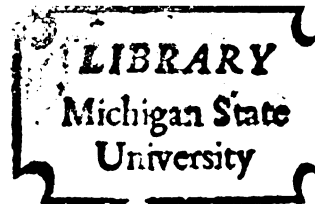


THE IMPULSE TOWARD THE WELFARE STATE;
CHICAGO 1890-1932

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
ANTHONY R. TRAVIS
1971



This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

**The Impulse Toward the Welfare State:
Chicago, 1890-1932**

presented by

Anthony R. Travis

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in History

Madison Kuhn

Major

Date September 2, 1971



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ABSTRACT

THE IMPULSE TOWARD THE WELFARE STATE:
CHICAGO 1890-1932

By

Anthony R. Travis

By analyzing the social progressive coalition which built and administered a welfare system in Chicago during the years 1880-1932, this study lays bare the nature of that system itself. By implication a better understanding of the modern welfare complex is also gained, because many of the post 1932 programs merely represent a quantitative increase or a nationalization of programs previously developed on the local level.

The dissertation is divided into two main sections. The first establishes a framework of analysis by which the specific social reform programs contained in the second section can be investigated. The first chapter analyzes Chicago's rapid industrialization and urbanization in the years 1880-1900 which is an unstable situation in that a growing foreign working class was increasingly forced into situations where its members were compelled to resort to

violence in order to prevent their already dreadful living and working conditions from deteriorating even further.

The unrest of the workers was of concern to a new upper class made up of the professionals and administrators who owed their position to their technical skill in operating the emerging complex economic system. The majority of this new elite strongly believed that, in order to protect its privileged position, strict law enforcement and efforts to improve the character of the workers were necessary. On the other hand, a small but enlightened and growing minority of this same elite class became convinced that the best device for achieving a stable society as well as satisfying its humanitarian instincts was one that would give the workers a stake in the present economic order by moderating the worst aspects of their life and by insuring that the best among them would move somewhat up the economic and social mobility ladder. This upper-class group was strengthened in its beliefs and directed to concrete action by the teaching and example of social reformers who first clustered around Chicago Commons, Hull House, and other Chicago settlement houses.

The second chapter analyzes the nature of the social-progressive alliance as it developed after 1900. An intensive investigation of the major contributors to the various reform organizations confirmed the impression that they were members of Chicago's upper class. In many

ways they were similar to Robert H. Wiebe's "New Middle Class" that emerged in the nation's cities at the turn of the century. This class comprised those with strong professional aspirations in such fields as medicine, law, economics, business administration, social work, and architecture. It was a small enlightened minority of this class which dominated the board of directors and financial lists of the social reform organizations in Chicago, and thus was influential in the fashioning of social welfare programs and in their implementation.

The other half of the social progressive reform coalition was made up of the full-time upper-middle class reformers who staffed the administrative positions in the various welfare organizations. Their career patterns that included birth to middle-class parents in the rural small town or a suburb to a major city, a Protestant religious upbringing, a university education, and migration to Chicago where they put their talents to work in the cause of social reform. These elite decision-makers made up a small tightly knit group which was united by a deep trust and respect for each other. Not only did they think creatively about the social economic maladjustments of a mass industrial society, but they widely published their view. They were all highly articulate, most of them having had some college education with a majority possessing at least a bachelor's degree. Finally, women played a

role that was disproportionate to their activity in other endeavors.

This progressive alliance of corporate businessmen, professionals, and social reformers acting not in response to an upwelling of popular demand but out of a desire to create a society that was congenial to its interests and ideals, effected a wide variety of social reforms in the years 1900 to 1932.

The remaining seven chapters deal with the specific reforms, including housing reform, the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, the juvenile court, mothers' pensions, child and woman labor laws, and unemployment relief, that were espoused by the progressives. These chapters reveal the fact that the aim of the reformers was not only humanitarian amelioration but also social control of the working class.

The principle primary sources used in the study were the papers of the major decision-making elite of the social progressive reform coalition such as Julius Rosenwald, Victor Elting, Jane Addams, Graham Taylor, and Sophonisba Breckinridge as well as the manuscript records of the various reform organizations. Especially helpful was Survey magazine with its vivid descriptions of social reform activities in Chicago.

THE IMPULSE TOWARD THE WELFARE STATE:

CHICAGO 1890-1932

By

Anthony R. Travis

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PREFACE

The study of progressive reform in the United States has recently been invigorated by the development of a new framework of analysis. Historians had been severely confined by the older or liberal point of reference within which progressivism was perceived as a conflict between the business community and so-called tribunes of the "people," who were political leaders representing the interests of the farmers, workers, and small businessmen. In its view, these leaders acted in behalf of the public interest to impose controls on the business community who fought such efforts out of greedy self-interest. It pictured the reformers' efforts to ameliorate the worst working conditions opposed by almost every businessman. It analyzed the role of the parties, court decisions, and legislation within this context. Finally, because the liberal historian puts special emphasis on the rhetoric of the various progressive reform leaders, his synthesis of the era were usually ones in which the political structure was pictured as highly moralistic and rationalistic.

In order to escape the narrow boundaries of this framework, Samuel P. Hays has suggested a new method of historical-social analysis. Historians should refocus their work on the "structure and processes of human relationships." Society should be seen as a "network of human contacts in which there are uniform and persistent patterns," the most important aspects of which are "their structures and the processes by which they change over time."

One such structure is the twentieth century American welfare system by which public and private groups have supported in a variety of ways the economic casualties of the free market economy. The nature of this system is exposed in a study of the progressive coalition that built and administered it.

There is a growing mass of evidence that a new upper-middle class business and professional class, which emerged as a result of the turn of the century industrialization and urbanization, was responsible for political progressivism such as municipal reform and government regulation of business practices. This group of reformers was not responding to an upwelling of popular demands, but was motivated by its own particular needs of the moment in the face of an indifferent or even hostile public. Thus, the role of the business community in reform becomes more ambiguous than in the liberal framework. As Robert

Wiebe has pointed out, some elements of the corporate business elite supported a particular reform when it was to their benefit to do so, and opposed it when it was not in their economic and political interest.

In light of this evidence and in the spirit of Hayes' "social analysis of American History," this study tested the hypothesis that it was also a coalition of enlightened corporate executives, professionals, and social engineers that were at the heart of the social progressive movement to build and administer a public and private welfare system in Chicago during the years 1880 to 1932. Although Roy Lubove (The Progressives and the Slums, 1962), Irwin Yellowitz (Labor and the Progressive Movement in New York State, 1897-1916, 1965), Jeremy P. Felt (Hostages of Fortune: Child Labor Reform in New York State, 1965), and Roy Lubove (Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh: Government, Business, and Environmental Change, 1969) have confirmed this thesis in certain areas of social reform, this study has attempted to look at the reform movement as a whole in Chicago from 1880-1932 in all of its varied aspects. The validation of the hypothesis by this method lends further weight to its essential accuracy and gives it a broader spectrum of applicability.

In the research and writing of this dissertation, I am deeply grateful for all the constructive criticism and thoughtful advice that Professor Madison Kuhn has

given me. I would also like to thank Professor James Soltow, in whose seminar I first became interested in the topic, and Professor Donald Lammers for their helpful suggestions.

Anthony Raymond Travis

East Lansing, Michigan
August 23, 1971

CHAPTER I

CHICAGO 1890-1900, THE BIRTH
OF NEW SOCIETY

In Chicago during the years 1890 to 1932, a coalition of social engineer experts and farsighted elements among the city's upper class corporate executive and professional elite fashioned a welfare system designed to ameliorate the social-economic maladjustments of the newly emerging industrial society. Its major focus of concern was the cruel plight of the immigrant working class caught in the rigors of a free market economy. The social progressive reform alliance was drawn to this problem not only by genuine humanitarian concern, but also by a keen desire to see an efficiently operating social-economic system free from working class unrest. Ultimately, its progressive social welfare institutions, public and private, proved to be major social control devices by which the upper class was able to maintain its wealth, power, and humanitarian self-respect, while at the same time gaining the willing acceptance of the working class to its subordinate role in society.

In order to understand the function of the welfare system, it is necessary to trace its birth in the context of the rapid urbanization, immigration, and industrialization that was creating a new, complex, and unstable society in Chicago.

In the period 1870 to 1910 Chicago was undergoing tremendous socio-economic change. It was in the process of being transformed from a center of western commerce in grains, lumber, livestock, and meat packing to one of the most important manufacturing, merchandising, banking, finance, and population centers not only in the Midwest, but in the country. By 1880 only New York and Philadelphia surpassed it as a manufacturing point in terms of value added by manufacture: by 1900 even Philadelphia had dropped behind.¹ Chicago's spectacular development was measured in the increase in value-added-by-manufacture from \$70 million in 1880 to \$270 million twenty years later. Its industrial growth rate was almost 500 per cent in a time when Philadelphia's was only 230 per cent. More importantly for comparison purposes in 1880 the value added by manufacture in Chicago was 38 per cent of New York's but in 1890 it became 48 per cent and by 1900 rose to 62 per cent.² So swift a rate of industrial expansion, to second place among American cities, caused severe cultural and economic dislocations.

Samuel Hays in his book, The Response to Industrialism, has capably portrayed such manifestations not only in Chicago but other growing urban centers. The American by 1914 had suffered a severe cultural shock as his old small community way of life began to give ground under the impact of a "new factory-machine method of production, with its specialized tasks, its large aggregations of capital, and its advancing technology." Anxious to achieve economic and social mobility, millions of people, not only from Europe but also from rural America, poured into the metropolitan centers that formed the focus of the new economic order. Once there, they were forced to make drastic changes in their work, play, and even thought. In short, they had to cope with a new impersonal economic environment, not always successfully.

Chicago in this period was not only experiencing a manufacturing boom but also a merchandising one, as it reached out to serve half of the Middle West. As early as 1875 the total sales of its dry goods' wholesalers were \$293 million making it the second only to New York City. "Those engaged in the dry goods business," Professor Bessie Louise Pierce has written, "were enjoying a growing market, competing successfully with eastern wholesalers not only because of proximity to the customer, but often because of lower prices and easier terms of credit."³

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It was during this period that such firms as Field, Leiter & Co.; Carson, Pirie & Co.; and Mandel Brothers established Chicago as the center of the dry goods wholesale market for the West. The prime model was Marshall Field who, building on the rich inheritance of his partner, Potter Palmer, increased his wholesale and retail sales two and one half times, from \$17 million in 1872 to \$46 million in 1900, under the firm name of Marshall Field and Co.⁴ In that same period net profits trebled from almost \$870 million to \$2 1/2 billion in 1900. The other retailers and wholesalers increased their business volume proportionately, making Chicago a major merchandising center for the Midwest.⁵

Chicago's rapid economic growth created a large new elite of high salaried lawyers, business executives, architects, bankers, and stock brokers, mostly men who had carried with them the self-help philosophy from the middle class out of which they had risen. These men presided over the emerging corporations which were the organizational structures in the manufacturing and merchandising sectors of the Chicago economy, as well as of banking and finance.⁶

Gaining more people in these years than any other city, Chicago promised jobs and homes that it could not always supply. The increasing opportunities drew people not only from Europe, but also from the rural parts of the

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United States. There was a flood of people into Chicago looking for a better life. Between the years 1890 and 1900 Illinois had a 26 per cent increase in population, while the national average was 20.7 per cent.⁷ More significantly in that same period the rate of net migration per 1,000 average population was 92 for Illinois and only 42 for the United States as a whole.⁸ Most of this Illinois migration stopped in Chicago, making it the second largest city in the nation by 1900 with a population of over 1 1/2 million. This figure represents a 150 per cent increase in population over 1880.⁹

Although its native stock grew rapidly and the city attracted some old American elements, its greatest growth came from recent European immigrants who were employed in the meat packing industry and the expanding mass manufacturing industries. In the period 1890-1900 the rates of net migration of foreign born whites per 1,000 average population show that Illinois and Chicago had a significantly higher rate of foreign migration than the national average.¹⁰ In Chicago the native white of mixed or foreign parentage, foreign born, and Negro made up 80 per cent of the city population by 1900, or about 1,360,000 in absolute numbers.¹¹ By 1900 the arriving immigrants were predominantly Italian, Russian Jewish, Polish, and Balkan.¹² The number of wage earners accordingly increased by 72 per cent during the period

1890 to 1900.¹³ By 1890 manufacturing and mechanical work employed nearly half the labor force, giving evidence not only that Chicago's economy was well on the way to maturity, but also that much of this labor immigration was being used in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in the expanding factory system.¹⁴

With the growth of the factory system in Chicago there was the necessary growth of specialization. Complex operations were broken down into easily learned components, thus making it possible for employers to hire unskilled persons, including women and children. In meat packing, for example, a de-assembly line was set up. Each man remained stationary while the carcasses passed hanging from an overhead track. He made only one cut as the meat passed by him.

On the other side of the coin, women and children were forced to enter the labor market because the male head of the household often could not earn enough to support a family. Between 1880 and 1910 the number of women holding jobs in manufacturing in Chicago increased from 12,000 to 57,000. In that same period the number of children remained at a relatively stable level, about 4,000. Chicago reformers believed that the reported figure was low because it was difficult for the census takers to get an adequate sample from businessmen who did not wish to admit that they were employing children.

In addition, they also discovered that the vast bulk of children worked outside of the manufacturing classification.¹⁵

Another result of specialization in manufacturing, with its recurring business cycles, was the oppressive insecurity of the laborers whose only source of income were their wages. Although real wages generally sloped upward in manufacturing during the period 1880 to 1914, the rise was marked by short but sharp declines that were particularly severe for the unskilled and semi-skilled hourly wage earner. Laborers in such situations were presented with the grim choice of either toiling harder and longer, if they were lucky enough to have employment, or facing the loss of the modest social gains made previously.¹⁶

Even when real wages were rising, many workers were not able to maintain a minimum standard of living which can be defined as a "basket of goods thought to constitute the material and psychological requisites of some specified level of welfare." Usually this basket of goods was priced in a money sum and could be used to separate the population into two classes, those above and those below the specified welfare level.¹⁷

Perhaps one of the earliest statements in the United States of a fair standard of living was formulated by Father John A. Ryan in his book, A Living Wage (1906).

He estimated that to maintain a family of moderate size in health and self-respect would require an income of about \$600 a year. This figure was confirmed by other social workers such as Louise Bolard More and Robert Coit Chapin. John A. Ryan asserted, in addition, that 60 per cent of the adult male wage earners received less than \$600 annually. Although his figures were based on some crude statistics by modern norms, most other economists of the period who conducted independent investigations discovered that on the average a worker's annual wage was about \$550 with a skilled worker making at the maximum \$700 annually.¹⁸ Thus, at least half of the workers did not earn what was then defined as a minimum decency standard of living or a just wage as it was more commonly called in the early 1900's.

Eugene Smolensky in 1963 produced a comparative study of poverty levels in the United States between 1903 and 1959. He collated New York City Budgets reflecting Minimum Comfort per capita standards as contemporaries defined them, and Gross National Product per capita figures. In order to make the comparison meaningful, he converted all monetary figures into 1959 dollars. In 1903-1905 the figure for Minimum Comfort per capita was \$555 while the G.N.P. per capita was \$1,096. In 1959 the figures were 1,082 and 2,721 respectively. In effect, this means that the M.C. budget per capita had remained

at about one half of the G.N.P. per capita at a time when the G.N.P. had more than doubled. Thus, to be defined as poverty stricken in 1903-1905 meant that a person's standard of living would have to be about one half of what it would have to be today.¹⁹ Even taking into consideration the fact that an automobile is included in the basket today, the workers at the turn of the century must have been forced by their low wages to live a life that would seem to a modern observer to be unlivable.

In times of depression the situation became almost intolerable. In his study of The Depression of the Nineties, Charles Hoffman estimated that the national unemployment in the winter of 1893-1894 ranged from 15 to 20 per cent of the total work force; and in 1896-1897, another trough in the level of unemployment, "the rate hovered around 15%."²⁰ In Chicago more than 100,000, a figure which represented perhaps 20-25 per cent of the work force, were reportedly out of work during the winter of 1893-1894, including thousands attracted to the city by the promise of work on the World's Fair which had opened in May, 1893, but failed to generate anything beyond very short-term employment.²¹ These jobless men along with those from Chicago's depressed manufacturing industries, overflowed the corridors of the city hall looking for food and shelter. In order to make sure that

no more men would come to the city looking for a means of livelihood, police guarded the railroad stations.²²

The men who found themselves without a job in such a depression were lucky to survive. In each new depression a smaller proportion of the unemployed could return to the subsistence living of farm relatives. As a result, there was little conception of an emergency social welfare system that could absorb the shocks of a downturn in the business cycle. Even though the 1890's saw the beginnings of organized relief, it could not serve the flood of the temporarily unemployed.

Although the unemployed and the underpaid remained peaceful, searching for work, borrowing, and begging from friends, relatives, and churches, there was a growing current of violence. According to a statistical study by Sheldon G. Levy, the period 1879-1908 was the most violent in the United States up to that time.²³ In the words of this study based on weighted (for population and the growth of newspaper reporting) frequencies of deaths among attackers and targets for both individuals and groups in politically violent situations:

The pre-and post-Civil War periods appear to have been quite violent ones. However, the judgment of the pre-Civil War period is greatly influenced by a single reported event in the sample in which an estimated 300 deaths occurred. Were it not for this event, the post-Civil War period would be the pre-dominantly violent one. This judgment is consistent with historical analyses, such as those by Brown and by Taft and Ross in this volume, that have examined the post-Reconstruction period and the early labor violence.

The largest single weighted reason for politically violent events over time (1879-1908) was protests based on group antagonism, especially labor violence.²⁴

In Chicago such violence mainly took the form of strike-related action. Z. E. Jeffrey, in his tabulations from the Chicago Press, found no year in the 1870's completely free of labor strikes and attending violence. The climax came with the railroad strike of 1877, toward the end of America's widest depression to that time.²⁵ Beginning Monday night, July 23, and continuing into Thursday night, there were frequent clashes between the police and large groups of working-class people who were trying to enforce a city-wide sympathy strike not only in support of the railroad workers, but also for a universal eight-hour day. At first these working people were successful when business as usual came to a halt.²⁶ On Tuesday, July 24, a working-class assemblage methodically overturned railroad equipment at the Illinois Central, Baltimore & Ohio, and Michigan Southern freight yards. Other young workers forced the closure of the stockyards and most businesses along Desplaines and Canal Streets.²⁷ On Wednesday the strike spread to mills and shops not only on Canal Street but in the industrial districts on the north and west sides, where workers joined the strike either by persuasion or by violence. In fact most normal business activity again came to a stand-still in the city.²⁸

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That afternoon rioting and looting broke out as police tried to break the strike action by the laborers. This situation along with numerous police-workingmen clashes continued Wednesday night and the next day. On Thursday at the stockyards and the gasworks, employees forced the company officials to sign papers promising to raise wages to \$2 a day for the next eighteen months. The officials cheerfully signed, understanding that the pledges could not be enforced in court once order was restored. With special police and Illinois National Guardsmen pouring into the city on Thursday, the organized violence seemed to burn itself out by nightfall. On Friday things began to return to an uneasy "normal."²⁹

As bad as this violence was, "rumor magnified every fray into a bloody slaughter." Throughout the city, middle-class people, unnerved by fear and tension, believed that gatling guns and sprays of canister shot had claimed thousands in dead and wounded, and that Halsted and Sixteenth Streets had become rivers of blood. Actually only thirteen men were killed and only ninety-seven, including fifty police, were injured.³⁰

This turmoil, which grew out of the social-economic maladjustments of the newly emerging industrial society at a time when depression conditions forced wage cuts, was very unsettling to the executive and professional elite in the city. Their most immediate reaction seemed to be

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to buy weapons, as gun stores did a brisk business.³¹ Once the violence ended, however, most business opinion coalesced around the idea that strikes cause violence and, therefore, must be prevented by the use of force personified by a larger police force and a much enlarged regular army and state militia.³² Marshall Field, for example, urged that a large mobile regular army be created and be kept ready to move anywhere in the city to put down any threat to the established order.³³ This sentiment was not limited to the city of Chicago as every state in the Union between 1881 and 1892 revised its military code to establish or strengthen its organized militia.³⁴ "The stimuli to the formation of the various National Guard units were the labor riots of 1877 as well as a more generalized fear of anarchists, nihilists and internationalists."³⁵ An Illinois colonel in the National Guard told the National Guard Association Convention in 1881:

We have a battalion of five companies of cavalry, all located in the City of Chicago. It grew out of our riots of 1877, previous to which we had no cavalry in the state. During the riots it was found necessary to have cavalry, and we hastily organized a battalion of cavalry service during the war. Our cavalry was not equipped by the state. It belongs to the National Guard, but was equipped and uniformed completely by the Citizens' Association of the City of Chicago. This association is composed of businessmen who look after the best interests of our city.³⁶

According to Martha Dorthick's study on the National Guard, "officers of the Guard in all the states appear to have been business and professional men, representatives of the 'better classes.'"³⁷ Thus, in large

measure the stimulus for the strengthening of the organized state militia came from businessmen and professionals who feared lower class violence.

