of indifference; faith instead of disbelief and a sensitivity to the values of human life and the dignity of human personality. We must make sacrifices now to remove the traces of destruction from our landscape and wipe away the harrowing memories and evils of the war from ourselves so that we can have the peace of mind, strength, and optimism to restore the family, the community, and the nation to normal progressive living.

In the curriculum we must seek and stress such studies as will make the children what we hope them to be — happy, efficient social beings free men instead of inhibited, inarticulate individuals; and as we abhor war as the rest of the people do, we here should pledge also that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed."

As we are confronted by problems,

urgent and grave in the material field and even more in the character-emotional field, the PTA as supporter of the schools assumes a pivotal role in our educational system. Because of the limited financial resources of the government, it is compelled to shift a part of the burden of school support upon the PTA—an incidence in the fiscal policy of the government which gives the PTA some official standing. Where the PTA has limited resources, it has also succeeded in obtaining municipal school appropriations which provision may be considered a signal proof of municipal capacity for local autonomy. This also signifies the awareness of the people and the municipal officials that the schools are a community project.

Until recently, when almost everyone but teachers was making big money in business or in army camps the PTA came to the rescue of the teachers by giving them extra pay in cash or in kind, or otherwise took kind care of teachers. The PTA stood by the teachers through thick and thin and the most loyal and long-suffering among them kept faith with the association in the service of the children. Thus in the most trying hours of need for survival and the call for public service, the bond of understanding and respect between the parents and the teachers has been forged.

From this interrelation arose the new consciousness that the parents and the teachers have become partners in the educational enterprise. The teachers give instruction to the children in school while the association, through the parents, check them at home about their lessons or otherwise ask them, "What have your teachers

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