This fear and the resulting inflexible attitude on the part of businessmen of "force must be met with force" was further strengthened when in 1886 an incident that became known as the Haymarket Riot shook the middle and upper-middle classes in Chicago. During a labor rally to protest the death of workers in a McCormick company strike for the eight-hour day, a bomb was thrown that resulted in the death of a number of policemen and the arrest, trial, and execution or imprisonment of a group of anarchists for having advocated "propaganda by the deed," not for manufacturing or throwing the bomb.³⁸

Although the majority of the people who came to the labor rally belonged to the top level of the working class, practicing the most skilled crafts, and probably not parties to the bombing, the middle class of Chicago responded hysterically. Fed by fear, vengeance, and a feeling of bewilderment, they thought "'the immigrant anarchists' were spilling out of the slums to kill the police, in order to destroy the security of the middle class." Such a fear was most likely shared by the upper-class administrative elite. The Chicago Tribune, reporting on a saloon closing by police days after the Haymarket Riot, described it as:

. . . the headquarters of the foreign-speaking population, which flaunts and marches under the red flag, and heretofore they were the centers of a great throng of men who did little but drink beer and attend the meetings in the halls above.

As late as May 7th the Tribune was announcing that middle-class citizens continued to fear the eruption of further violence in the working-class districts that would spill out into the better neighborhoods.³⁹

This fear reverberated through the newspapers in headlines such as "Arming For War," and "Dying Police Officers," and "Ten Thousand Rioters Attack Rosenfeld Drug Store and Completely Gut It," and "The Meeting On The 'Black Road' Leads to Riot of Serious Proportions," and finally "Anarchy's Red Head."⁴⁰ The Daily News on May 5/6 put out extras at 9:15 P.M., 11:00 P.M., 4:30 A.M., 12:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M., 3:00 P.M., 5:00 P.M., 6:00 P.M., 9:45 P.M. with such scare headlines.⁴¹ It is no wonder, then, that the middle-class community feared that "lawless marauders would again erupt out of the proletarian sector of the city and terrorize people." It was the time of a "reign of terror."⁴²

In response to this violence the upper-middle class again called for repression in the name of law and order, and the next state legislative session passed the Merritt Conspiracy Bill making any person, who conspired to perform an act of force or violence that might endanger human life or property, guilty even if he was not a party to the

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actual deed.⁴³ In addition, anyone who had written or spoken in such a way as possibly to incite others to an unlawful act was declared guilty of that act even if it could not be proven that the person who had committed the actual deed had read or heard the statement. There was no need to prove that the people actually had come together to conspire if it could be proven that their act knowingly advanced the illegal result.⁴⁴ Further, the legislature made any city or county where rioting destroyed property responsible for three-fourths of the cost to individuals, and it gave to the police even more latitude in the use of means to suppress mass disorders.⁴⁵

Anxiety was once again heightened in the depression of 1893 with the Pullman Strike which began on Friday, May 11, 1894, in protest against reductions in wages at the sleeping car factory. The first day of the strike was peaceful with the young workers playing baseball or lawn tennis as if they were on a holiday for most of them believed that the stoppage would be of short duration. As the strike dragged on through the summer, it turned into a bitter strike punctuated by violence. The scope of the work stoppage widened when the National American Railway Union joined in a sympathy boycott of all trains with Pullman cars. President Grover Cleveland, Democrat, decided to break the boycott on the grounds that it was interfering with the mail. He accomplished his goal by

sending in troops to insure the movement of the trains and by putting the leader of the boycott, Eugene Debs, in jail for failure to comply with a court injunction to end the strike.⁴⁶

In the wake of the Pullman turbulence, Cleveland appointed a three-man commission to investigate the circumstances surrounding the strike.⁴⁷ It concluded that the "cause" was the large concentrations of capital and labor which, although not in themselves evil, encouraged wasteful industrial warfare. Such conflict could be avoided, it suggested, if capital would recognize the right of men to form unions that would negotiate for them. Grover Cleveland neglected the report, and ignored its suggestions.⁴⁸

Most Chicago businessmen refused to accept labor unions because the militia and the courts could be trusted to smash any strike picket line. Only a minority of businessmen recognized that if some of the workers' physical needs, including housing, were met there would be less support for unions and less need to use force against disgruntled employees.

One of the first experiments along such lines had been George M. Pullman's model town where the 1894 strike began. Basic to its construction was the hope that a rationally planned community, created along business lines of order and efficiency, would provide the workers

with decent housing and provide the Pullman sleeping-car company with disciplined and loyal employees. In prosperity it flourished, although its paternalism was oppressive and it was unable to solve the existing social problems of the workers. In the depression of 1893 it actually contributed to a new dangerous unrest. While the company reduced wages and laid off men, it made no reduction in the rents that took so large a share of the workers' incomes. Perhaps too hastily many contemporaries concluded that the Pullman model town experiment was a failure in that it had ended in a bitter strike of the workers. They agreed that such a direct paternalistically planned community should never be attempted again.⁴⁹

Despite that failure, some progressive elements among the business elite continued to search for alternatives that would achieve the ideal of industrial efficiency through a contented work force. These businessmen, although they accepted George Pullman's conviction that the interests of business and the larger community were identical, decided that they should work through the social and political agencies and organizations of the city to achieve their goals rather than solely through the corporation.⁵⁰

Such a social organization was the Chicago Civic Federation. With the uncertainties generated by the depression of 1893 with its high rate of unemployment, which in turn produced thousands of vagrants, and with the

rising level of violence in Chicago an increasing number of businessmen began to recognize the necessity of ameliorating the conditions of the immigrant worker. As an organization of the "best citizens who formed the public conscience of Chicago," the Civic Federation filled that need.⁵¹

The visible impulse for action occurred at a meeting called by a group of concerned businessmen and attended by a large number of wealthy people in the Central Music Hall on Sunday, November 12, 1893.⁵² The spark that ignited the fire was an emotional speech, "If Christ Came to Chicago," by an Englishman, ^{W.T.} ~~Charles~~ Stead, on the problems of the poor.⁵³ He suggested the need for an organization which, by extra-legal processes, would help carry on the city's work of protecting those unemployed men threatened with death from exposure and starvation. Such an organization could mobilize the new civic consciousness that had been manifested in the organization and construction of the World's Fair in 1893.⁵⁴ Out of this meeting the Chicago Civic Federation, embodying the paternalistic philosophy of the upper-class executive and professional elite, was organized by a small group of businessmen led by Lyman Gage, a successful Chicago banker. Many businessmen for the first time discovered within the association that "social peace depends upon maintaining something more like a balance between prosperity and

poverty." As one of them warned, "society must pick up its own chips or the chips will clog the wheels."⁵⁵

The Federation demonstrated through its wide range of activities the manner in which "one part of civic amelioration is inextricably bound up with the remainder of corporate interests."⁵⁶ Its activities included campaigns not only for a more business-like local government, but also for pure air and water, better street lights, cleaner sanitation facilities, and security against contamination and adulteration of food and drink, especially milk. In addition, it worked for better schools and more recreational and cultural facilities. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Federation led a campaign for business-like administration of private charities.⁵⁷

In order to achieve this latter objective, the Civic Federation launched a philanthropic committee with Mrs. Potter Palmer, wife of one of the wealthiest merchants and land speculators in Chicago, as chairman to oversee the work of The Relief and Aid Society, which had been founded after the 1871 Chicago Fire to dispense a dole to the needy.⁵⁸ Federation members thought that it was attracting the indolent and unworthy to Chicago by its posting of notices in the city's newspapers, at the onset of the depression, announcing its policy of giving free food and lodging to all those who asked. There were no checks on indiscriminate giving, and no



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attempt to coordinate the efforts of the other welfare agencies in Chicago. In addition, the office was only open for two hours a day and closed most of the summer. The Federation thought that it did too little to alleviate the distress of unemployment, what it did do, it did badly.⁵⁹

The philanthropy committee, whose members included Charles Henderson, Graham Taylor, and Julia Lathrop, quickly recognized that there was a need for a permanent organization to assist the city's deserving unemployed because private relief was uncoordinated and public relief was not sufficient to ease the widespread suffering during the winter of 1893. Applicants to the single public relief office in the city ranged between 1,000 to 1,200 daily. Once there, they must wait in a long line for hours in the biting cold. One day a man died from exposure while a woman was crushed to death. Even when a person got into the office, the year's appropriation of \$125,000 was not enough to assure him of any relief. Not only was The Relief and Aid Society undermining the morale of the working class by its practices of hit or miss relief, but the unemployed were beginning to engage in demonstrations in the city's parks. The largest of these meetings was addressed by Henry George and Samuel Gompers and attracted over 10,000 people. Some of them resulted in clashes with the police.⁶⁰

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To meet this situation the philanthropy committee led by Graham Taylor, Julia Lathrop, and Professor Henderson as well as Mrs. Potter Palmer, launched the Central Relief Association on December 14, 1893, to raise money and to coordinate the activities of existing private agencies. In its first six months, the Association received \$135,268 in cash contributions, spending \$81,443 on work relief. In order to qualify for this relief, a man must be the head of a family, pass a means test, and be willing to work.⁶¹

The ideal of scientific charity was illustrated by the Central Relief Association whose board members were made up of businessmen such as Richard T. Crane of the Crane Manufacturing Company and social reformers such as Jane Addams in its operating procedures for a model relief kitchen. At this relief station food was given only to those who agreed to work on the city streets. In addition, each one of the applicants was investigated by an agent of the association. All of his friends, relatives, and neighbors were closely questioned to see if the family was truly destitute and, if so, whether or not his character warranted a work relief grant. Such an experience must have been humiliating to the hapless men thrown out of work through no fault of their own and forced to seek aid to keep their families together.⁶²

Out of this program of the Central Relief Agency grew the Chicago Bureau of Charities in 1898. Among the prime movers behind the organization were the successful corporation lawyer, Charles L. Allen; physician and professor of medicine at the Rush Medical School, Henry B. Favill; wealthy merchant and director of Armour and Company, Arthur Meeker; as well as banker and lawyer, Leverett Thompson. Because the emergency of depression unemployment was largely over, the new organization no longer gave money directly to the poor or to other agencies. Instead, it became a coordinating committee whose main task was to preserve the records of applicants and to strengthen the cooperation between the various societies engaged in charitable work. It did this largely by maintaining a registration bureau where each welfare agency in the city listed the background of its clients. This procedure made it less likely that there would be a duplication of services. In addition, the Bureau remained a central referral agency to which a businessman might refer an applicant who was, in turn, sent to an appropriate charitable organization. This function was explained by an open letter to its supporters dated January, 1899:

The result of a general understanding of this better way will render house to house and street begging unproductive employments, and while the really destitute and helpless of our city will be cared for and helped, the tramps and criminals will find this city less attractive as a winter resort. As our business and professional men become acquainted with the aims and purposes of this bureau, it will have generous financial support.⁶³

As time went on, the Chicago Civic Federation became less important as a social mediator as it turned its energies to the securing of business-like municipal government in order to lower taxes. But in its early days before the turn of the century, it provided the essential support for much of the social reform legislation that was proposed in the Illinois General Assembly and in the City Council. Perhaps even a more important function of the Federation was that it provided businessmen with their first organized attempt at social amelioration and non-violent social control. Enlightened businessmen hoped to bring the classes together in a mutual recognition of their roles in society.

One such businessman was Lyman Gage, president of the Chicago Civic Federation and of the First National Bank of Chicago.⁶⁴ In a speech referring to the Haymarket Riot of 1886 and later violence, he stated that "it was evident that the social fabric was being torn by mutual mis-understanding; this might be stopped or at least mitigated by a better comprehension of the ideas and motives which activate men in their relations to each other in the society."⁶⁵ The Civic Federation fulfilled that function on terms acceptable to the business and professional elite of the city.

Perhaps one of the most important achievements of the Bureau, and in a larger sense of the Chicago Civic

Federation, was the close collaboration between businessmen and the middle-class social reformers who were beginning to cluster around the new settlement houses located in the working-class districts. Some businessmen saw in the settlement house leaders a means for the study of Chicago's social problems. The settlement movement had grown out of the early humanitarian reaction by middle-class reformers to the worst social maladjustment of the turn of the century urban-industrial society. Jane Addams and Ellen Starr, for example, early in 1889 founded Hull-House, the model for later settlement houses. Located in the heart of an immigrant working-class district on South Halsted Street a mile west and three-fourths of a mile south of the city's center, its original structure is now an island on the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus. Designed on the theory "that the dependence of classes on each other is a reciprocal relation," the settlement was to show the lower class that the upper class cared about their problems and at the same time bring the poor's sorry condition to the attention of the wealthy. This function was to be performed by middle-class men and women who would live in the immigrant districts in a house that served as a center of their activities.⁶⁶

Jane Addams saw four subjective and objective reasons for the existence of settlement houses. The

subjective reasons for a middle-class man or woman to choose living in a social settlement were: desire to make the entire social organism more democratic; the "impulse to share the race life, bringing as much as possible of social energy, and the accumulation of civilization to those portions of the race which have little"; and, finally, a wish to accomplish a "renaissance of Christianity," particularly of its humanitarian aspects.⁶⁷

The objective value of the social settlement rested in its ability to articulate the needs of the immigrants to the public authorities and, when necessary, to formulate private programs to meet the community's needs on an interim basis until the public authorities acted.⁶⁸ To that end such Hull House residents in the late 1890's as Florence Kelly, Julia Lathrop, and Ellen Gates Starr conducted a number of studies on nationality characteristics, wage levels, the sweating system, wage-earning children, and art for the laborers.⁶⁹

It was through these studies, as well as by living in the working-class districts, that many early middle-class reformers began to understand some of the effects of the industrial system on the laboring class. Mary E. McDowell, the founder of the University of Chicago Settlement, was an "immigrant" from Evanston, Illinois, who landed in the stockyards district on September 17, 1894. After moving into a small house with a co-worker, she began

to comprehend through direct experience the industrial and social life of her working-class neighbors. What she saw was shocking to a woman of her high social standing. Families sent sons and daughters of eleven and twelve to the meat packing companies to add to the home income. Housing conditions were deplorable, contributing to a high infant mortality rate as well as high rate of disease among all elements of the population. The streets were dirty, but still provided the only play areas for young children.⁷⁰ To these early pioneers the settlements such as the University of Chicago and Hull House were "a center for a higher civic and social life." They were also a hub from which "to initiate and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises," as well as "to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago."⁷¹

Thus, the settlement houses provided an institutional framework within which those concerned with the amelioration of social conditions, including those who were not independently wealthy, could learn about the needs of the working class, and pursue "efficient" programs that would ease the suffering. Graham Taylor in a letter to Mr. J. J. Scott, a lawyer for Mrs. Cyrus McCormick, wrote:

The settlements are not only important in interpreting America to our great immigrant population and the newly arrived immigrants to our citizens, but in affording facilities for training both paid and

volunteer work for more efficient civic and social work in the service of the state and the community. Efficiency is as much required in those who are helping people help themselves, as for the success of our industrial . . . training.⁷²

As the social welfare system grew, different organizations sprang up that filled the various early functions of the settlement house. It was, nevertheless, one of the first, and most durable of the institutions making up the welfare system.

Almost from the beginning, businessmen became interested in the work of the settlement houses not only because of their humanitarian concern with the plight of the working class, but also because of their desire for non-violent social control over the immigrants. The extent of their interest is seen in their heavy contributions to the settlements' financial upkeep and their positions on the board of trustees. Participation in the movement brought them even more deeply within the teaching circle of Jane Addams and her followers.

Thus, very early in the development of the welfare system there was a wedding between middle-class social reformers with their plans for ameliorative projects and businessmen with their financial resources to make those plans a reality. Both the social workers, the businessmen, and the professionals, acting out a variety of motives, worked within the framework defined by each others' goals and values as well as their vision of a "better" society.

Their motivations included humanitarianism, nostalgia for the simplicities of small town life, guilt, and the fear that if the harshness of the working men's lot was not made lighter they might attempt to overturn the entire system. Their common bond, on the other hand, was the conviction not only that something should be done, but that something actually could be done to alleviate the social maladjustments caused by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration. To the business and professional contributors, action must take place within a bourgeois capitalist framework; to most of the reformers there seemed no other practical means.

An excellent example of an early progressive social reform measure that was a result of the alliance of social engineers and enlightened elements of the upper class was the Sweat Shop Act of 1893.⁷³ An outgrowth of the widespread exposure of the inhuman working conditions in the garment industry in Chicago, it owed much to the 1892 investigation of sweat shop conditions by Mrs. Florence Kelley, an early resident of Hull-House.⁷⁴ It was sponsored by the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, which had been set up by the state legislature in the wake of the labor violence of 1877.⁷⁵

According to the Kelley report, there were three organizational structures in the garment industry: inside shops, outside shops, and cutters' shops. The inside

shops were those conducted on a factory basis by the manufacturers themselves, while outside shops were those in which contractors manufactured garments in shops of their own, but used materials owned and cut by the manufacturers. Both the inside shops and the outside shops sent their garments to be finished by poor immigrants in their tenement apartments. Some manufacturers maintained cutters' shops, giving out all their unfinished garments to the contractors for sewing. Almost all the textile manufacturers gave out a substantial number of their unfinished garments.⁷⁶

Conditions in the inside shops were dreadful because any demands by the employee for better wages or working conditions were met immediately by dismissal or transfer from the factory to the contractors' shops, known as sweat shops, where conditions were even more foul in that they were over-crowded, dirty, unheated, and often lacked the most elementary sanitary provisions. Florence Kelley found 800 sweat shops in Chicago and believed this to be a conservative estimate. In these shops almost 13,000 women, men, and children labored for long tedious hours for pitifully inadequate wages. Because wages were much lower than those paid in the factories, the garment trade was able to exploit only those not able to work elsewhere. This group included high proportions of women and children.⁷⁷

Even worse than the contractors' shops were the home shops which consisted usually of a single room that served as an impoverished immigrant family's work room and living quarters. The room was usually poorly ventilated, small, over-crowded, and located in the basement or attic. The piece-rate being so low, this was the best accommodation a family forced into such endeavors could afford, even after long hours of toil. Many of these home shops were operated by people who, because of disease, physical handicap, or other such problems, could find no other employment.⁷⁸

When the governor submitted the Kelley report to the Illinois General Assembly, it appointed a special committee of seven members, three senators and four representatives, to investigate the sweating problems in Chicago and to recommend necessary remedial legislation.⁷⁹ The committee spent five days in Chicago visiting various tenement quarters and sweat shops. They were genuinely shocked by the conditions they found. Ironically, they were less upset by the inhuman working conditions than by the fact that many of the home shops were infested with diseases that could be transmitted to the retail buyer of the garments. It was this threat to public health that attracted the interest of Chicago's newspapers.⁸⁰ The Chicago Times ran a story concerning the sweat shops and the investigation under a headline

reading, "Shops Where Disease Is Stitched Into the Clothes We Wear."⁸¹ According to physicians who testified before the commission, diseases were often spread by tenement-made garments, and epidemics of contagious diseases had been traced to the sweat shops. It was this factor perhaps more than others which aroused public opinion against the system, although genuine humanitarian concern for the plight of the unfortunate workers, especially the women and children, was also an element.⁸²

Having filed its report, the committee recommended the passage of a bill to regulate the manufacture of clothing and the other articles in Illinois. The bill passed as the Sweat Shop Act of 1893 with little controversy. The state legislature was under public pressure to do something to protect it from the threat of disease contracted through the purchase of garments made in unsanitary conditions. Jane Addams and Florence Kelley, as well as other social reformers, journeyed to Springfield to articulate this public outcry for changes in the garment trade. In addition, the bill had the powerful support of the reform Democratic governor, John Peter Altgeld. There was little opposition among the manufacturers because under the law they would be required only to keep a list of their contractors. They were not, however, responsible for anything that went on in their contractors' shops. Thus, the clothing manufacturers

had little reason to block the bill. The bill only proposed to regulate the contractor, usually an immigrant operating on a shoestring budget, and the home finisher, an even poorer immigrant. Neither had political leverage outside his own precinct. Thus, the bill in no way disturbed the economic interests of corporations in the state.⁸³

The first three sections of the Sweat Shop Act of 1893 were designed to protect the community from the diseases which inevitably accompanied the manufacture of clothing under the sweating system, while the rest of the law was designed to protect the health of the women and children who, as exploited workers, were troublesome to the middle-class conscience. The law applied not only to those employed in the clothing industry, but also in other manufacturing.⁸⁴

In the area of child labor this law was the first to contain even a semblance of enforcement provisions. It became unlawful to employ any child under fourteen years of age in any manufacturing establishment, factory, or workshop within the state. Any child between the ages of fourteen years and sixteen years to be employed in any of the above establishments must have an affidavit signed by parent or guardian stating age, date, and place of birth. The affidavits were to be kept on file by the employer so they could be seen by the state

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factory inspectors, three of whom were created by the law. In addition the employer must present on demand of the inspector, a certification of physical fitness made out by a physician for each employee. Violation was to be punishable by fine and imprisonment. The significance of child labor reform will be discussed in a later chapter.

The same law prohibited the employment of any female in any factory or workshop for more than eight hours in any one day or forty-eight hours in any one week. Although the state legislature made no provision for poverty-stricken families to gain an alternate source of income, the conscience of the middle class was satisfied by this simple negative action.⁸⁵

The Illinois Bureau of Factory Inspectors with its small staff was able to police with relative effectiveness the provisions of the Sweat Shop Act in the factories of the major manufacturers. These manufacturers were stable members of the community with a physical plant that could be inspected with ease. In addition, they usually had a reputation to protect and avoided involvements in legal proceedings. Thus, most of the violations outside the sweat shops were concentrated in only eight factories across the state whose owners had decided that the profit of employing children outweighed the risks of doing so. Most of them were located in small towns where the local community supported their activities.⁸⁶

The situation in the garment trades was entirely different. Besides employing large numbers of children, nearly one-fourth of all women engaged in manufacturing within the state worked in the sweat shops. Because of the law, large numbers of violations took place in these shops. Engaged in a marginal business where entry was easy and failure was common, the contractor usually operated a small shop employing a few women and children to stitch garments for the manufacturer. He could only afford the use of foot power machinery and usually was forced to pay more rent per person employed than a rationally arranged factory.⁸⁷

In order to make a profit, the "sweater" paid relatively lower wages to his employees, and worked them longer hours than those in the manufacturing shops. Wages were so poor that only poverty-stricken recent immigrants, women, and children were attracted to the jobs. In addition, the employer could hire and lay off easily because his employees did not blame him, but rather the wholesaler or the market. He could also lay off more easily than could the garment manufacturer because his machinery was foot powered; thus, there was no steam to turn off or other costly equipment standing idle. The employee took his power with him. Finally, he did not have to worry about sanitation conditions as did the larger manufacturer because there was no large visible

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figure against whom reformers could arouse public opinion. If public opinion did become aroused by the practices of a single small sweater, he could simply pack up and move his operation to a new place.⁸⁸

All attempts to regulate the garment industry met indifferent success.⁸⁹ The manufacturing company was only required to keep a list of its contractors, and was not held responsible for the conditions in its contractors' shops. Thus, enforcement had to begin with regulation of the contractors' shops. No staff of ten deputies could possibly keep up with all the violations of the law in the thousands of small sweat shops located in tenement basements and attics.⁹⁰ Throughout the 1890's the number of sweat shops continued to increase despite numerous convictions. In 1895, for example, there were thirty sweaters convicted on 34 charges of employing children under fourteen and 129 charges of employing children under sixteen without an affidavit. Yet, between 1894 and 1895 the shops increased from 1,413 to 1,715.⁹¹

If the contractors' shops were hard to police, there was no way at all to regulate the uncountable numbers engaged in home finishing for piece rates. Although the contractor was required to keep a list of those to whom he gave garments to be processed, there is no record of his ever doing so. In addition, the inspectors did not really want to haul before the court a

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poverty-stricken widow and her children who were engaged in the business only from sheer economic necessity and were forced to live and work in filthy conditions. There seemed to be no way to get at the problem.⁹²

There were other defects in the Act of 1893. It was impossible, for example, to prove that a child found in a workroom was employed there. In addition, many children, although they had affidavits which indicated that their parents had sworn to the fact that they were of legal age to work, appeared to the inspectors to be under fourteen years of age. Finally, the law applied only to manufacturing occupations, and the school authorities continued to issue work permits to children under fourteen, as they were impowered to do, in hardship cases for other occupations.⁹³

Because of these defects, a new bill was drawn up by Chicago social reformers in accordance with the recommendations of Florence Kelley, and introduced into the General Assembly of 1895. The bill contained provisions to extend the child labor sections of the 1893 law to include mercantile stores, offices, and laundries. It also contained provisions regulating the garment manufacturers in the details of contracting out their garments to be finished.⁹⁴

In spite of widespread publicity concerning the health hazards to the middle class who brought clothes

stitched in unsanitary conditions, the bill failed. Florence Kelley was careful to point out, for example, that the "risk run by the purchaser of a costly cloak or a custom-made suit is precisely the risk run by the working man buying a cheap ready-made suit and by the poor woman who got a bargain counter knee pants for her boy." The combined opposition of the retail garment merchants who wanted no government interference in their business was enough to defeat the bill. In order to placate public opinion, the state legislature did set up a special commission to investigate the scope of child labor. Out of this commission eventually came a new child labor law in 1897. This law and later legislation will be discussed in the chapter on child labor.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Sweat Shop Act of 1893 was that it provided another opportunity for concerned upper-class business executives and professionals to cooperate with middle-class social reformers to rectify a serious distortion of the capitalist system. Together they moved against the abuses of marginal businessmen who were acting outside the pale of acceptable conduct in the treatment of their employees. Such conduct was intolerable to many corporate businessmen on humanitarian grounds, as well as practical grounds. The thought of women and children toiling long hours in unsanitary conditions for low wages, lower than those

of the average unskilled worker, was hard for a Christian conscience to bear. On the practical side, the sweat shop posed a very real health threat to the middle-class consumer. In addition, such injustice could lead to instability in the society as a whole as those who were so grossly exploited became totally alienated from the capitalist system. The coalition of businessmen and social workers who were beginning to build the welfare system in Illinois were determined to prevent such a situation from developing. Jane Addams wrote in 1892 that a settlement was a protest against class division and a means of bringing the classes together that were being driven apart by the pressure of social and economic maladjustments.⁹⁵ The social reformers hoped to do this by ameliorating the worst conditions experienced by the working class and by training the best among the lower class to rise into the middle class.

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FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER I

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CHAPTER II

"WHAT ARE WE GOING TO CALL OURSELVES TODAY?"

After 1900 the coalition of middle-class reformers and progressive elements of the upper-middle class began to solidify into a unified whole. One of the distinctive characteristics of the alliance was the commonly held belief system of its members. Although they disagreed over particular reform issues, most believed that if the bourgeois industrial society was to be made viable a certain amount of fine tuning had to be applied to the free market economy. They held, for example, that when the normal structure of supply, the family and the market, proved inadequate to sustain a minimum standard of living, a substitute mechanism should come into play. Within such a belief system they developed relief programs for the unemployed, especially during depression troughs. For the unskilled workers, ill-housed because of low wages, they urged tenement regulations so that their housing would at least meet minimum health and comfort standards. For widows with children they developed a mother's pension plan.

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The social reformers and their upper-class allies were also convinced that the immigrant unskilled workmen were potential members of the middle class. In order to help them achieve this ideal, they formulated social programs to train them to compete more effectively in the economic market place for the necessary income to live a comfortable and respectable life. The immigrant had to be taught not only job skills, but also a set of values such as thrift, sobriety, competitiveness, individualism, acquisitiveness, and deferred gratification. Most of all he had to be convinced that the bourgeois industrial system was relatively open and that one rose in the economic hierarchy through personal merit. To meet this need the social workers developed programs of adult education in the public schools and clubs, as well as lectures, meetings, classes, and discussions in the settlement house.

The main targets of their attempts to modify the behavior patterns of the working class so as to make them functional in a middle-class capitalist economy were the children. The Juvenile Court of Chicago, for example, was founded on the principle of taking the even most deviant children, from a middle-class perspective, and turning them into model citizens. Child labor laws and compulsory education were aimed at preventing the exploitation of the child by marginal businessmen to such an

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extent that they could not function effectively later on the labor market.

Another commonly held belief was that all social welfare programs should be designed in such a way so as to reduce tension by bringing the classes together in a recognition of mutual dependence. Andrew A. Bruce, a resident of Hull House during the 1890's, later described Jane Addams, the personification of the humanitarian aspect of social welfare, as one whose:

. . . great advantage lay in the fact that she could sympathize with the problems of employers as well as those of the employee and the unemployed . . . and at the same time reveal to those who were less fortunate or perhaps less burdened with the responsibility of business management, the real heart of those favored classes.¹

Jane Addams put it more simply when she said, "Capital and labor should join hands."² Graham Taylor, a prominent Chicago social reformer and founder of the Chicago Commons as well as the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, saw the settlement worker as a mediator between the classes. He lived in the immigrant slum and, thereby, came to understand the life and labor of workers. On the other hand, he was articulate enough to interpret their experience and needs to the upper-middle class elite of corporate executives and professionals.³

By bringing the classes together the social reformers were in a sense abolishing classes all together. Everyone would be middle class, a few in the upper-middle

and the rest in the lower-middle. Although everyone would share the same ideals, values, and life style, the upper-middle class minority would still administer the economy for the benefit of all on the basis of their expertise and be rewarded accordingly. The lower-middle class, on the other hand, would enjoy a modest, but healthful and fulfilling, life with the knowledge that the very best among them might rise into the ranks of the upper-middle class.

Businessmen interested in social welfare echoed the same belief. Julius Rosenwald, President of Sears, Roebuck and Company, stated that "the social workers' delicate mission . . . is to take from the rich and give to the poor, for the benefit of both, without offense to either."⁴ On another occasion he explained to a group of businessmen that "the best investment any community can make of its money is to take proper care of the families in it that are below par and to keep them and others from dropping down to dependency. . . . "⁵

The progressive alliance began to take shape at a time when there was a gradual transition from ethical philosophy to a more scientific explanation of human behavior. In the area of delinquency, for example, more advanced reformers were beginning to view the wayward child as a product of its unfavorable environment rather than as a victim of heredity. The environmentalist approach

made behavior modification seem possible for, if a child's conduct was molded by his surroundings, it could be changed by altering them. Such a principle could also be applied to other situations where behavior modification was deemed beneficial.

The scientific method, as it applied to social phenomena, included an objective study of the social conditions by the use of sampling techniques, statistics, and systematic investigation. On the basis of facts gathered in such a way, programs could be formulated that would precisely fit the needs of middle-class society and of the poor. The watch words for each step in the process were scientific, business-like, and efficient.

At a memorial service for a social welfare educator, Edith Abbott, a reform-minded professor teaching at the University of Chicago, Charles E. Merriam, recalled that "to the general impulses of philanthropy she had added the values of organized and disciplined knowledge. She combined observation, professional analysis, and mature reflection. This kind of endeavor led to informed and oriented action to solve social problems."⁶ More was needed than humanitarian ideals.

Julius Rosenwald was also a passionate advocate of the environmentalist and scientific viewpoint. Speaking before the Advertising Association of Chicago in 1913,

he persuasively argued that "in this age of expert service, philanthropy is being reduced to a science administered by paid experts." He went on to point out that "it is just as impossible for the general public to intelligently handle the growing, menacing problems of poverty and distress as it is for the general public to run your business or mine."⁷ Many businessmen apparently agreed, as they channeled their contributions through such organizations as the Chicago Charity Bureau. In addition, the Chamber of Commerce had set up by 1910 a registry of all approved charities to which businessmen could give with confidence, knowing that their contribution would be used wisely.

These progressives also accepted, from their own experiences in the business and professional world, the values of efficiency, organization, planning, and technology. Thus, reform activity took place within organizational structures that were managerial and administrative in nature. The working class was to be directed, but not consulted, by these organizations so as to repress their unruly, random, spontaneous, non-functional behavior, and substitute instead a new consciousness which conformed to the needs of the emerging corporate economy.

These progressive reform associations were usually non-partisan in nature because the professional

social reformers had to make them acceptable to businessmen who provided much of the economic support. Graham Taylor warned his fellow social reformers not to express a party preference, especially in national elections.⁸

This tactic was important because outside the area of social welfare most of the businessmen and professionals interested in reform were basically conservative and Republican. Julius Rosenwald, for example, had supported with conviction all the Republican presidential candidates since the 1890's.⁹ Years later Graham Taylor recalled that he had warned Jane Addams that, by supporting Theodore Roosevelt's third party bid for the presidency in 1912, she might alienate the most generous financial contributors to social welfare activities. He was confident that social reformers by being non-partisan were in a position to "swing the balance of power in the large independent vote of Chicago and Illinois for the public welfare, irrespective of party lines."¹⁰

Working together, reformer and philanthropist persuaded existing clubs to undertake welfare activities and created a host of committees and associations to focus support on particular social goals. These various organizations provided the formal structure through which the social progressive coalition operated. Most of the committees and associations were concerned with one particular reform. The City Homes' Association, for

example, focused on housing reform while the Chicago Consumers' League worked for better working conditions for women and children.

Even in its own small area of interest a reform organization could not be totally self-sufficient in pursuing its goals. Typically, it depended on others for one or more of its basic functions which included information gathering, theory and program planning, propaganda and pressure design, and program actualization. For example, one organization might be primarily interested in information gathering and theory and program planning, depending on another organization for lobbying the bill through the state legislature.

Members of the faculty of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy and later of the School of Social Administration of the University of Chicago were very influential in the design of the legislation to control juvenile delinquency, but were dependent on the Juvenile Protective Association to lobby the bills through the City Council and the state legislature. In addition, these groups were tied together into a functional whole because they shared a small common fund of financial and executive talent. Their members, by virtue of financial and executive contributions, formed the elite decision-makers of the social progressive movement.

These organizations depended for their existence on the gifts of relatively small numbers of contributors. By going through records of the various social welfare and reform organizations in the sample, one can draw a composite picture of the typical major contributor who may be defined as one who gave enough money to make his withdrawal from the organization a serious matter in terms of the survival of that organization. To be classed as a major contributor to a large settlement house a person would have to donate at least \$500 to \$2,000 a year over a period of three years, considering the size of its budget. On the other hand a contributor to a small budget organization such as the Illinois Committee on Labor Legislation could have given considerably less and still be indispensable. At the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy the extremely small number of contributors made them crucially important.

Graham Taylor complained in 1921 that there were too few givers. That same year he expressed regret that "Americans had suffered from the lack of such men of the leisure class in England who have been so loyal in serving the higher interests of their country."¹¹ By 1921 some of the most generous had died that he warned that "the higher interests of Chicago will surely suffer seriously unless there is a rally to fill the break."¹²

The seriousness of the situation is reflected in a 1924 study of the financing of social agencies in Chicago. Although at least 100,000 people had given more than \$2 to any or all of the agencies, most of the funds came from a handful of no longer young contributors. Ninety-five per cent had given between \$2 and \$100, but together they supplied only 22 per cent of the total dollars. Those who gave \$500 to \$1,000 made up .5 per cent of the total contributors, but donated 9 per cent of the total contributions. The figures for those who contributed \$1,000 to \$5,000 were .4 per cent and 24 per cent respectively and for those who gave over \$5,000 the figures were .8 per cent and 25 per cent. Thus, less than 5 per cent of the contributors gave almost 80 per cent of the donations to these 123 Chicago welfare agencies.¹³

In addition, several hundred thousand had given less than \$2, mostly to three broadly based organizations. To one of them, a quarter of a million people had given an average of 24 cents. Many of these small contributions may represent duplications because there is no evidence as to whether or not a giver donated more than once on different occasions. But if these contributions were included in the summary, the contribution curve would be further slowed with "barely one-tenth of one per cent of the total contributors giving 40% of the total charitable budget of the city."¹⁴

Classification of 101,168 Contributors of Over \$2 to 123 Chicago Agencies Showing
Proportion of Total Contributions Carried by Each Group:

Size of Contribution	Number of Contributors	Amount Contributed	Percentage Of Contributors	Percentage of Total Contributions
\$ 2 to \$100	96,622	\$867,743	95.5	22
100 to 200	2,083	354,151	2.1	9
200 to 300	780	194,340	.8	5
300 to 500	576	219,419	.6	6
500 to 1,000	543	372,077	.55	9
1,000 to 5,000	481	875,419	.4	24
5,000 and over	83	935,714	.8	25

Out of a random sample of fifty major contributors to the social reform organizations, three-fourths were men, and of them one-half were top level executives of large- and middle-sized corporations. It was also determined that of the others a fourth were in finance and a fourth were doctors, lawyers, and architects. The women were all wives or widows of prominent and wealthy Chicago businessmen. The vast majority of the persons in the sample were Protestants, although there were a few Jews. One of the most striking features of this group was that almost three-fourths had graduated from high school while over two-fifths graduated from college. Only a small percentage were born in a foreign country. This was at a time (1910-1912) when a typical Chicago citizen was an unskilled laborer, Catholic, foreign born, and had eight years of schooling or less.

More significantly, perhaps these "major contributors" were members of Chicago's "elite." Almost three-fifths were listed in either the first (1905), the second (1911) or the third (1926) editions of Albert Nelson Marquis' The Book of Chicagoans. These books were biographical dictionaries containing almost 6,000 entries. Richard Jensen in an article, "Quantitative Collective Biography: An Application to Metropolitan Elites," found that Marquis' work was a "fair, accurate, and comprehensive," guide to Chicago's elite class.¹⁵

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Using Marquis' books, Richard Jensen made a quantitative study of the characteristics of Chicago's elite or upper class.¹⁶ If one compares the attributes of the "major contributors" to social reform organizations with Jensen's elite it becomes clear that they are similar:

Characteristics	Jensen's elite-%	Major Contributors To Soc. Reform Organizations-%
1. Foreign born	14	10
2. Protestant (declared	35	85 (Prot.
3. Catholic Prot.)	4	0 back-
4. Jewish	3	15 ground)
5. High School or Above	--	75
6. Some college	60	50
7. Finance (occupation)	26	18 of those
8. Manufacturing/Trade/		known
Transportation	48	60 in the
9. Medicine/Law/Other		sample
professions	32	22
[9% occupations not known]		

It is clear that these "major contributors" to the social reform organizations were members of Chicago's upper class. In many ways they are similar to Robert H. Wiebe's "New Middle Class" that emerged in the nations' cities at the turn of the century.¹⁷ This class comprised those with strong professional aspirations in such fields as medicine, law, economics, administration, social work, and architecture as well as specialists in business corporations. What distinguished this class was their

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"consciousness of unique skills and functions, an awareness that came to mold much of their lives."¹⁸

These "major contributors" were also important because they usually gave to more than one organization. Julius Rosenwald, for example, contributed to almost the entire range of the major social welfare groups in Chicago. Most of the others did not give so widely, but they too spread their contributions to many organizations and could be essential to the survival of several.

By virtue of their contributions, most of the major contributors held influential seats on the boards of directors of the social welfare and reform organizations. Out of the fourteen members of the Board of Trustees of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy in 1920, ten were major contributors. They included top business executives such as Charles R. Crane of the Crane Manufacturing Company, Edward L. Ryerson of the Ryerson Steel Company, Julius Rosenwald of Sears, Roebuck and Company, and Victor Lawson, publisher of the Chicago Daily News. With them were equivalent men from the professions, Victor Elting, a prominent Chicago lawyer, and Allen B. Pound, an equally successful Chicago architect.¹⁹

The Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy was almost totally dependent on such men for contributions. In 1911, for example, it received \$2,000 from Victor Lawson, \$2,000 from Charles R. Crane, \$2,500 from Julius

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Rosenwald, \$1,000 from Edward L. Ryerson, and \$1,000 from the Russell Sage Foundation, a national philanthropic enterprise controlled by businessmen. These contributions made up almost the total income of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy.²⁰

The pattern was similar for the social reform organizations. The board of directors of the Housing Association of Chicago was made up entirely of business and professional men. It included such people as J. Ogden Armour, the meat packer; Julius Rosenwald; and Benjamin J. Rosenthal, a successful banker.²¹ The other organization concerned with working-class housing reform was the City Homes' Association whose membership totalled about 100 in 1901. Almost all of these are identifiable as successful businessmen, mostly corporate executives or professionals. Among these men were meat packer, J. Ogden Armour; Cyrus, Harold, Robert, and Stanley McCormick of International Harvester; Martin A. Ryerson, a manufacturer; Marshall Field and Company executive, John B. Sheed; Marshall Field; and William J. Chalmers, of the Chalmers Manufacturing Company.²²

In the Immigrant Protective League the influence of businessmen contributors was indirect as well as direct. Out of a total budget of \$3,150 almost \$2,500 was donated by five individuals or organizations:

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1. Chicago Association of Commerce (Businessmen's Club)	\$1,000
2. Chicago Community Trust (Businessmen's Charity)	500
3. Harold Swift (meat packer)	250
4. Albert D. Lasker (banker)	250
5. Martin D. Hull (a successful lawyer and state representative)	400
Total	\$2,400 ²³

In some cases, such as the Immigrant Protective League, contributions and influence were wildly distributed throughout the business community. The more usual pattern, however, was the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy with a few large contributors who also sat on its board of directors. There was a pattern of interlocking directorships with one wealthy businessman serving on many boards.

The archetype of these businessmen contributors and board directors was Julius Rosenwald. His career was marked both by the accumulation of great wealth in the mail-order business and by the disposal of much of that wealth in philanthropic enterprises. It has been estimated that he gave away sixty-three million dollars. The figure is given additional importance by the fact that he used his grants to rouse large donations by other men. He usually required the recipient of his benefaction to match a certain percentage of it by donations from different sources. By this method he was able to raise

much more money for his philanthropic endeavors than he actually possessed. Thus, his influence in the social welfare movement was immense.²⁴

Born to middle-class Jewish German-American parents in Springfield, Illinois in 1862, Julius Rosenwald went to New York City at the age of seventeen with only a grammar school education. After a six-year apprenticeship with his uncle, a wholesale clothier, he entered the same business in Chicago in 1885. In a city of great business opportunities and with the financial backing of his New York uncles, he was moderately successful, supporting his family in middle-class comfort.²⁵

Julius Rosenwald's fortune took a turn for the better when in August, 1895, he and his brother-in-law went into an active partnership with Richard Sears who needed new capital to expand his mail-order business. A new Illinois corporation was formed later that year with Sears as President of the company with one-half of the stock, while Julius Rosenwald became Vice-president with one-fourth of the stock upon the contribution of \$37,500 toward a total capitalization of \$150,000. With the rapid and steady increase in the sales of Sears, Roebuck and Company, Rosenwald's personal fortune grew accordingly. Annual sales of about one and a half million dollars in 1897 had risen to more than eleven

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million dollars in 1900. In 1909, when he became President of the company, they were close to fifty-one million dollars.²⁶

As his wealth grew the President of Sears believed he had an obligation to society to use it for the benefit of mankind. Such people as Judge Julian W. Mack, Miss Jane Addams, Doctor Graham Taylor, Miss Mary McDowell, and Minnie Low, all part of the social welfare and reform movement, had a deep influence on his charitable activities. They convinced him that contributing his money to the movement for social welfare reform was one of the best outlets for his charitable impulse and his pragmatic sense.²⁷

He gave to such organizations as the Illinois Juvenile Protective Association, Illinois Branch of the National Child Labor Committee, Playground Association of Chicago, City Homes' Association, Mary McDowell's Housing Project, Chicago Housing Association, Women's Trade Union League, Businessmen's Relief Committee (1908), Hull House Association, Illinois Immigrant Protective Association, the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, and the Chicago Commons' Settlement.²⁸

Julius Rosenwald contributed to a cause only after carefully investigating its beliefs in order to make sure that they were in accord with his own: orderly reform and amelioration within the corporate bourgeois framework.

In a letter to a business friend regarding the Women's Trade Union League, Rosenwald stated:

I contributed because after a thorough investigation I was convinced the people back of the movement were moderate in their attitudes. While I could not subscribe to everything in their program, I felt it was a good deal better that capital should not indicate a spirit of aloofness or what might be construed as an antagonistic attitude. Furthermore, I found that men like Victor F. Lawson [publisher of the Chicago Daily News] were assisting the League. . . . Our later inquiries gave further evidence that the women back of the movement belong to the conservative group.²⁹

Julius Rosenwald was referring to women like the upper-middle-class reformers Mrs. Raymond Robbins, Miss Mary McDowell, and Miss Sophonisba Breckinridge, all officers of the Women's Trade Union League in Illinois. They were intent on guiding working women into conservative business unions.

These large varied contributions gave Julius Rosenwald a good deal of influence in the social welfare movement which he exercised through his position on the board of directors of a number of organizations, including the Hull House Association and the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy. It is apparent that the leaders of the various organizations were aware of his influence through the power of the purse. The head of an organization which wanted to give free milk to poor children, lamented to a friend that Rosenwald had refused to make a contribution. "I am really awfully sorry about this because we wanted the prestige of having him on our list,

as well as the contribution."³⁰ It is clear that other businessmen looked to him for guidance in their contributions.

Another example of Rosenwald's influence in the social welfare movement came when Mary McDowell and Mrs. Bowen, two social welfare leaders, were mounting a drive for a minimum wage for women. He wrote them a letter stating his opposition to it at that time. They wrote back telling him that most likely he misinterpreted the nature of the minimum wage legislation they wished.³¹

He wrote to them again:

I did not misunderstand in the least your attitude nor the attitude of Mrs. Bowen in the matter. I merely felt and still feel that any agitation for the minimum wage at this time will only redound to the credit of those unscrupulous politicians, who, to my mind, have done more harm by connecting vice with wages and justifying immorality in the wage-worker than would be cured by a minimum wage law in a generation. . . . In my opinion you would be paying an awful price for the purpose of getting a minimum wage law, if it had to be secured at the cost of the good name of the women you were fighting for.³²

Julius Rosenwald ended his letter with an invitation to both women to come to lunch with him and then to tour the plant. It is not recorded what happened at the lunch, but Miss McDowell and Mrs. Bowen dropped the idea of minimum wage legislation until the 1930's.

Another businessman who had tremendous influence in the social welfare system was Charles R. Crane, first Vice-president of the Crane Company, and Director of the

National Bank of the Republic. This persuasiveness was due to his large and varied contributions to social reform and welfare organizations and the resulting policy-making positions to which he was appointed.³³ His power was clearly recognized by others in the social welfare system. On a trip to Washington D.C. Agnes Nester, President of the Women's Trade Union League of Chicago, was urged by Olive M. Sullivan, Secretary of the League, not to neglect seeing Mr. Crane who was also in Washington at the same time because "he would feel quite offended if you do not tie up with him." Miss Sullivan went on to say:

If you personally do not need his financial assistance perhaps he will be willing to let something come to the League. . . . He [Mr. Crane] would be glad to guarantee your salary and then you would be free to go where and when you will.³⁴

Born in Chicago in 1858, Crane had joined after a high school education the family's Crane Company that manufactured iron pipe fitting and plumbing fixtures, so profitable now that people were moving indoors. Concerned with social injustices, he contributed to Chicago Commons and the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, and served on their boards of trustees. Through his experience with welfare capitalism at Crane Company and the Crane Elevator Company and through his settlement work, he became convinced that the social condition of the workers must be ameliorated if the bourgeois society from which he had benefited was to remain viable. At

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the Crane Company, for example, he was instrumental in establishing a sick benefit and pension plan for the relief of deserving workmen and their families. Shortly, the company added a medical department.³⁵

The McCormick family at International Harvester Company also instituted a corporate welfare program in the early 1900's. The major motivation was to gain the workers' loyalty and prevent unionization. It was also a way for them to reduce industrial accidents, absenteeism, and labor turnover which contributed to higher costs. Workers' benefits included sickness and accident insurance, and counseling services. The McCormicks, from their experience with welfare capitalism, came to the realization that in order to insure a healthy happy working force they must be concerned with the community from which it was recruited. In addition, because International Harvester controlled such a large percentage of the agricultural implement business, it was vulnerable to anti-trust sentiment. The concern of the family with welfare Programs could help to blunt this opposition to the large Corporation.³⁶ Thus the family, especially Stanley and Mrs. Anita Bair McCormick, became interested in such things as housing reform in Chicago.

Such businessmen felt a social responsibility that was compatible with their business interests. They appreciated the value of public respect and confidence

if the corporate structure of the economy was to be maintained.³⁷ Julius Rosenwald recognized before 1915 that "in a modern complex society the state must assume increasingly the burdens of education and health and not leave them only to private charity or initiative."³⁸ These men believed that corporate capitalism, because it rested on the narrow base of the good will of the minority of enlightened executives working solely with their own employees, was not enough. To be effective welfare programs must work through the state so that they helped those who needed it most, the workers who were employed by marginal businessmen for longer hours at lower wages in less healthy surroundings; or worse yet, were unemployed. In addition, women and children who were not employed often needed aid. Only the state could act in such situations.

Although businessmen made up a majority of the list of large financial contributors to reform, upper middle-class professionals and their wives were also important. This group included such men as Allen B. Pond, one of the great architects of the city of Chicago. Six years after his graduation from the University of Michigan in 1880 he came to Chicago where he began a successful practice; but he spent much time in the social welfare movement, especially as a trustee of Hull House Association, Grads Hill Center (a social

settlement), as well as the Housing Association of Chicago. One of his prime concerns was better housing for the working class. Another contributor from the professions was Julian W. Mack, an attorney and Judge of Chicago's Juvenile Court, which was itself a major instrument of social reform. There was also Victor Lawson, publisher of the Chicago Daily News, who not only made his paper the mouthpiece of social reform in Chicago, but gave generously to the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy and to numerous welfare agencies.³⁹

These professional men were a product of the newly emergent urban industrial bourgeois society in Chicago. They realized, as will be demonstrated in the succeeding chapters, that to maintain the present social and economic relationships without violent conflict the workers must be given a stake in the new society. In effect, the workers would have to be converted from an alienated lower class into a satisfied lower-middle class. These progressive professionals and their colleagues in the big business believed in the essential rightness of the corporate system with its benefits to them in terms of power and wealth. Public and private action was necessary only to put some restraints on the abuses of that economic power, and to correct the most flagrant maladjustments of the society that by its very nature offended their sense of humanity.

The question naturally arises as to who the smaller contributors were, for up to this point we have only talked of the major contributors on whom the social welfare system so heavily depended. The composite characteristics of the lesser donors are harder to put together but, from the sketchy financial records of the various social welfare and reform organizations, they appear to be upper-middle class people. The welfare organizations did not take up collections on a mass scale, but were financed through appeals to large contributors and selected smaller ones. Often pleas to contributors of moderate means were made through middle and upper middle-class women's clubs and church organizations. For most organizations contributions were rarely under \$25. A typical example is the financing of the University of Chicago Settlement. Its budget for 1929 was:

\$10,000	- earnings of the Settlement House
4,000	- membership contributions
7,500	- the League for U. of C. Settlement
6,800	- Wieboldt's Foundation
3,000	- Students' Settlement Night
4,500	- offerings at religious service ⁴⁰

The list of names for the invitations to the Students' Settlement Night indicate that those who were invited lived in upper-class areas of the city. Similarly, the twenty-nine League members were invited to a 1929 tea at the Settlement House. If they were typical

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of the membership, they gave about \$300 a year. Thus, it is clear that the social welfare institutions were financially fueled by a business and professional middle class even when smaller contributors are considered.⁴¹

Within this framework, then, the social reform leaders must work, for many of its policy-makers were corporate businessmen or professionals who, because they benefited from the economic and social relations of the society, tended to favor reform that would preserve those relations without endangering the whole system. On the other hand those policy-makers that did not actually fit this category were dependent on financial backers who did.

The contributing board members were recruited by charismatic people like Jane Addams; people whose idealism and zeal gave them major influence. She was a unifying force that everyone in social work looked to for inspiration. Her charisma in part was due to her own personal magnetism, but in a larger sense it was due to her total commitment to helping others. James Weber Linn in his biography of his aunt, Jane Addams, remembered her as one who "had given all her sympathy, all her time, all her energy, and most of her money to the cause of reform." Her courage and her devotion to the poor made her a symbol to many Americans of the true humanitarian spirit.⁴²

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Because she became a dynamic symbol to those outside and inside the welfare system, she had considerable influence in the decision-making process of the social progressive alliance. The extent to which she exercised that influence is seen in the fact that she held executive positions in at least fourteen local social reform associations and in innumerable temporary committees.⁴³ Adding to her importance was the fact that she not only reflected deeply on the social maladjustments of her time and the possible remedies for them, but also expressed her conclusions in over 500 books and articles.⁴⁴ Attention was also focused on her because she founded and headed the pioneer settlement house in Chicago.⁴⁵ She was:

God-driven in her enthusiasm for righteousness, her wide human affection, her willingness to learn of life, her insight into complicated situations, her faith in human nature which enabled her to form new and hopeful combinations with the most unpromising materials and suggest solutions for problems which the community had long accepted as insoluble.⁴⁶

In addition to Jane Addams, there was a small group of men and women who also devoted their lives to social reform and were prime decision-makers in the progressive social reform alliance. Like Jane Addams, their pervasive influence did not come primarily because they held a particular executive office in a social welfare organization, although they were usually officers in a variety of such groups. Their dominions, instead,

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came from their acknowledged pre-eminence in the social welfare movement as a whole.

First of all, these elite decision-makers were a small tightly knit group. They corresponded and met with one another in order to discuss strategy and goals. By coming to know each other well on the personal level, their relationship bred a deep trust and respect. The group was so small that one time when Jane Addams entered a meeting called to work out some social problem she found the same familiar faces and remarked "What are we going to call ourselves today?"⁴⁷

This elite included:

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|-----|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 1 . | Edith and Grace Abbott* | - | educators at the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, social workers |
| 2 . | Mrs. Emmons Blaine* | - | philanthropist and leader of various reform organizations, especially Juvenile Protective Association |
| 3 . | Julia C. Lathrop* | - | social worker |
| 4 . | Mary E. McDowell | - | settlement worker, Head of University of Chicago Settlement House |
| 5 . | Florence Kelley* | - | reformer, Head of Illinois Factory Inspection Bureau 1892-1896 |
| 6 . | Sophonisba P. Breckinridge* | - | educator at the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy |

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| 7. Louise Bowen | - philanthropist, social worker, especially juvenile delinquency and child labor |
| 8. Dr. Alice Hamilton* | - medical reformer |
| 9. Lucy Flower* | - social reformer |
| 10. Minnie Low | - settlement worker |
| 11. Graham Taylor | - settlement worker, Head of Chicago Commons Settlement House |
| 12. Charles R. Henderson | - sociology professor at the University of Chicago |
| 13. Charles Ball | - chief tenement house inspector for Chicago |
| 14. Charles E. Merriam | - political science professor at the University of Chicago, political reformer |
| 15. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Robbins* | - social reformers |

* Hull House resident at some time in life

Another characteristic of the top policy makers in this group was that they not only thought deeply about the social economic maladjustments of a mass industrial society, but published their views and their proposed solutions. As a group, these men and women were highly literate. Everyone was a regular contributor to magazines ranging from the popular to the scholarly. All of them had some college education and most had their bachelor's degree; some had advanced degrees. This is especially significant as women played a role in the

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social welfare movement disproportionate to their activity in other endeavors. These women were better educated than their peers in the general population.

The over-all career pattern for most of these women and men was birth to middle-class parents in a rural small town or suburb, a protestant religious upbringing, a university education, migration to the big city where they put their talents to work in the cause of social reform. By virtue of their education and values, they too might be described as part of Chicago's new upper class.⁴⁸

Typical in these respects was Sophonisba Preston Breckinridge.⁴⁹ She came from a very distinguished Kentucky family. Her father, seeing that she enjoyed and did well at school, sent her to Wellesley College where she found mathematics so interesting that she majored in it. After graduating she taught high school but, tiring of it, she elected to study law in Lexington, Kentucky. Although she was so competent that she became the first woman to be admitted to the Kentucky Bar Association, clients did not flock to her. In 1897 she entered the University of Chicago as a graduate student in political science and economics. After earning the doctorate, she added the degree of juris doctor in the law school in 1904. Along the way she was admitted to Coif, an

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honorary legal fraternity similar to the liberal arts Phi Beta Kappa, of which she was already a member.

While in graduate school, she had not been a library monk, for she had responded eagerly to the appeal for her to face the great social question of the day, the inequalities and injustices of the new mass urban industrial society. In this area, at least, a woman would be welcome to apply her talents.

On the basis of her experience with the poor at Hull House, where she lived while going to the University of Chicago, Miss Breckinridge decided to devote her life to social reform. She became a charter member of the Chicago Women's Trade Union League and joined the staff of the State Bureau of Labor in order to conduct a survey of conditions among Chicago unskilled working men. Her part of the report was published as a book on workmen's conditions in the Chicago Stockyards. She not only wrote reports, but was also an activist, participating in the garment workers' strikes in 1911 and 1915.

In 1907, urged by her friend Julia Lathrop, Sophonisba Breckinridge accepted an offer to join the staff of the newly created Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy. Here the faculty and students studied the social problems of the city and formulated programs to solve them. In addition, the students were trained to be professional social workers. Miss Breckinridge

became the Dean of the School and remained in this position when it became the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

In addition to her academic pursuits, she was a tireless crusader for the abolition of child labor, improvement of housing conditions, better working conditions, minimum wage, and shorter hours. She tried to achieve her goals through convincing enough people that action was needed. She did this through speeches and organizational work and, most importantly, through her writing and teaching.

Although these professional reformers were primarily motivated by a religious and compassionate concern for the plight of the poor, they were forced to operate within a framework defined and limited by their source of financial backing, the other half of the progressive social reform coalition: the enlightened upper class. In addition, they were limited by their own value system which in many ways was similar to the one ascribed by Robert H. Wiebe to the "New Middle Class." The reformers, for example, believed in the bureaucratic, administrative, manipulative, top-down approach to social problems.⁵⁰ The working class was to be guided to a better life, but was to have no part in the development of the programs designed to accomplish this task. The best example of this outlook is the development of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER II

¹Andrew A. Bruce, "Jane Addams," The Illinois Voter, XII (June, 1932), p. 4.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Graham Taylor to Albert J. Kennedy, September 20, 1912, Graham Taylor MSS. Newberry Library; Graham Taylor to Albert J. Kennedy, March 8, 1918, Graham Taylor MSS. Newberry Library.

⁴Speech by Julius Rosenwald, "In Sherwood Forest," Julius Rosenwald MSS. University of Chicago Library.

⁵Speech by Julius Rosenwald to the Advertising Association of Chicago, October 30, 1913, Julius Rosenwald MSS. University of Chicago Library.

⁶Charles E. Merriam, "A Member of the University Community," n.d., Edith and Grace Abbott MSS. University of Chicago Library.

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CHAPTER III

HOUSING REGULATION IS NOT ENOUGH

Until the 1890's few people in Chicago held that the city had a housing problem comparable to New York's where much of the working class lived in sub-standard apartments as typified by the "dumbbell tenements."¹ This type of building was essentially a front and rear apartment connected by a hall. It usually covered the entire space of a 25 x 100 foot lot and contained fourteen rooms to a floor, seven on either side running in a straight line. One family lived in the first four of the seven rooms, measuring about 15 x 10 feet, while the remaining three rooms to the rear were occupied by a second family. In this way four families were housed on each floor. Water closets were located opposite the stairs, one for each two families. Of the fourteen rooms on each floor only four had windows that opened on anything but an air shaft. This air shaft formed by the indentation of two building sides was usually not larger than twenty-eight inches wide. It was inadequate

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in terms of providing light and air. These were the very best in working-class accommodations.²

Unlike the dumbbell pattern in New York, Chicago's working-class districts were made up of small frame houses constructed after the 1871 Chicago Fire for one or two middle-class families. With the spread of the factory district near the center of Chicago, their middle-class occupants fled toward the boundaries of the city. As they did so, working-class families moved into the frame houses. An unskilled workman was severely limited in his choice of rental apartments as he had available a relatively small amount of money for his housing needs. He often was forced to crowd into these inadequate houses with other working families, sharing the total rent. By the 1890's these homes were very over-crowded with four families living in the space designed for one family. Adding to the discomfort was the general disrepair and weathering of the frame houses over the years. Because of the shortage of housing, the landlord found few profit incentives to clean and repair his holdings. Chicago's poor were no better housed than New York's poor; they were only less visible.³

Another factor which made it difficult to arouse public sentiment in favor of housing reform was that there was no rich absentee landlord on whom to focus a political attack. A typical rental house in the poorer

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districts was owned by an immigrant working-class family just a shade better off than its tenants, and occupying the worst part of the house.⁴ Because the landlord was permanent, a taxpayer, and able to influence a vote besides his own--the tenants--he enjoyed some influence in the local political machine, which in turn controlled the city government. It was highly unlikely that housing reform would be initiated by the local political structure.

A final factor limiting public concern over working-class housing was the general self-righteousness of the middle class, the belief that the working class got exactly what it deserved, and that bad housing was only a reflection of a defective character. Accordingly, there was little that could be done about the situation except to teach the working class how to achieve a moral life.

In response to a severe outbreak of cholera and smallpox in 1867, the state legislature authorized the creation of a Board of Health in Chicago. This board in turn set up an annual "Sanitary Survey" of the city. Although the first report and all the subsequent ones emphasized that one of the most important factors in the spread of disease was the lack of drainage facilities and of flush toilets, especially in poor districts, little was done to correct the situation.⁵ People in the middle class, once the immediate health crisis

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passed, quickly sank back into traditional thinking concerning poverty, bad housing, and moral character.

Enough citizens became interested, however, in building regulations after a fire that destroyed much of Chicago in 1871 to pressure the City Council to consider a tenement house ordinance which applied to dwelling places where more than one family lived. Although it was primarily aimed at the prevention of fire by setting certain standards for the construction of new homes, the ordinance was not passed.⁶ The old individualistic idea that man should be able to do what he wanted with his own land was still too strong to permit the passage of such legislation even in the face of the evidence that it was not viable in the crowded urban environment.

Such an individualist approach could not survive the interdependence engendered by urbanization. So many unskilled immigrant families crowded into Chicago looking for a better life that the population was enlarged by 120 per cent in the years 1880-1900, a growth rate larger than any in its history or its future.⁷ In order to meet this influx, landlords added rooms for another family or built a second house at the back of the lot, crowding land and houses alike. In many of those houses, families supplemented the father's low wage by taking in garments to be finished at a piece rate. The contract system in the garment trade provided the bridge by which diseases

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like smallpox, consumption, diphtheria, typhoid, scarlet fever, and scabaras could be transmitted from the slums to the best neighborhoods in the city.⁸

The social reformers played on the rising middle-class fear of contracting various diseases through the medium of the garments they wore in order to focus attention on the living conditions in the working-class districts of the city. In the face of public concern the City Council passed in 1879 an ordinance which in part was aimed at the regulation of families engaged in garment finishing in their tenements. The law required that clothing be made only in sanitary surroundings.⁹ One year later the Health Department authorized the Chicago Health Department to make inspections to be sure that the provisions of the earlier law were carried out.¹⁰ Although the law only affected those tenements which contained families engaged in the garment trade, it did set the principle that the Health Commissioner could be empowered by law to inspect slum housing and enforce a code of standards. Nevertheless, the middle class, when they thought of it at all, continued to see the housing question as a health matter particularly as it related to them.

Awakened by the squalid crowding in America's large cities and by books as shocking as Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives, Congress directed Labor Commissioner Carroll D. Wright to study the slum.¹¹ Mr. Wright invited

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Mrs. Florence Kelley, a resident at Hull House, to draw up the report on Chicago, chosen as a representative inland city. Her report, published in the 1893 labor report, described Chicago's slums not only as practically unlivable for their inhabitants, but also as a threat to the well-being of the city as a whole:

	Chicago As A Whole	Chicago Slum Districts Studied ¹²
1. Saloons	One for Every 212 persons	One for Every 127 persons
2. Arrests	One for Every 11 persons	One for Every 4 persons
3. Foreign born	51%	57%
4. Illiteracy	10%	25%

The investigation graphically demonstrated to Chicago's progressive upper-class elite of corporate executives and professionals, who either read it or had it interpreted to them by social reformers, that the city had a dangerous slum filled with foreigners prone to drink, violence, crime, and disease. Worse still it was becoming increasingly clear that this condition endangered the stability and health of the entire city. The effects of lower-class crime and disease, for example, were often felt in the best of neighborhoods.

Sensitive members of the upper class were also shocked by the wretched living conditions of Chicago's poor. The survey had rated slum houses as excellent, good, fair, or bad according to a criteria that included

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light, air, ventilation, cleanliness, and sanitary conditions. The greatest proportion of houses were only fair with 15 per cent judged to be bad. Only one-fourth of the slum district tenements had water closets, while the rest relied on privies. Only one person in twenty-five lived in a house with a full bathroom. To the upper class these figures represented more than a matter of aesthetics; privies were a means for the spread of diseases. The fly did not stay within the confines of the slum district.¹³

It was only natural that the upper class and many social reformers drew a causal connection between the two most prominent features of the slum, bad housing conditions and socially disruptive behavior. The only disagreement was over which factor caused the other. The more enlightened members of the upper class agreed with the social reformers that it was the environment that was the root cause.

Adding to the mounting evidence that Chicago like the older cities had a growing housing problem were the annual reports of the Illinois State Factory Inspection Bureau under Florence Kelley. Although these reports were concerned with working conditions, they frequently spotlighted the plight of the very poor when they focused on tenement house manufacture. Because the poor did most of their work in their living rooms, the living conditions

of these people were as bad as their working conditions. The 1896 report was especially descriptive of the inhuman surroundings of clothing manufacture in the living rooms of the tenement houses:

On the same street, a few doors away, reached by an outside wooden stairway, narrow, steep and shaky, is the home of another capmaker. There are three rooms and caps and cap material is strewn over them all. In one room the contractor, his wife, three small and very dirty children, and three workmen each at a machine, were found. The whirr of the heavy machines did not cease while the inspector's questions were answered. The lounge and unmade bed were piled with cap-boxes and caps, and a little investigation revealed vermin in and on both . . . (The caps are of fine corduroy, silk lined, handsome--not for workman's wear).

The theme that the clothes manufactured in the tenements and sweat shops were not only made for the poor, but also for the rich appears throughout the reports. This fact leads to the speculation that the reports were aimed at least in part at the upper-class' fear of transmission of disease from the slums to the better neighborhoods in the hope that they would be motivated to take action to ameliorate the foul conditions in the slums of the city.¹⁴

Florence Kelley related many other examples of the unsanitary conditions in tenement sweat shops. A rather typical one concerned a man and wife who made caps together under contract and who had been followed through the year from one bad location to another:

The visit found them . . . in a one-story wooden cottage in the rear of a tenement house of several stores. The cottage, containing four low, dark and damp rooms, stands below the street level, and the ground under it is water soaked. The man and woman eat, sleep and work in one room, surrendering the others to dirt and vermin: even in the one occupied the bed was standing with posts in saucers containing a mixture for destroying vermin. The man complained of rheumatism and the woman's face was swollen with neuralgia. Just outside the windows of this living and work room were three vaults, used by tenants of three houses.

In addition to these studies, the residents of Hull House, because of their location in the slums, had first-hand experience with the miseries of slum conditions that were in part obscured by the statistical approach of the federal study. They published their thoughts on the problem in 1895 in a book entitled Hull-House Maps and Papers.¹⁵

The study was modeled on Charles Booth's Maps of London. In essence it was an investigation of the social and cultural conditions of the working-class district whose boundaries were from Halsted to State Streets and from Polk to 12th Streets. Nationality composition, wages, the sweating system, child labor, poverty, and recreation were all objects of study.¹⁶

Half of the district, according to the report, was made up of rear tenements facing dirty alleys. In these dwellings, the most wretched and destitute congregated in great numbers. Most of them were frame houses in very bad repair because they brought in such high rents

that there was no business profit in destroying them to build new ones. Living conditions were dreadful, as many of the houses were allowed to "literally rot away and fall apart while occupied." When this happened, brick tenements were often built, but these were usually more crowded and had a "more stifling atmosphere . . . [and a] denser darkness. . . ." ¹⁷

It was also discovered that families moved around constantly going from tenement to tenement in line with their economic condition. If the immigrant worker was upward economically mobile, he usually moved into better accommodations. If on the other hand he was downward mobile through illness, enforced idleness, or "bad luck," he would be forced to seek quarters that were worse, but more in line with his income. Thus, the lower-class experience in the slums was a mixture of discouragement at the foul conditions presently suffered, as well as a hope in the future for better and fear of worse, depending upon economic circumstances. ¹⁸

In studying the wages of the unskilled worker, the authors described an Italian employed on the railroads as a fairly typical example of the plight of the unskilled workman. With no other source of income his yearly average wage was \$225. In effect this meant that he had available \$2 or less a week for rent even if he spent half his income on this item. Clearly his \$2 would buy him, if

he had a family, only a very inadequate apartment in the worst part of the slum. The earlier federal study of Chicago found that one-third of the people in the slums paid less than \$2 a week for rent while two-thirds paid less than \$4, a sum that would purchase only slightly better housing.¹⁹

In addition to these studies there were exposes on the slums in the city's newspapers. These articles performed the function of stirring up middle- and upper middle-class fear and humanitarian concern over the slum. The stories played up the violence and crime centered in the working-class districts, as well as the problem of disease and inadequate housing conditions. As the Sunday Times-Herald put it on April 12, 1896, in a full-page article: "The condition of the slums is a public concern, a menace by pestilence and fire, and a breeder of crime and pauperism." The story went on to describe the threat to the rest of the city from the slums.²⁰

Enlightened members of the upper class were firmly convinced that inadequate housing conditions were one of the major causes of the seeming propensity of the lower class for crime, violence, and disease. Social reformers like Jane Addams also persuaded them that it was possible to modify this behavior pattern by providing the lower class with a more adequate physical environment. To accomplish this task the social welfare groups at Hull

House united with progressive elements of the upper class such as Mrs. Charles Henrotin, wife of a wealthy Chicago banker and broker, and Mrs. Emmons Blaine, a daughter of the first Cyrus McCormick. They were firmly convinced that inadequate housing conditions were one of the major causes of the seeming propensity of the lower class toward crime, violence, and disease. To modify this behavior pattern, a better physical environment would have to be provided.²¹

The first step in the campaign for better housing conditions was taken in 1900 when the Improved Housing Association, which had been formed after the World's Columbian Association by prominent businessmen concerned with the slums, called for a housing conference. In response to this call Mrs. Charles Henrotin urged the Executive Committee of the Chicago Bureau of Charities on April 6, 1900, to consider this idea. Most of Chicago's social welfare organizations agreed to cooperate in the conference. The Chicago Bureau of Charities, The Consumers' League, The Chicago Department of Health, as well as most of the settlement houses decided to work together.²²

In order to draw public attention to the conference, the social welfare groups agreed that an exhibition graphically illustrating the unsatisfactory housing conditions for the poor should be brought from New York City to Chicago. Although the affair was to be open to the public,

special invitations were sent to influential citizens who might be helpful to the cause of reform.

Most of the cost involved in the project was underwritten by the McCormick family.²³ They were interested in the project for a variety of reasons conditioned by historical circumstances. Their fear of workers, especially if they organized, had been kindled in their own 1886 strike and reinforced by the Pullman Strike and Boycott of 1894. In order to undercut organizing attempts by employees at their plants, they initiated beginning in the middle 1890's a series of social amelioration programs. At the same time the family, especially Stanley McCormick and Anita McCormick Blaine, became interested in improving the environment from which the workers came.²⁴

While the exhibition was in progress, a conference of businessmen and social workers interested in housing reform was held. They decided, as a result of the meeting, to organize the City Home's Association in late April, 1900. The Association's self-appointed task was to study the physical conditions of life in Chicago, especially in the "more thickly settled districts of the city," and to make recommendations on how they could be improved.²⁵

The membership of the first Executive Committee, which was elected by the general membership of the City Home's Association, included such prominent people as Mrs. Emmons Blaine; Mrs. Cyrus McCormick; Mrs. Joseph T.

Bowen, a wealthy widow; Miss Jane Addams; Edward B. Butler, a trustee of Hull House and a prosperous merchant-executive of Butler Brothers, a wholesale dry goods house; Cyrus Bentley, a successful lawyer in the firm of Bentley, Burling and Swan, one of the most prominent law offices in the city; Chester M. Dawes, a corporation lawyer who became general counsel in 1910 for the Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad; and, finally, George Vincent, an educator with a Ph.D. in Sociology, Dean of Faculties, Arts, Literature, and Science of the University of Chicago. He later became President of the University of Minnesota and of the Rockefeller Foundation.²⁶

Once the Executive Committee was organized, it immediately appointed a committee on tenements on December 7, 1900. This committee was composed of Jane Addams, Mrs. Cyrus McCormick, Mrs. Harold McCormick, and Mr. Charles Hutchinson, a wealthy banker and grain merchant, among his many offices the Presidency of the Corn Exchange National Bank, Director of Northern Trust Company, and President of the Chicago Board of Trade. The membership of both these committees are good examples of the progressive upper-class executive and professional elite which were concerned with Chicago's social problems.²⁷

One of the first acts of the Committee on Tenements was to form a sub-committee to investigate the extent of the housing problem in Chicago by conducting a survey.

The Sub-Committee on Investigation had as members Jane Addams; Miss Julia Lathrop; Mrs. Cyrus McCormick; and Mr. Robert Hunter, a resident at Hull House as well as the person in charge of the actual investigation. It was this committee which produced in 1901 a comprehensive and authoritative study of housing conditions in Chicago.

The social reformers involved in the study were firmly convinced that the social problems of the United States would be solved through the administration by experts of a prescribed cure formulated on the basis of a scientific investigation of the problem. This investigation was to be the first step in improving the living conditions of the poor.²⁸

The investigation centered on workers' housing in three West Side districts, selected because the social reformers thought them fairly typical of slum conditions in the city. They included a Jewish and Italian quarter in the ninth and nineteenth wards, a Polish area in the seventeenth ward, and a Bohemian ghetto in the tenth ward with a total population of 45,000.²⁹ Blacks were not included because in 1900 they made up such a small percentage of the population.

The final report concluded after interviews and statistical analysis of the resulting data that housing conditions were "growing steadily worse, and that the slum now building is likely to repeat the history of

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those in other cities." The growth of slums, it explained, was the result of the natural desire on the part of landlords to cover every inch of their ground space with large tenements without sufficient provision for light and ventilation. Unless checked by city regulation the profit incentive would lead to "the kind of slums that New York already endured." The day of the double-decker or dumb-bell tenement was beginning to arrive in Chicago as old frame houses collapsed and were replaced with these new dwellings. Most of the lots still contained, nevertheless, frame houses, usually a two-story house with a basement. On the rear part of the lot was usually another tenement fronting on an alley with its windows directly over manure boxes and garbage containers. The privies were normally nearby with the filth of rear yards and alleys strewn around. It was in these foul rear tenements that the poorest people lived.³⁰

Although the Hunter Report found the rear tenement to be the worst kind of housing, the entire area surveyed was thought to be "oppressively dense." The typical house was divided into three apartments with three or four rooms. Of all the apartments investigated 40 per cent had under 300 square feet of floor area which was considered to be the bare minimum of healthful living for a family of four. Considering the fact that the average number of people per apartment was about five,

there was very little "breathing space." The statistics gave some idea of the misery of overcrowding which faced the unskilled immigrant worker, but they did not convey the horror of these families that fell below the average. A fairly typical example of such a family was portrayed by the chief investigator, Robert Hunter:

One day the writer visited the family of a man who had been prostrated by heat while at work with the street-paving gang. They were a family of seven, living in a two-room apartment of a rear tenement. The day was in August, and the sun beat down upon one unintermittently and without mercy. The husband had been brought home a few hours before, and the wife, in a distracted but skillful way, found pathways among the clamoring children. The air was steamy with a half-finished washing, and remnants of the last meal were still upon the table. A crying baby and a sick husband occupied the only bed. The writer had known before of five people sleeping in one bed, so he supposed the father and the oldest child usually slept on the floor. As he watched the woman on that day he understood a little of what it meant to live in such contracted quarters. To cook and wash for seven, to nurse a crying baby broken out with heat, and to care for a delirious husband. To arrange a possible sleeping-place for seven, to do all these things in two rooms which open upon an alley, tremulous with heated odors and swarming with flies from the garbage and manure boxes, was something to tax the patience of a Job and the strength of a Titan.³¹

In addition to over-crowding the study found conditions in the houses to be unsanitary because of darkness, lack of air, uncleanness, and poisonous gases. For example, poorly ventilated rooms with walls overshadowing the windows made the rooms musty, which inevitably led to accumulations in the dark corners of dirt, mold, and vermin. The situation was made worse by over-crowding,

miserable constructions, ill-repair, defective plumbing, privy vaults, and the lack of baths.³²

Outside sanitary conditions were also sub-standard. The sidewalks were often broken, with the streets unpaved and lined "with rows of foul garbage boxes standing before the doors." The alleys were found to be littered with rubbish as were many of the vacant lots.³³

Perhaps, according to authors, "the most serious of the evils which result from the tenement house system are various forms of individual and social degeneration." These "evils" included poverty, pauperism, intemperance, crime, sickness, high death rates. The survey tied most of these problems to the horrible environment in which the residents of the slums found themselves.³⁴

The chief investigator, Robert Hunter, concluded that the City Council must enact a new housing code aimed at wiping out the worst aspect of working-class housing. Such action was necessary because "Chicago has no intelligible, well-planned building and sanitary code." In its absence there was no way, as the ground became more valuable and the old frame dwellings became uninhabitable, to prevent landlords from building more and more dark, overcrowded, unsanitary double-deckers or dumbbell tenements in order to maximize their profits. In addition, there was the question of overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in the decaying frame houses.³⁵

The new building and sanitary code should set minimum standards of light, air, and cleanliness with which landlords conform. The problem of overcrowding could be eliminated by defining the number of cubic feet of air space per person necessary in each apartment. A landlord would not be allowed to rent to more people than for which there was adequate air space. The problem of the spreading double-decker tenement house was to be met in a very simple way; it would be outlawed. As for the decaying frame houses, they would be torn down. In order to enforce these laws the Hunter Report recommended that the city set up a vigorous inspection system under a centralized board of control.³⁶

Although most of these recommendations were prohibitions against actions that were thought to cause slums, the Report did have some positive ideas to improve life in working-class districts. The city should, according to Hunter, set up public baths, small parks, and gardens that would serve both the recreational and educational needs of the poor. The report also counseled that businessmen should build low-cost tenements on a large scale for the unskilled workers who could not afford adequate housing in the regular market. Such efforts could provide low-cost housing by applying large amounts of capital to massive projects, thereby taking advantage of the economies of scale. (The first of these model tenements was

built almost twenty-eight years later.) The investigation ended with a warning to the people of Chicago that "the city's location alone will not save it but that public opinion and legal enactments are essential if Chicago is to escape the housing evils of New York and London."³⁷

Armed with their comprehensive survey of housing conditions in three working-class districts, the City Home's Association, made up of social reformer experts on housing and concerned members of the upper class, turned its attention to the framing of a proper tenement ordinance. The model ordinance drafted by the Association was widely publicized and gained citizen support as an important antidote to the disease and fire hazard posed by the poorer districts to the rest of the city. The City Council was pressured to take action by public opinion whipped up by the various welfare organizations. The City Home's Association also supplied witnesses to the City Council to testify to the need for action. In December, 1902, by a vote of 47-7 the legislative body of Chicago passed a housing ordinance which embodied to a large extent the City Home's Association recommendation.³⁸

The ordinance regulated fire security, light, air, and sanitary conditions in Chicago's tenements. Most of the provisions were vague and, thus, left much of the enforcement to the health inspectors. The tenement house, however, was carefully defined as "any house or

building or portion thereof which is intended or designed to be occupied or leased for occupation as a home or residence of two or more families, living in separate apartments, and including all apartment houses, flat buildings, and residential hotels.³⁹

The weakest part of the law was its enforcement provisions for there was no central tenement law authority. Instead, the City Building Department was to issue the permits necessary to construct a tenement house. The Health Department on the other hand was to issue a certificate after an inspection of homes already built to see if they conformed to the requirements of the ordinance. This split in authority, as well as the lack of adequate funds to staff both departments, led to a lack of enforcement in the law. In addition, the wide discretionary power given to the inspectors left the way open to corruption.⁴⁰

In 1903 this lax enforcement became public knowledge when Chicago experienced a typhoid epidemic. The most crowded neighborhoods were heavily affected, the nineteenth ward (Hull House's ward) being the worst hit. With a serious epidemic on their doorsteps, Hull House residents decided to investigate. The main conclusion of their investigation was that the privy outlawed since 1897 was the chief source of the outbreak of disease and the common housefly the carrier. The fact that the privy vault still flourished was charged to the Chicago Health

Department which, according to the reformers at Hull House, was either criminally inefficient or actually corrupt in that the departmental inspections had produced no remedial action.⁴¹

The middle class and upper class, fearing the spread of the epidemic to their neighborhoods by way of the fly, panicked and took the Hull House Report to heart demanding action against the Health Department. As a result the Department was reorganized, the chief sanitary inspector was fired, and criminal charges were brought against some of the inspectors.⁴²

In order to take advantage of the public pressure demanding protection against the outbreak of future epidemics, the executive committee of the City Home's Association quickly moved to put forward a candidate for the vacant chief sanitary inspectorship. The major requirement for such a candidate in the eyes of the City Home's Association was that he possess technical competency and share their ideals concerning housing reform. Mrs. Emmons Blaine and Jane Addams, acting for the executive committee, first asked Robert de Forest, a New York City housing reformer, to become a candidate for the position of chief sanitary inspector. Although he declined to come to Chicago, he recommended Charles A. Ball, an engineer from New York with experience in tenement regulations.

Although Charles Ball tried to enforce the law by having his inspectors rigidly apply its provisions, he could not stem the tide of slum-making. His staff was too small to make adequate inspection visits, and the corruption too great above him to get convictions on violations. In a way this corruption may have made the life of the working class more livable because, if Ball had succeeded in eliminating all sub-standard housing, the poor may not have had the funds to live anywhere.⁴³

The documentation of his lack of progress came from a series of periodic studies of housing conditions. The first of these was a 1905 re-survey of housing conditions in the same districts covered in the Hunter Report. Like the earlier report this new investigation was conducted with the cooperation of the City Home's Association. Miss Sadie T. Wald, a social reformer in Chicago who was interested in slum conditions and their effect on juvenile crime, gathered the material. The major improvement, according to Wald, in the three districts was that the yard privy vaults had largely disappeared, and the garbage was more frequently collected. Charles Ball could take some of the credit for this advance for he had skillfully used the public fear of a typhoid outbreak and his employer's fear of another scandal to force convictions of those landlords who refused to install water closets in their tenements.

Thus, he was able to make spectacular progress in this area because the rest of the city felt directly threatened by the continued existence of the slum privy.⁴⁴

In other areas where such a direct connection between middle-class well-being and slum condition was not so apparent, the alliance of social reformers and enlightened members of the upper class had a more difficult time forcing change. The Wald Report, for example, discovered that when tenement conditions were compared to those found in 1900, the same density of population was squeezed into unfit and foul habitations. The only improvement in the situation, Miss Wald reported, came when a tenement was torn down to make room for a school house or factory.⁴⁵

Sadie Wald's classification of this as an improvement is very revealing of the general attitudes of the housing reformers. There was no mention of the cost of this so-called improvement; that is, the dispossession of the poor who had lived in the condemned tenement. Everytime a school or factory replaced a tenement, the housing available to the very poor was thereby proportionately reduced. The reformers never seemed to recognize this fact. They were forced to look for new housing that they could barely afford in an already over-crowded market.

Despite the fact that the condemnation of sub-standard tenements would have the same effect, this latest report ended with a plea for the stricter enforcement of the existing sanitary ordinances and the enactment of new ones, as well as the creation of an independent tenement house department. In order to rouse public opinion in support of such action and to "grapple intelligently with the situation," the report went on to demand the creation of a new expert committee to investigate the housing problem faced by the poor working class. The results of this study could then be distributed to the people through the press and pamphlets. Once these reforms were put into practice by the city, Miss Wald was convinced that "we will have a forward movement that must make a radical improvement in our local housing conditions."⁴⁶

By 1907 the City Home's Association had made only a small beginning in the area of housing reform. It had carried out two studies that clearly demonstrated the need for improvements of living conditions in the working-class districts. The City Council had responded with tenement regulation ordinances that were not completely enforced at first due to lack of funds as well as lack of will. When Charles Ball began enforcing the laws, the conditions of living inside these tenements did not seem to improve, although outside conditions did become somewhat better.

Thus, the upper-class housing reform organization, the City Home's Association, made little progress in arresting the spread of slum housing as thousands of immigrants poured into the city looking for jobs, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter. The major reason for this failure in the early housing reform movement was that, as there was little profit in providing decent housing for the poor, little was supplied. Given the free-enterprise ideology of many of the supporters of the housing reform movement, nothing could be done except to make studies and regulate the resident landlords who turned a profit by providing sub-standard housing to their own class.

This approach could not really help the poor obtain better living conditions because, if the law was too stringently enforced, it would cut the profit margin of the immigrant, working-class landlord by forcing him to make improvements. His response most likely would be to raise the rent. If on the other hand he refused compliance or if the house had too many violations, the only alternative was condemnation proceedings. Both alternatives resulted in a shrinking number of houses that poverty-stricken people could afford. Luckily for the poor this did not happen because the city machines which ruled Chicago were corrupt enough to make sure that the law was not completely enforced in return for bribes from

the landlords. As the bribes cost less than the fines for the violations or for making the repairs, the rent was not hiked by the resident tenement landlord as much as it would have been if the law had been enforced.

As for large-scale private capital investment in the construction of model tenements, the other half of the reformers' program, no such ventures were undertaken until the late 1920's. Although social reformers and businessmen argued that such investment could bring profitable returns, it is apparent that no businessmen decided to take the risks involved in pioneering low-cost decent working-class housing. Neither did employers raise wages enough for the unskilled workers to compete on better terms in the housing market.

It is fair to conclude that the social reform engineers could not provide better living conditions for the poor, given the conservative framework within which they were forced to operate by their dependence upon a progressive upper-class elite as well as their own middle-class mind set. Regulation of tenement houses was not enough.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER III

¹Edith Abbott and Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, The Tenements of Chicago: 1908-1935 (Chicago, 1936), pp. 7-30.

²Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York (New York, 1890).

³Abbott, pp. 7-30.

⁴Jane Addams, "Housing Conditions," Charity Review, X (September, 1900), 292-97.

⁵City of Chicago, Report and Handbook of the Department of Health of the City of Chicago, 1911-1918 (Chicago, 1919), p. 601.

⁶City Council Proceedings 1880-1881, p. 157.

⁷Homer Hoyt, One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago: The Relationship of the Growth of Chicago to the Rise in Its Land Values, 1830-1933 (Chicago, 1933), p. 284.

⁸Joseph Kirkland, "Among the Poor of Chicago," The Poor in Great Cities, Robert A. Woods, et al. (New York, 1895), pp. 196-200.

⁹City Council Proceedings 1880-1881, p. 157.

¹⁰City of Chicago, Report and Handbook of the Department of Health of the City of Chicago, 1911-1918 (Chicago, 1919), p. 601.

¹¹Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives (New York, 1890).

¹²U.S., Commissioner of Labor, Seventh Special Report . . . The Slums of Baltimore, Chicago, New York and Philadelphia (Washington, 1894), pp. 14-102.

¹³Ibid., pp. 13-14.

¹⁴Illinois, The Third Annual Report of the Factory Inspectors (1896), pp. 48-49.

¹⁵Hull-House Maps and Papers--A Presentation of Nationalities and Wages in a Congested District of Chicago Together With Comments and Essays on Problems Growing Out of the Social Conditions (New York, 1895), pp. 6-13.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 3, 10-11.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 10-13.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 20-23.

²⁰Sunday Times Herald, April 12, 1896, p. 15.

²¹Abbott and Breckinridge, pp. 45-59.

²²Executive Committee, Chicago Bureau of Charities MSS. April 6, 1900, Chicago Historical Society Library.

²³Robert Hunter, "Housing Reform in Chicago," Conference of Charities and Correction 1902, p. 343.

²⁴Robert Ozanne, A Century of Labor, Management Relations at McCormick and International Harvester (Madison, 1967), pp. 1-51.

²⁵Executive Meeting Minutes of the City Home's Association, [no date], Emmons Blaine MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

²⁶Executive Meeting Minutes of the City Home's Association, December 7, 1900, Emmons Blaine MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

²⁷Minutes of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Investigation of the Tenement House Committee of the City Home's Association, November 18, 1900, Emmons Blaine MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹W. R. Patterson, "Tenement Conditions in Chicago," Municipal Affairs, VI (June, 1902), pp. 285-87.

³⁰Robert Hunter, Tenement Conditions in Chicago (Chicago, 1901), pp. 11, 21-43.

³¹Ibid., pp. 51-67.

³²Ibid., pp. 100-10.

³³Ibid., pp. 111-43.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 144-60.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 160-79.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Abbott and Breckinridge, pp. 59-61.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House (New York, 1960), p. 210.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 210-12.

⁴³Robert de Forest to Emmons Blaine, November 3, 1903, Emmons Blaine MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library; Robert de Forest to Emmons Blaine, December 10, 1903, Emmons Blaine MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library; Robert de Forest to Emmons

Blaine, November 25, 1903, Emmons Blaine MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

⁴⁴Sadie T. Wald, "Chicago Housing Conditions 1900-1905," Charities, XV (January 6, 1906), 455-61.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFESSION
OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING

During the discussion after a paper on class conflict in America given by Professor John R. Commons at the 1908 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Jane Addams put forward the idea that academics and working men were uniting in a demand for social legislation.¹ There was, she thought, great hope in this development for it might lessen class conflict through the amelioration of the sorry condition of the laboring class.²

The nature of this cooperation between academics interested in social reform and the workers was not seen as one of equality. Scholars would not act as advisors to organizations of working men giving them the necessary data and theory on which to build programs that would meet their needs as they themselves defined them. Rather, the academics had in mind a relationship in which professionals would collect the data, formulate the programs to aid the working class, and create the necessary

bureaucracies to carry them out. To these reform scholars the laborer became objects of study, the content of a problem, and subjects to be manipulated through administered programs.³ The objective of all this was the betterment of the working class, but the direction was to be controlled by the appropriate middle class, native, professionally trained expert who worked for organizations funded by a business and upper-middle class.⁴ The model of such a union of scholars and working men was the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy.

The School had grown out of Graham Taylor's desire to communicate his experience and ideas to others. In April, 1895, he had organized the Chicago Commons School of Social Economics at the Chicago Commons Settlement House where he was the head resident. At first it was little more than a series of informal seminars for those interested in the social and economic problems of the day. In the seminars, Graham Taylor was joined by such prominent social reformers as anti-monopolist, Henry Demarest Lloyd; social gospel minister, Washington Gladden; and Professors Charles Henderson and John Dewey.⁵

Under the pressure of current needs in the field of social welfare, the school quickly took on new tasks. By the turn of the century the principles of scientific philanthropy and the rigorous application of systematic

postulates to charitable work began to be widely accepted among social reformers as the best means to combat mounting expenditures for public and private charity.⁶ Although the charitable impulse is as old as recorded history, the organization of efficient charity through business-like administration was a product largely of the industrial revolution of the late nineteenth century with its rising relief role during depression periods.

The Chicago Bureau of Charities organized in the middle 1890's by the Chicago Civic Federation was an excellent illustration of the principles of scientific charity with its mean tests, reports, files, and case workers. In the 1890's there was some antagonism between the settlement houses and the charity movement, but in Chicago at least Graham Taylor recognized the need to train social workers for their calling no matter who employed them.⁷ The apprenticeship system was no longer sufficient educational experience.⁸ Graham Taylor's realization came no doubt from personal experience as well as his reading of the contemporary literature on the subject.⁹

What was needed became clear to Taylor at the Provincial Settlement's Conference held at the Women's Settlement in Birmingham, England in 1903. At one of the sessions he heard the suggestion that the proper training of social workers required the help of educational

institutions in such specialties as economics, sociology, law, and political science. Only the college and the university could equip social workers with the necessary academic tools to perform their duties most adequately.¹⁰

On his return to the United States, Graham Taylor convinced William R. Harper, President of the University of Chicago, to provide limited support to him so that he might realize his desire to give social workers a more satisfactory training. In addition to Mr. Harper's small cash grant, the University of Chicago provided a classroom in its downtown extension division and space for announcements of classes in its catalogue. In this way Graham Taylor's Social Science Center for Practical Training in Philanthropic and Social Work came into existence in 1903.¹¹ The school was to replace the hit-or-miss training methods of individual social welfare organizations then in practice.

The first course offered by the Center was entitled "Dependency and Preventive Agencies." It ran one evening a week for twelve weeks with a staff of two volunteer instructors: Graham Taylor and Professor Charles R. Henderson. It attracted twelve students, all of whom were social workers.¹² In its second year the school expanded to four instructors, including among them Miss Julia C. Lathrop and Robert Hunter. It now had an enrollment of forty students taking seven courses.

Emphasizing vocational needs of the profession, the courses included "Public Charities," "Industrial Relationships," "Dependency and Charity," "Care of Dependent, Delinquent, and Defective Children," and "Correctional and Reformatory Measures." In summary, the courses were designed to train people in the techniques of administering both public and private welfare programs.¹³

The titles of these courses as well as those offered later in the life of the school seem to indicate an emphasis on manipulation of the individual to fit the prevailing social-economic environment rather than the other way around. Few were aimed at helping the working class fight for a decent share of the wealth, goods, and services of the American society. This may well have been a result of a natural concurrence of views between the middle-class teachers of the school and its wealthy business and professional financial backers. One course, for example, entitled "Industrial Social Work" trained persons in techniques that made the workers more satisfied on the job and, thus, more efficient.

The four original volunteers are typical of the background of the later expanded staff of the school. Graham Taylor was born to a middle-class family in Schenectady, New York in 1851 that contained four generations of Dutch Reformed Church ministers. After his ordination in 1873, he served as pastor of a small

church in Hopewell, New York. Even at this early date he emphasized the Christian duty to serve those less fortunate. The twelve years spent in Hartford, Connecticut as a professor at Hartford Theological School and minister of a Congregational Church mark Graham Taylor's full conversion to the social gospel. He became very interested in the settlement house movement as a way to put his ideas concerning Christian responsibility for the poor into practice. In 1892 he accepted a position at the Chicago Theological Seminary on the condition that he would be permitted to found a social settlement. Two years later Graham Taylor announced the opening of Chicago Commons.¹⁴

Robert Hunter was born in Terre Haute, Indiana to middle-class parents. After graduating from Indiana University he served as organizing secretary of the Chicago Bureau of Charities. In the 1890's he was a resident of Hull House and later of Northwestern University Settlement. In 1900 he wrote the study of Chicago's housing situation which was discussed in the previous chapter.¹⁵

Charles R. Henderson also had a middle-class religious small-town background. He was born in Covington, near Terre Haute, Indiana in 1848; his father was a lawyer. After attending the old University of Chicago and the Baptist Union Theological Seminary, he was ordained a Baptist minister. While serving as a pastor

in Detroit from 1882 to 1892, Henderson became interested in the social gospel and enrolled in the University of Leipzig to study sociology. After receiving the Ph.D. in 1901 he returned to the United States to accept a sociology professorship at the University of Chicago. Besides writing a score of books and articles on social problems, he was an associate editor of the American Journal of Theology and of the American Journal of Sociology. At one time or another during his life he was President of the National Conference of Charities, Chairman of the executive committee of the United Charities of Chicago, President of the Chicago Society of Social Hygiene, as well as an associate member of the American Medical Association.¹⁶

All these teachers, including Julia Lathrop, born in Rockford, Illinois, had a middle-class rural background with a strong religious impulse that must have made it difficult to relate to the immigrant experience despite their desire to do so.

As the years went on the school continued to grow by adding courses and lecturers. Much of this early growth was financially underwritten by William Harper from private sources. After he died in 1906 the trustees, mostly businessmen and upper middle-class professional men of the Chicago Commons Association, took over the financial responsibility for the school. They in turn

appointed Edward L. Ryerson, a high-level executive of the Ryerson Steel Company, to be its Treasurer. His main job was to solicit contributions. The extent of contributions is indicated by the fact that his great solicitation achievement of 1906 lay in persuading Victor Lawson, the wealthy progressive publisher of the Chicago Daily News, to contribute \$1,500 for administrative expenses in 1906 and to give an additional \$2,000 a year for two years.¹⁷

The future of the school seemed assured when the Russell Sage Foundation of New York with a board of directors dominated by businessmen agreed to contribute \$10,000 a year to Graham Taylor's school on the condition that the grant be used to establish a department of investigation and research.¹⁸ This requirement was met when Taylor hired Miss Julia Lathrop of Hull House to supervise a newly created research department. At the same time Miss Lathrop became the co-director of an expanded school of social work.¹⁹ She in turn recruited Sophonisba Breckinridge, a friend of Jane Addams, born in a small city, and a holder of a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Chicago.²⁰ Considering the prejudice against women at the time in the academic profession, it was only natural that Sophonisba Breckinridge would accept a position at the school. Her alternatives were extremely limited if she did not wish to teach at a small women's college.

The next step in the growth of the school was taken on May 10, 1908, when Graham Taylor incorporated it under the name "The Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy" to reflect its wider goals. According to the articles of incorporation its purpose was to "promote through instruction, training, investigation, and publication the efficiencies of civic, philanthropic and social work, and the improvement of living and working conditions."²¹ It thus had two main objectives, to conduct research on social problems with the view of formulating social reform programs, and to train social workers in the techniques necessary for them to maintain the emerging welfare apparatus.

Serving on its board of trustees and responsible for its direction were wealthy executives and professionals Julius Rosenwald of Sears, Edward L. Ryerson of Ryerson Steel, and Charles Crane of Crane Company, along with architect Allen Pound, the Daily News editor Victor Elting, and jurist Julius Mack.²² Each was eminently successful in his chosen career. Joining the men on the board were wealthy and socially prominent women: Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, Mrs. Emmons Blaine, and Mrs. William F. Dummer, whose husbands commanded fortunes in banking, manufacturing, and law. Other trustees included Jane Addams, Julia Lathrop, Graham Taylor, and representatives of some of the mid-western state schools, such as the

University of Wisconsin. The professors on the board gave the school academic respectability, but they were outnumbered and too distant to be as effective as the men and women of wealth and social influence.²³

Not only were executives, professionals, and wealthy women heavily represented on the board of trustees, but they were also the chief financial backers of the school. Apart from the Russell Sage Foundation, the chief contributors were Lawson, Crane, Rosenwald, Ryerson, banker Alfred L. Baker, and Mrs. Dummer.²⁴ In addition, the school was housed from 1915 to 1920 in the South Michigan Avenue residence of Charles Crane, one of the city's leading manufacturers of plumbing fixtures.²⁵ Given these facts one can assume that no instructional or research programs were instigated that would be considered by these businessmen to be hostile to their long-term interests. In fact, most of the school's work revolved around training students to gain the knowledge necessary to administer existing social welfare programs, rather than to reform society. In 1910, for example, among the eighty-five part-time students of the school twenty-six were probation officers of the Juvenile Court, and eight were probation officers from the Juvenile Protective Association. Those students who completed the one-year courses found positions with municipal, county, and state welfare agencies as well as private agencies.²⁶

All of these organizations were conservative in that they devoted most of their efforts to amelioration and social control of the working class. Thus, their efforts had a stabilizing effect on the working class.

Avoidance of class conflict with a minimum of shifts in the power and wealth distribution was certainly in the interest of the businessmen and their wives on the board. Such social amelioration made it possible for them to discharge humanitarian impulses without endangering their long-range economic interests.

Working within a framework acceptable to the board were the instructors who taught the courses. They added an additional dimension onto the orientation of the school because they were primarily middle class, Protestant, native, social workers who viewed the working class through the lens of social scientific theory and middle-class bias. There was no greater defender of the use of social scientific theory than Sophonisba Breckinridge who became director of the Research Department when Julia Lathrop resigned in 1909 to assume other duties.²⁷ In the same year Edith Abbott, who had joined the staff earlier as a social statistician, became Miss Breckinridge's assistant. These two women became very close in their professional relationship, collaborating not only on the administration of the school and on various research projects, but also on the philosophical direction

of the school. In fact, their relationship was so close that their students often referred to them as "A&B."²⁸

Both Miss Breckinridge and Miss Abbott agreed that the training of social workers should lead to the kind of professionalization promoted by the American Economic Association and the American Economic Statistical Association of which they were members.²⁹ The advantage lay in the ideology of times, because professionals were thought to have a body of knowledge which made them experts in a certain area of endeavor. Edith Abbott expressed her mature thoughts on the subject in an address delivered at the National Conference of Social Work in 1928 when she stated, "The real issue is that there is a science and art of social welfare administration worthy of the best teaching, worthy of the best students."³⁰

In order to establish social work as a profession certain steps were taken by Abbott and Breckinridge at the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy. First of all, a body of knowledge had to be gathered that would form the basis of their expertise. This was accomplished primarily by borrowing freely from other academic disciplines whatever was thought to be relevant to the needs of social workers. Courses at the school were developed around sociology, economics, history, political science, law, and administrative techniques.³¹ These courses were designed to provide social workers with the tools to

investigate and solve social maladjustments of society by working through public and private welfare agencies as well as reform groups. This was to be done through aiding the casualties of the economic system and through modifying the environment to lessen the number of casualties.

Once a social worker mastered this body of knowledge, she became a professional expert who knew what was best for her clients who were to be considered not as whole human beings but as maladjusted victims that were being held back from rising on the social mobility ladder by artificial restraints imposed by an unfavorable environment. This was especially true of those members of the working class who appeared to the social workers to be capable of rising into the middle class if some aid was given. To accomplish such social-economic mobility the worker would have had to adapt and accept the fundamental social and economic system that prevailed in the society. The client, not being an expert, had no voice in his adjustment program.³²

The model for most social workers was the doctor-patient relationship. The doctor was to consider only the illness of his client; his only professional duty was to cure the patient's illness and, thus, restore him to health. Being an expert on illness, he consulted his patient only as to his symptoms so as to make a diagnosis

and prescribe a cure. Unlike the public health officer, he did not seek to arrest the spread of disease.

So it was to be with the social worker: consult his clients, the working class, as to his symptoms, make a diagnosis, and prescribe a cure. The working class in this model was turned into an impersonal object that was to be guided for his own good. On the other hand, if his problem was common to a wide group, the decision might be to manipulate the environment in such a way as to adjust this wider group to society or to adjust the society.³³ The method of changing the environment was more popular in the era 1900-1915 than in the later 1920's when the emphasis was on the individual.

The next step in turning social work into a profession of social engineers was undertaken by Breckinridge and Abbott when they set up a certification process. It was imperative that the general public be able to distinguish between the professional social worker and imitation, between the doctor and the quack. The School of Civics and Philanthropy accomplished this task by instituting a prescribed curriculum and issuing a certificate to graduates upon its completion. This certificate was the ticket to expertise and professionalism. In addition, Breckinridge and Abbott attempted to make the certificate the entrance requirement for positions in the city's various welfare agencies.³⁴ This was done directly in

the case of private welfare agencies and indirectly in the case of public ones.

A good example of how social workers proceeded indirectly in regard to public welfare agencies appeared in the juvenile court. The judges of that court set up a panel of professionally trained social workers to make recommendations to them concerning the hiring of probation officers. This panel, convinced as it was of the need for professional probation officers, looked to the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy's certificate of accomplishment as an extremely important piece of evidence of professional competence in theoretical social science knowledge and the practical work of administrative techniques and casework.³⁵

The ultimate goal of the leaders of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy was to put as many public social welfare positions as possible under civil service. As the required civil service examinations were either prepared by the staff of the School of Civics and Philanthropy or by others with similar ideals, the profession of social work was able to control access to these positions and eliminate "political considerations."

In order to endow the certificate of expertise with more prestige both Miss Breckinridge and Miss Abbott desired to affiliate with one of the universities as an autonomous professional school. "Only in a university,

and only in a great university," Edith Abbott wrote, "could a school of social work get the educational facilities that advanced professional students must have if they were to become the efficient public servants of democracy."³⁶ Their opportunity for such affiliation came in 1920 through a set of favorable circumstances.

From the day of its founding the major threat to the school was its lack of adequate financial support.³⁷ As it had expanded, the cost of instruction, administration, and maintenance rose faster than income from tuition and contributions. Although Graham Taylor was constantly looking for additional contributions, he never seemed to be able to keep up with the annual deficit.³⁸

Sophonisba Breckinridge, taking advantage of the annual budgetary problem, continually suggested from 1905 to 1920 that the Board of Trustees open negotiations with either Northwestern University or the University of Chicago. Apart from the appointment of a committee in 1905 to study the question, no action was taken until 1920. The major reason for this lack of action was the determination of Graham Taylor to keep the school independent. He believed that university affiliation would mean the end of any religious or moralistic approach to social problems.³⁹ As founder and president of the school, he also realized that this union would mean a lessening of his authority over it.

By 1920 the financial condition of the school became impossible with the contraction of contributions during the war and post-war era of anti-foreign and anti-reform sentiment. Faced with the insufficient funds to keep the institution going, the majority of the trustees now welcomed Sophonisba Breckinridge's report in the Spring of 1920 that the University of Chicago would accept the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy into its academic community as an independent professional school. The only major stipulation was that it had to bring with it a dowry of \$25,000 a year for the first five years. The Board of Trustees agreed when Rosenwald, a trustee also of the University of Chicago, Crane, Ryerson, and Blaine, as well as the Red Cross, the Jewish Charities, and the United Charities pledged the requisite amount. The latter groups, employing many of the school's graduates, had a vested interest in its continuation.⁴⁰

On August 10, 1920, the University of Chicago took over the responsibility for its operation and finance, renaming it the Graduate School of Social Service Administration. It was now primarily a graduate school leaving the general undergraduate education of future social workers to other departments of the University.⁴¹ Abbott and Breckinridge now had their coveted certificates of expertise enhanced by the

prestige of a graduate degree from the University of Chicago. There the trends in social work described above intensified in the 1920's. With the introduction of psychiatry to social work, there was an even greater emphasis on the understanding and control of behavior. Both psychiatry and social work began to account for behavior in functional historical terms. Considering the environment as a constant, the new psychiatric social worker explained deviant behavior by studying the individual's personality. Why, she asked, could one individual achieve in an unfavorable social-economic environment while another individual could not. She found the answer in personality defects.

If poverty caused deviant behavior only in those who were in some way defective, then the remedy lay not in economic reform, but in psychological rehabilitation. The use of psychiatry could correct this behavior. Deviance, of course, was defined as disruptive behavior either actively as juvenile delinquency or passively as a refusal to work. This type of social reform was designed to achieve stability through social control. Such social reform was somewhat analagous to the doctor who during a typhoid epidemic tries to decide why some people who drink contaminated water die while others merely get sick, instead of attempting to clean up the water supply. Roy Lubove and Clark Chambers, scholars

on the history of social work, have shown that the professional schools of the 1920's, including the one at the University of Chicago, were primarily concerned with the deviant individual and his rehabilitation.⁴²

The importance of such attitudes within the context of schools of social work took on considerable significance as the Graduate School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago and similar institutions which had been developed by other Illinois universities became the chief suppliers and controllers of the developing social welfare bureaucracy. The positions for which they trained personnel were increasingly located in the public sector of the welfare system, finding careers as directors, supervisors, and inspectors for the state welfare department, probation officers, parole officers, attendance officers on the municipal level as well as directors and social workers of Chicago's and Cook County's welfare boards.⁴³ During the New Deal these schools of social work enlarged their range of activities when they were called upon to provide professional personnel for federal agencies.⁴⁴ Thus, the early attitudes shaped by the pioneer School of Civics and Philanthropy were transferred in modified forms to the modern welfare bureaucracy.

On another level the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy was important because of its research function. Many social reformers believed that the

gathering of data on social problems was a necessary prelude to the solution of them. It provided not only the means to conduct the vital research, but also the opportunity to train students in the methods of gathering and classifying scientific facts.

After Julia Lathrop's resignation in 1908 in order to devote more time to her other reform projects, Miss Sophonisba Breckinridge directed the research department with Miss Edith Abbott assisting her. Their investigations, which largely concerned housing problems and juvenile delinquency, were financed by Russell Sage grants.⁴⁵ The studies of housing conditions serve as an excellent example of the basic philosophy underlining such inquiries, as well as the operating procedures for them.

In 1908 Chicago's Chief Sanitary Inspector, Charles Ball, asked the Department of Social Investigation to study a series of inquiries concerning housing conditions in the city as part of his program to better the living conditions of the working class. Abbott and Breckinridge agreed to conduct the investigations not only to advance knowledge in the area and to improve housing conditions, but to train their students in the techniques of conducting such surveys. The results of these studies were published between the years 1910 and 1915.⁴⁶

The usual method for conducting these investigations was for a student, as part of his educational requirements for graduation, to be assigned a research project under the guidance of one of the staff. He then selected a particular geographical district, usually with a homogenous gathering of ethnic groups or distinctive housing type. The next step involved the formulation of a set of questions aimed at gathering a certain kind of data. The student would soon send out a group of observers armed with these pre-printed questions. Some of the questions were answered by the visitor on the basis of observation ("Does the house contain a flush toilet?"), while others were answered by the residents ("How often is the garbage picked up?").⁴⁷

On the basis of such data properly categorized, quantified, and analyzed, plans to improve slum housing were formulated. At no point were the objects of the study asked their opinion on what should be done about housing conditions. Because they were not professionals, their opinions were considered to be those of an uninformed layman. Like the patients of a doctor, the poor were to be examined and then told what was best for them by the respective professional middle-class reformer.

These studies were published as journal articles under such titles as "Housing of Non-Family Groups in Chicago," "Chicago Housing Conditions: South Chicago at

the Gates of the Steel Mills," "Chicago Housing Conditions, the Problem of the Negro," "The Color Line in the Housing Problem," "Chicago Housing Conditions: Two Italian Districts," "Chicago Housing Conditions: The Lithuanians in the Fourth Ward," "Chicago Housing Conditions Among the Slovaks," "Chicago Housing Conditions: Greeks and Italians in the Neighborhood of Hull House," and finally "Chicago Housing Among the Hungarians."⁴⁸

The authors of each of these housing studies, made between 1910 and 1915, all agreed that no phase of community life was more closely connected with its welfare than was housing. The student who conducted the investigation in the Hull House neighborhood wrote that "the root cause of low educational standards, high mortality and morbidity, crime and industrial inefficiency are all rooted in poor living conditions."⁴⁹ All the studies agreed that the only direct way to improve physical housing conditions was "for the Chicago City Council to enact a stricter housing code and set up a better enforcement mechanism."⁵⁰

Miss Breckinridge and Miss Abbott also proposed an indirect procedure to deal with the housing problem: employers should pay a higher wage so that the workers could buy or rent more adequate housing. As they explained in a 1911 report:

We have called attention in other articles to the fact that the community is not doing its part: first because the housing code is inadequate; second, because of the failure to provide the Department of Health with a staff of inspectors sufficient for the enforcement of such as has been enacted. . . . But it must be acknowledged that no building law, however comprehensive and well enforced, can meet the needs of this neighborhood . . . [There is a] necessity of so altering industrial conditions that decent standards of family life may be maintained.⁵¹

The raising of wages represented the ultimate goal to Breckinridge and Abbott if the problems of the working class were to be solved. It was an ideal, given the framework within which the social welfare system operated, that was extremely difficult to achieve. Thus, the social reformers would have to be content to work for more immediate ameliorative reforms. Until the late 1920's, when the concept of privately financed housing projects and later federally financed ones became popular among Chicago social reform leaders, the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy seemed limited to conducting innumerable studies of the housing question and to the turning out of students by using the surveys to reach them the scientific techniques of fact gathering.

Perhaps part of Breckinridge's and Abbott's pessimism can be traced to the efforts of Charles Ball to use his position as Chief Sanitary Inspector to better the living conditions of the working class by strictly enforcing the tenement house laws. In September 1908 he authorized the creation of a Board of Survey composed of

a medical inspector, a sanitary inspector, and a building inspector, whose task included the examination of any building alleged to be a public nuisance.⁵²

By 1911, 125 buildings had been investigated by the Board, of which 62 had been demolished and 36 had been repaired by order of the Health Department.⁵³ The owners were assessed the cost of demolition or of repair. As no record was kept concerning the question of alternative housing for the tenants of the demolished homes, it may be assumed that they found equally wretched housing for it was the only available accommodations for their income level.

As part of his clean-up campaign, Charles Ball added twenty inspectors to his staff between 1907-1908. Although there was only moderate improvement in the housing stock for the unskilled working class, there were dramatic increases in the appropriations for the inspection work. For example, the Chicago City Council's annual appropriations grew from \$71,000 to \$112,000 in 1908 and to \$772,000 by 1916. Most of the increase in funds was used to increase the number of inspectors. The fact that Charles Ball was extremely receptive to the ideal of a "professional staff and civil service" makes it exceedingly likely that the jobs under him were filled by middle-class "professionals." The chief outcome of his better housing campaign was to decrease the housing stock (landlords either refused to make improvements and

had their property condemned or raised rents to cover the cost of improvements) and to provide some jobs for the middle-class civil servant. It did, on the other hand, accomplish some improvements in exterior conditions in the working-class neighborhoods. There was less garbage in the alleys for example.⁵⁴

To provide proper housing, in quantity, some leaders proposed large-scale financing to replace the two- or three-family enterprises that were commonly owned by resident landlords. Although never taken seriously by the social reformers at the Chicago School as the definitive answer to the housing problem, the idea of attracting bulk private capital into the low income housing market proved alluring to many progressive businessmen and to some social reformers despite its earlier failure in many Eastern cities, most notably in New York City.⁵⁵ To the businessmen it offered an opportunity to take action against a widely acknowledged problem within their free enterprise ideology. They knew that poor housing existed in Chicago and that it interfered with the industrial efficiency of their workers. In 1909 the Commercial Club, composed of some of the most respectable and prominent businessmen in the city, issued a report that concluded:

. . . good workmanship require a large degree of support on the part of the workers in their homes and their surroundings and ample opportunity for that rest and recreation without which all work becomes drudgery. . . . Noises, ugly sights, ill smells, as well as dirty streets and workshops or offices, tend to lower average efficiency.⁵⁶

In 1912 Mary McDowell, head resident of the University of Chicago Settlement, became interested in such a project.⁵⁷ Her first step was to send out a series of exploratory letters to sympathetic men such as Allen B. Pound, W. F. Dummer, Clarence Buckingham, H. B. Highie, Julius Rosenwald, Edward Swift, all prominent and wealthy professionals or executives of large corporations.⁵⁸ In the letters she asked "On what basis were rents to be figured, philanthropy or business?" A typical response was Buckingham's reply of June 24, 1912:

It strikes me that the rents should be based a good deal on what apartments will fairly be worth, taking into consideration location and other apartments in the same district. I do not think the surplus, if any, should be used for lectures and other things or to run moving picture shows. It strikes me that any surplus left over should be put in a sinking fund for some unusual expenses and repairs, which are bound to occur in every building.⁵⁹

William F. Dummer summed up the consensus of the businessmen when he said, "Don't mix business and philanthropy."⁶⁰

Mary McDowell accepted the advice of the businessmen who responded to her letter when she decided to build a model tenement house on strictly business principles for low-income families in the neighborhood back of the stockyards. She expected a return of 4 or 4 1/2 per cent on the investment capital.⁶¹

The first hurdle was overcome when she received \$35,000 in pledges from E. A. Butler, Buckingham, Rosenwald, Swift, Dummer, Mrs. Samuel Dauchy, and Mrs.

William T. Johnson. With these promises in her pocket, Mrs. McDowell sent out a form letter to area businessmen asking them to invest in the project, informing them of those fellow businessmen who had already invested. Projecting the total outlay at \$85,000, the model tenement was to be three stories high with forty flats of two, three, four, and five rooms. There would be a common laundry as well as bathing facilities. In addition, the building would contain a lodging dormitory for young unmarried foreign working men.⁶² The project was to be a demonstration of the idea that through the use of large-scale financing and mass production techniques, working-class housing could be built cheaply and efficiently. Their hoped-for result would be low rents, but decent housing.

Although the model tenement never got beyond the planning stage, the project set a precedent for cooperation between social workers and businessmen concerned with the question of increasing the housing supply for the low income family. Julius Rosenwald became interested in such an enterprise in 1919. He and some fellow businessmen underwrote a fund of \$800,000 which Benjamin J. Rosenthal, a wealthy investment broker, was raising for a low income housing project to stretch from 87th to 89th streets between State Street and Indiana Avenue on Chicago's South Side, a working-class district.⁶³ By using the economies of large-scale construction and by selling them

as close as possible to cost while still making an adequate return on capital investment, it was hoped to sell the homes on time to thrifty working-class people at considerable savings over the cost in the open market. The builders would also offer the individual buyer low cost life, health, and fire insurance.⁶⁴

To carry out this proposal a group of Chicago businessmen and professionals set up The Chicago Housing Association with a total raised fund of \$600,000. Among the original subscribers to the stock of The Chicago Housing Association were J. Odgen Armour (\$100,000), Julius Rosenwald (\$100,000), Swift and Company (\$100,000), Benjamin J. Rosenthal (\$100,000), Thomas E. Wilson (\$50,000), Morris and Company (\$50,000), William P. Wrigley, Jr., a gum manufacturer (\$50,000), The Consumer Company (\$25,000). These eight men and companies represented \$575,000 of the total capitalization. The contributors set up a Board of Trustees to direct the day-by-day affairs of the Association.⁶⁵

In turn, the Board of Trustees appointed a social service committee to investigate each application to insure that potential buyers had the proper characteristics to be trusted with the responsibilities of owning his home.⁶⁶ The social service committee was composed of such prominent social workers as Graham Taylor, Sophonisba Breckinridge, Mary E. McDowell, and Harriet Vittum, a settlement

worker.⁶⁷ Each was dedicated to the administrative philosophy of social work as taught at the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy and its successor, the School of Social Administration at the University of Chicago. The general rule was that the potential home owner was to be "thrifty"; that is, a good credit risk.⁶⁸ One can well imagine that then, as now, one characteristic of being a good credit risk was long service to a single company. Although not necessarily intended to do so, such a requirement provided an effective mechanism of social control, for the employer was the normal source of a character reference.

Another requirement for the right to become a buyer was the necessity to fit into an ethnic quota system. The planners of the project saw the quota as a way to Americanize the immigrant workers by having a proper mix of different groups. This mixing would disrupt clanishness, the desire to seek the company of their own nationality.⁶⁹ Once again men and women were being manipulated as objects without their active consent for some greater good of society as determined by the social workers and their backers, the businessmen.

In this year of the Red Scare and the most massive strikes in the nation's history, some businessmen were also interested in the project's potential for social control. In a clearly articulated letter soliciting support for the project, Benjamin Rosenthal wrote that "the more we work

on the problem, the more convinced we are that the solution for unrest lies in the building of homes along the line we are working and sale of them at cost to worthy [as defined by upper-middle class businessmen and middle-class social reformers] working people who cannot afford to buy homes in the usual way that they are sold. . . ."70

This low-cost housing project, like the others attempted during this period, was not successful after the initial investment was depleted. By 1925 Harold Swift was already discouraged, reporting that the Association had not been able to re-finance itself through retained earnings. As a consequence it could not continue new home construction without the issuance of new bonds which would be an admission that the plan had not worked out well.⁷¹ Even earlier disenchantment was expressed by E. J. Buffington of the Illinois Steel Company who complained that "so much of the material was purchased at special prices, based on the philanthropic appeal, and the business lots which were sold were largely disposed of on the same basis, so that if this attempt should work out well, it would not necessarily indicate that the next one would also."⁷² This problem never had to be faced because the project was not successful enough to sustain interest. After the original lot of fifty homes was built and sold, the project for all practical purposes came to an end.⁷³

Julius Rosenwald was also interested in better housing for Blacks in Chicago. In general Rosenwald was very sympathetic to the welfare of the Blacks not only in the city but also in the nation as a whole.⁷⁴ In this he may have been stimulated to action by Sophonisba P. Breckinridge who in a 1913 article had demonstrated that Blacks usually paid more for identical accommodations than whites.⁷⁵ He may not have read the article, but he surely saw her often enough for her to tell him about it. In pursuit of his ideal, Rosenwald purchased land in 1914 but, before any further progress could be realized, the country was involved first in a depression, and then in a world war.⁷⁶ His attention was directed elsewhere until the Chicago race riots of 1919. A Commission of which he was a member reported that the tumult was greatly intensified by the crowded and disreputable housing facilities among the working class. His interest in better housing for Blacks was rekindled, but not to the point of action.⁷⁷

Rosenwald was finally prodded into action by the election of the reform Mayor Dever in 1924 who won with the support of the social workers of the city. In return for this the Mayor appointed Mary E. McDowell director of the city's Department of Public Welfare. She in turn commissioned a series of housing studies which when completed in 1925 pointed to the need for more adequate low-income housing.⁷⁸ In response to the surveys the Mayor called, in April 1926, a City Housing Commission made up

of prominent citizens to discuss the situation. Out of this Commission came two concrete plans for limited dividend housing; Julius Rosenwald's plan for Negroes and Marshall Field Estate's plan for low-income whites.⁷⁹

In 1928 Rosenwald's son-in-law, Alfred K. Stern, induced him to begin the project. As the price for his involvement, Rosenwald demanded that the enterprise be built as a practical business venture, so that it could be used as a yardstick to determine the possibilities of the use of large-scale private financing for satisfactory low-cost housing.⁸⁰ As the first step, Mr. Rosenwald invited a group of business associates to invest in what would become the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments. They invested approximately \$270,000, purchasing a six-acre city block between 46th and 47th streets, between Michigan and Wabash avenues. It was determined that about 60 per cent of the land was to be devoted to gardens, courts, and playgrounds with the remaining 40 per cent given over to the construction of a five-story walk-up apartment house with 421 apartments of three, four, and five rooms.⁸¹

Finally opening in late 1929, the net profit for the year amounted to approximately 5 per cent on the common stock outstanding after full allowance had been made for operating expenses, interest, taxes, insurance, and depreciation. The average occupancy for the year was

97.5 per cent while the loss arising from default of rent due amounted to only 1.2 per cent of the total.⁸² As the depression worsened, disaster struck in the form of a declining rate of occupancy and rents combined with a relatively stable overhead. The 5 per cent net profit earned the first year could not be maintained, so the trustees in 1936 sold the property to avoid losses. Under its new owners, it became just another slum tenement as they tried to squeeze a profit from it.

Even in its first good year, in order to achieve 5 per cent on invested capital, the project charged rents too high a price for low-wage semi-skilled workers to afford. A three-room apartment, for example, was renting at the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments for \$42.13 a month at a time when the vast majority of the unskilled and semi-skilled workers were paying only \$5 to \$20.⁸³ Considering their income, this figure was near the maximum that they could afford. The project attracted a white collar clientele. It was apparent that superior privately financed housing must carry rents too high for the workers or offer a return too low to attract investors. By 1930 in the onset of depression, many social reformers, as well as progressive businessmen and professionals, believed that public aid was essential, particularly in a depression. It seemed that altruism and profit did not mix,⁸⁴ as Dummer had warned.

Julius Rosenwald summed up the lesson learned from the failure of the project in the 1930's:

Although the Michigan-Boulevard Garden Apartments were self-supporting, the project demonstrated clearly that low cost housing for low income groups was absolutely impossible. . . . The return on investment was not great enough to attract private capital . . .⁸⁵

The Marshall Field Garden Apartment Homes were built under the same principles and with similar results. When the 2,908 apartments were finished in April 1929, they filled two city blocks on the north side in a working-class district. In order to make way for the project, the homes in the area were torn down. No effort was made to find new residences for these displaced persons. If they could not afford to move into the new housing, the project had worsened rather than bettered their conditions.⁸⁶

Ranging in size from three and one-half to six rooms, they rented for \$12 to \$15 per room per month with an average of \$13.55. Based on an investment of \$5,679,000 the gross returns were projected at 8 1/2 per cent. Such returns were never realized because of the high rate of vacancies, which were caused in part by depression conditions. The project was located in a neighborhood where only the poorest of the poor lived, the unskilled worker, and they could not afford the rents. If they became more affluent, they moved to a better neighborhood, not into the new housing. Thus, the plan never met the needs of the lowest income groups for which it was designed. In

fact, it narrowed slightly the housing supply available to them by tearing down the sub-standard, but cheap, housing previously located on the land. Even with the economies of a massive housing project, private capital simply could not realize enough profit to attract additional capital, at least during the depression era. They did serve to provide two functions: they were a model for the erection in the cheapest manner possible of housing for low income families in huge impersonal projects, and they demonstrated the essential role of government-financed housing projects.⁸⁷

Based on the experience of the social workers and progressive businessmen to attract capital toward this low-cost housing project, it is not hard to understand why Edith Abbott in the economic paralysis of 1935 concluded that the private sector of the economy could not meet the needs of such a market.⁸⁸ The answer, according to Edith Abbott, was for the federal government to build low-cost housing with the social workers administering the program.⁸⁹ The source of capital changed during the New Deal Era and after, but the concept of huge housing projects containing hundreds of apartments presided over by social worker-administrators did not, as the housing reformers assumed key positions in the Federal Housing Administration.

From the housing experience, a clear picture emerges of the framework within which progressive social reforms operated. On the one hand there was the manipulative

scientific social engineering philosophy of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, and on the other the philosophy and interests of the progressive business community. Perhaps the most important positive result of working within such a framework was the accumulation of a great amount of accurate quantitative data on housing conditions among the working class. The failure of privately financed low-cost model tenements and low-cost home building projects opened the way for the acceptance of public housing projects among many progressive businessmen including Julius Rosenwald, as well as most social reformers. On the other hand, by treating the working class as clients who needed help in one area or another so that they could lift themselves up into the middle class, many social workers never understood the immigrant experience. For this reason, the progressives were not able to develop a program that not only met the immigrant's housing needs, but also fitted his total life style. To make matters worse, the reformers produced programs that, because they were administrative and bureaucratic, dehumanized the immigrant by attempting to place him in huge impersonal housing projects that broke his web of community relationships.

Many immigrant working families looked upon sub-standard tenement housing as the first step up the social and economic ladder. Usually a newly arrived unskilled immigrant found housing in such a dwelling. As soon as he

saved up enough money, he would move into a relatively better neighborhood. Sometimes this step was only achieved by the second generation. This view was confirmed by sociologist Paul Frederick Cressey who, in a study of Chicago immigrant housing patterns, found that between 1898 and 1930 newcomers in each foreign influx shifted from central-city areas toward peripheral residential communities at the same time that they moved upward economically and socially.⁹⁰ In another study conducted by the Chicago Department of Public Welfare in the Italian district of the 17th ward, it was found that by 1915 there was a large-scale movement from the areas around Chicago Commons as the residents became more prosperous.⁹¹ These studies confirmed earlier impressionistic observations by Sophonisba Breckinridge.

In a more recent work focused on the Italians, Humbert S. Nelli discovered that the "movement of both the colony and the individual generally proceeded outward from Chicago's core area toward the periphery . . . but there were outer areas of settlements." That movement was usually accompanied by economic mobility within the working class, from unskilled to semi-skilled and skilled jobs, as well as increases in land and home ownership.⁹² In the eyes of the immigrant, ownership of one's own home was an essential part of upward social mobility.⁹³

This part of the mobility process was often achieved by buying a two- or three-family tenement on credit through a local Savings and Loan Association or through a real estate contract. As a rule the ethnic owner would live in one of his building's apartments and rent the rest of them. The tenement house was one of the few outlets for accumulated savings that were within the immigrant's range of understanding.⁹⁴ The struggle to make the monthly payments was a real battle. In order to keep his investment viable the immigrant father often had to ask his wife and children to work in order to bring in additional income.⁹⁵

A 1894 United States Bureau of Labor investigation of the working-class district in the area east of Hull House found that 10 per cent of the residents owned their own homes. Significantly, of this 10 per cent, 80 per cent were living in multi-family houses. By 1930 twice as many immigrants were home owners with the percentages running even higher in better neighborhoods. The normal pattern of ownership, nevertheless, remained a three flat, two to rent and one for the landlord in which to live.⁹⁶ Thus, the vast majority of ethnic workers rented from resident landlords, and aspired to the eventual ownership of their own tenement. Until they could afford to buy, many tenants lived in buildings owned by relatives or friends, creating a close bond between tenant and landlord.⁹⁷

Thus, while middle-class social reformers looked on the housing conditions in working-class districts in terms of sanitation, congestion, and low-quality physical environment, many ethnic workingmen viewed the tenement as one of the few available investments for his hard-earned savings, accumulated at great sacrifice. It was a disagreeable but temporary way of life necessary to accumulate the investment capital to begin his upward social and economic mobility. Such a movement appeared highly desirable to the workingman for psychological as well as economic reasons. Owning property was one of the few ways an immigrant could gain self-respect not only in the eyes of his countrymen, but also in the eyes of the property-conscious native middle class. More importantly, economic mobility meant a possible escape from the economic insecurity that threatened him on all sides. Finally, a man who owned his own home, even if mortgaged, was more secure than an apartment dweller in hard times simply because foreclosure was a long drawn out affair while eviction was a relatively swift operation.

Even Jane Addams, perhaps the most compassionate of the social workers, misunderstood the housing situation. In her book, Twenty Years at Hull-House, she recognized the existence of the widespread phenomenon of immigrant workingmen buying real estate. However, she attributed it to their "Slavic land hunger" acquired in the "old

country." She went on to condemn mildly this land hunger because those afflicted "had become so absorbed in money making that all other interests had apparently dropped away."⁹⁸ She was able to make such a statement because she did not understand the necessary drive of the immigrant for security in a threatening economic environment. Never having personally faced economic insecurity or even living in an apartment house, she overlooked it as an important motive to own income property. Like the man being strangled to death who struggles for air and realizes its importance for the first time, the immigrant struggled to be free from the grinding fear of absolute destitution. He understood, as Jane Addams did not, the primary value of economic security, the lack of which could be physically as well as psychologically painful. To the immigrant clean alleys, flush toilets, and uncrowded living conditions were worthy goals for reform, but not as important as protection against the very possibility of absolute destruction which would spell the end of his dreams of achieving the good life. If he could achieve economic mobility, clean alleys, flush toilets, and uncrowded living conditions, it would come as part of his higher standard of living in a better neighborhood. The fact was, however, that such ameliorative reforms such as housing codes, as well as model tenements, meant higher rents. More expensive payments would most likely have slowed the economic and social mobility

of the immigrants if the other factors in the situation such as wage levels remained constant.

It is only fair to point out that this aspect of the housing situation was understood by some of the leaders of social reform such as Edith Abbott. It is interesting to note that even with this knowledge no programs were proposed to operate within the framework of the immigrant workman's needs. One such program might have been some form of subsidy to tenement landlords making it profitable for them to provide better conditions for their tenants. Instead, much of the pattern of thought concerning the housing of the poor developed during the Progressive Era was carried over into New Deal liberalism. One of the few changes was the publically financed massive housing projects. Although the source of the funds changed, the administrators of the projects and their ideas did not. The University of Chicago continued to turn out professionally trained manipulative bureaucrats who had the tenants of the projects at their mercy. There was still little communication except through the poll and survey between the social workers and the low-income wage earner. In addition, slum clearance projects consisting simply of tearing down sub-standard housing with little regard for the future of the tenants living in the condemned apartments still continued to be a popular reform measure. Perhaps the outcome might have been different if the New

Deal's Federal Housing Administration had insured loans to small landlords as it did to single family owners. Even this small step in the direction of working within the immigrant experience was never tried, so pervasive was the reliance on mass public financing of huge impersonal housing projects presided over by a small army of bureaucratic administrators.

Housing reform has not been too successful economically or socially, not even in the eyes of social reformers themselves. In analyzing the reasons for this failure during the Progressive Era, a good insight into the weaknesses and dangers of the philosophy which motivated the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, and through it much of the reform movement in Chicago, can be gained.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER IV

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¹⁵Peter d'A Jones introduction to Harper Torchbook edition (New York, 1965) to Robert Hunter, Poverty (New York, 1904).

¹⁶Albert N. Marquis, The Book of Chicagoans (Chicago, 1911), p. 318.

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CHAPTER V

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: A MIDDLE- CLASS INVENTION?

One of the central concerns of the social reformers at the turn of the century was the child. They were anxious to make sure that childhood would be a time when a potential adult learned to be well-adjusted, productive, civic-minded, and happy. Although middle-class families could be trusted to strive to meet these ideals, working-class families, because of harsh environmental conditions and ignorance, could not be counted upon to conform to such expectations.¹ These youths were, in many cases, not prepared by their parents to function in a bourgeois, industrial, urban society. As one social reformer put it:

We are all the product of our environment and live the life that is shaped and moulded for us in our early years. The boys and girls of our wealthy and prominent citizens, as well as the children of the poor, are made out of the same material, and it depends on the moulding they receive in youth what they will become later on. The children of the rich make mistakes and often transgress the law, but there is always sufficient influence at hand to save them from the error of their way, while the children of the poor have but few friends to take their part, otherwise they, like the others, might live down their wrong-doing and names untarnished attain positions of usefulness and honor.²

Social workers viewed it as their task to help the working-class child overcome his environmental handicaps as well as protect society from his "errors."³

To meet this need a series of programs was formulated by the social engineering experts with the backing of progressive elements of the upper-middle class. Such programs included child labor laws, women's labor laws, compulsory education laws, mothers' pensions, organized recreation, and control of deviant behavior. These programs were designed as a way of giving social workers a legal wedge by which they could intervene in the affairs of lower-class families so as to give them the requisite life style that would fit them for the industrial system.

The most obvious need for such intervention occurred in the area of the anti-social behavior manifested by so many children of the poor. Armed with scientific studies of pauperism and crime, as well as their own practical experience, social welfare reformers, many of them working out of the settlements, came to realize that much of what they termed juvenile delinquency could be traced to the effects of an unsatisfactory environment. Clark Kelsey expressed this concept skillfully in the Annals of the American Academy. He wrote, "In dealing with children whose spirit of mischief or lack of appreciation of the law has led them to commit some offense, there is a tendency to recognize other causes than natural

depravity." It was ridiculous, according to Kelsey, to allow a child to grow up in ignorance of the reasons behind social customs and then, when the child went wrong, to attempt to remedy matters by repressive and punitive measures. Instead, the aim should be to prevent the crime by catching the child in the early stages of delinquency.⁴ Many social reformers such as Jane Addams also believed that they were shielding children who had gone wrong from a cold-blooded legal system.

Before 1899 in Illinois there was no mechanism for solving this problem. A boy who was between the ages of ten and sixteen was dealt with in the same court as an adult offender. In such cases the judge had only two options, to sentence him to a period of confinement and punishment or to acquit the boy of all charges. If the offense was major, the boy would be sent to a reform school operated by sectarian groups but financed by the state, or as a felon he would be dispatched directly to prison. If, on the other hand, the offense was small, the judge usually dismissed the case with a warning,⁵ although on occasion the judge sent the boy to the county jail.

Social workers charged that such procedures encouraged anti-social behavior in youth. By punishing children with reform school, or worse with jail, the goal of rehabilitation was not likely to be reached. As

one social reformer pointed out, "We make criminals out of children who are not criminals by treating them as if they were criminals."⁶ In those cases where the child was let off with a warning his respect for the law was lowered because he thought he was getting away with something. A series of such experiences could condition him to a life of crime. To the social reformers in Chicago, there was a clear need to prevent juvenile crime rather than to punish it; to form rather than to reform the child.⁷

Although private reform schools in Illinois had been subsidized by the state since the 1870's, most of these were rather harsh institutions founded on the idea that the way to correct the wayward child who committed minor crimes was corporal punishment. Perhaps the first concrete step toward a more humane way of treating young offenders came in 1893 when the jail school committee of the Chicago Women's Club, headed by Miss Florence Hawthorne, began to conduct classes for juveniles in the county jail. Members hoped that the idle time of these youths could be turned to useful educational effort. In that same year the legislature set up an Illinois Home for Juvenile Offenders under pressure from Chicago reformers. Instead of sending a youth to prison or to a private reform school, the court could send a boy or girl to this Home unless convicted of a felony. In 1895 the law was changed so that all juveniles could be sent to

the Home, where the emphasis was on positive reform rather than punishment.⁸ Although this institution was an improvement, the number of children it could accept was extremely limited by the minimal size of legislative appropriations.

In addition, despite these improvements law breakers between the ages of ten and sixteen were still subject to all the criminal processes applicable to adults so far as arrest, detention, and trial were concerned. If convicted of a particular crime, they could still be committed to a house of correction or to a county jail at the discretion of the court. If the goal of rehabilitation was to be reached, this entire procedure would have to be changed.

The impetus for Juvenile Courts came in February 1896 when the various child welfare agencies held a convention in Chicago. A joint committee made up of the original jail school committee along with the reform and philanthropy committees of the Chicago Women's Club was the spearhead of the campaign.⁹ They agreed on the need for a special local court that could deal with youthful offenders on a basis other than strict adversary proceedings. They were also in accord that an educational campaign, aimed at the general public as well as the state legislature, to convince them both of the necessity for a juvenile court, should be undertaken. The reformers

justified their project on humanitarian, as well as better and more scientific crime control, grounds.

The chairman was Julia Lathrop, who was an active member of the Chicago Women's Club and a social reformer from the upper-middle class.¹⁰ Her father was a prominent lawyer and public official in Rockford, Illinois. After Julia Lathrop took an A.B. degree from Vassar in 1880, she joined her father's law office as a secretary. Apparently she was not completely satisfied with her career, for when Hull House was opened by Jane Addams she went to live and work there. In 1893 the reform-minded Governor Altgeld appointed Miss Lathrop to the Illinois State Board of Charity where she remained with brief breaks in tenure for thirteen years. While on the board she became very concerned over the demoralizing effects of prison on children who, because of minor crimes, were caught in the legal system with its emphasis on retributive justice.¹¹

The committee's first step was to persuade the State's Attorney in Chicago to allow one judge of the municipal court to hear all the cases concerning youths under eighteen. Judge Tuthill agreed to hold a morning session once a week every Friday morning, for boys only.¹² This court operated on the assumption, as did the later juvenile court, that a child who committed a crime did so because of an unfavorable social environment, and thus he was in need of education and care, not punishment. In

order to prescribe the necessary medicine that would restore the erring youth to moral vigor, a good deal of knowledge concerning his background was needed.¹³

The task of collecting environmental data was undertaken by Miss Hawthorne, a member of the joint committee for court reform. She spent each week collecting the facts concerning the backgrounds of the deviants who were to be arraigned at the end of the week. At the trial on Friday morning she would present the results of her investigation to Judge Tuthill. He, in turn, would use these studies as one basis for his decision in each case.¹⁴

In the eyes of the social reformers, the major drawback of this system was the fact that as in an earlier children's court in New York a child was forced to endure a criminal trial. He was formally accused of a crime in open court and after adversary proceeding declared innocent or guilty. This system of justice was unfair to youthful offenders for two basic reasons, according to social reformers. First of all, a guilty verdict meant a life-time record as well as punishment. If the crime was minor the punishment would most likely be a few days in the House of Correction. If the crime was more serious, a jail sentence was mandatory. Secondly, a conviction on a specific charge was often difficult to obtain even in the face of the fact that there was often clear evidence that the defendant was heading for a life of crime because

of his anti-social behavior in general. In each case rehabilitation was made difficult.¹⁵

It was these shortcomings of Judge Tuthill's court that convinced many persons, including the Chicago Bar Association, that special treatment for children in the judicial system was imperative. Seeking a new form of justice for youthful offenders, social reformers proposed a courtroom where the aim would be to change the behavior of the child by positive action rather than by punishing him. To achieve this goal they must develop a new model of conducting the preliminary procedures as well as new methods of administering the hearings on a non-adversary basis. In addition, they hoped to broaden the concept of admissible evidence to include the child as well as the social and personal facts that made up his environment. New techniques such as interviews by trained observers with neighbors and relatives of the child to gather such facts would also have to be worked out. Finally, to avoid costly institutionalization they had to find new methods of supervising delinquent children in their homes.¹⁶

The Chicago Bar Association, Illinois State Board of Public Charities, Illinois State Conference of Charities, Chicago Women's Club, and Hull House Association as well as such individuals as Jane Addams, Mrs. Lucy Flower, and Julia Lathrop began to put pressure on the state legislature to create a formal juvenile court.¹⁷ The

legislature in 1899 responded to this lobbying effort by passing without much controversy an act which empowered any county to set up a juvenile court.¹⁸

The lack of controversy over the act may be explained by the fact that the juvenile court bill, which was drawn up by the Chicago Bar Association, was presented as an anti-crime measure, law and order being a popular issue in those days. It was pictured by reformers as a way of dealing humanely and effectively with youthful crime. Considering that the "youths of today are the men of tomorrow" it was also a preventive measure that could cut down on adult crime in the future.¹⁹

Another reason for the lack of any extended debate over the bill in the state legislature may well have been the fact that the final act did not include appropriations to cover the cost of the operation of this new court. Individual legislators may have seen this as a way to hold the line on the increasing costs of state reform institutions by providing a mechanism by which delinquents could be treated in their own homes at little cost to the state. As most juvenile crime was recognized as occurring in populous Cook County, the rural dominated legislature could pass the burden of control of such crime to Cook County.²⁰ Even many of the reformers were not unhappy at the lack of appropriation for, if private agencies had to be called on to subsidize the Juvenile Court, these

agencies would have an effective voice in the decision-making process.²¹ The court could thus be saved from the machinations of corrupt politicians.

Once the state law became effective on July 1, 1899 the chief judge of the circuit court of Cook County brought the Chicago Juvenile Court into existence by appointing Judge Julian Mack to hear cases under the new judicial proceeding pertaining to youths. Because Julian Mack was a close friend of Julius Rosenwald and was in sympathy with most of the aims of the social reformers, it was only natural that they had great influence in the future direction of the court.²²

A case in the new juvenile court could begin with the filing of a petition by any person who had some reason to believe that a child was delinquent, dependent on the public for support, or lacked fit parents. The parents and the child were summoned directly to the court because there was no indictment and thus no need for a grand jury. The child was brought in to be helped, not judged. The arrest of a child for a criminal offense was the only other way a case was initiated. The justice of the peace court either dismissed the case or handed it over to the juvenile court for further action.²³

Once the case of an individual child got under way, the standard procedure was based on the question, "What in view of all the circumstances surrounding the

child's life, is it best to do for him?" The child was not indicted or accused of any crime, but rather was to be helped to overcome his anti-social behavior in general. During the proceeding there was no prosecutor or defense attorney, for as one social reformer stated, "It was the state for Johnny not the state against Johnny." As a result there was no need to enforce the ordinary rules of evidence. Thus, hearsay evidence of parents, neighbors, policemen, school teachers, and employers was commonly allowed in court. The probation officer, whose job it was to collect the vital environmental data about a child appearing before the court as well as form a written evaluation of the character of the child, was also charged with protecting the child's interests. Thus, his role was split between those of prosecutor and defense counsel in a traditional court. A jury was allowed at the discretion of the court or at the request of friends of the child. Few cases were tried with a jury because parents were usually convinced by persons associated with the court that it would not be in the interest of the child. Finally, the child himself was asked to tell his story to the court. In effect, he was often put into a position where his own testimony was used against him without the constitutional safeguards involved in such situations.²⁴

The result of the proceeding was not a verdict of innocence of guilt, but rather the judgment whether or not a child was delinquent. If in the opinion of the judge the child's general anti-social behavior would lead to more serious crimes, the youth would be returned home under the direction of a probation officer, sent to a foster home, or dispatched to a reformatory to be rehabilitated.²⁵

Most cases ended in probation for the juvenile delinquent. This form of resolution was considered by social reformers to be the best possible one because it was natural. Its aim was to employ the social worker-probation officer "to elevate and improve the home without breaking it up." The key to this system was the role of the probation officer who had charge of the child's case. The officer began to familiarize himself with the child when he collected the environmental background data used by the judge as part of his decision. During the trial the probation officer closely observed the child and his parents. "He was, thus, able to gauge the parental relation by noticing how the parents treated the whole subject of their son's arrest, how often they visited him and whether there was more sorrow or indignation over the event." If they were more indignant then sorrowful the court might decide to take the child away from their influence. If they were, on the other hand, cooperative the child would be paroled to their custody.

In general, the probation officer was to assess whether the family as a whole could be depended upon to help rehabilitate the child.²⁶

Once the boy or girl was found delinquent and probation was decided upon, the probation officer undertook a more detailed study that covered not only the whole field of family relations, but the child's entire environment including those agencies which might help in the rehabilitation process, the school, church, and the workshop. His principle task was to earn the friendship of the family through sympathy and cordiality in order to gain its cooperation. This procedure was important because it increased the probation officer's authority over the child and his home life. If the mother perceived the officer as a welcome guest and counselor as well as an ally in preserving order, he could not only directly aid the child, but might also be able to raise the whole tone of family life including its neatness, cleanliness, and morality. If such a relationship was impossible to achieve because of resistance of the family, the whole authority of the court could be invoked to impose the requisite conditions for the delinquent's reformation. If this method also proved to be inadequate, the probation officer usually recommended institutionalization of the child. In effect, the probation officer through the courts had the ultimate authority to take a child away from its

parents if he deemed it in the interest of the child as he defined it.²⁷ This was particularly true because the court almost invariably followed the advice of the probation officer.

Judge Mack appointed Mrs. Alzina P. Stevens, a social worker living at Hull House, to be the first probation officer. She had been recommended for the position by a committee working out of the Chicago Women's Club among whose members were Miss Jane Addams and Mrs. Charles Henrotin, the wife of a successful stockbroker. As there were no appropriations available, Mrs. Steven's salary was paid by this same committee. When the number of probation officers was increased, their salaries were also privately financed.²⁸

Out of this early ad hoc committee of the Chicago Women's Club, organized to raise money for probation officers' salaries, grew the Juvenile Court Committee. The driving force behind this more formal and permanent organization was Mrs. Lucy Flower, even though Mrs. Julia Lathrop became its chairman with Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen as vice-chairman. The wealthy Chicago businessman, Mr. James H. Echels, became the treasurer with Mrs. Charles Henrotin, assistant treasurer.²⁹

The committee became an integral part of the administration of the juvenile court. All nominations, for example, for the position of probation officer were

made through a civil service examination formulated by the committee. It raised, in addition, over \$100,000 in the years 1899-1907. The money was used to operate the probation system which was not publicly funded. The two largest contributors were Julius Rosenwald and Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen. She was a member of one of the oldest upper-class families in the city, one that claimed as an ancestor a wealthy trader who was instrumental in the founding of Chicago. Her personal fortune was widely invested in such companies as Julius Rosenwald's Sears Roebuck and Company. In addition to her inheritance, Mrs. Bowen had married an affluent businessman. After his early death, she became dedicated to social reform on a full-time basis, especially as it concerned children. Most of the other contributions came in large amounts from well-to-do families.³⁰

A great improvement was made in the probation system in 1905. The state legislature was persuaded by those who had founded the juvenile court to strengthen it in Cook County by authorizing the commissioners to pay regular probation officers out of public funds.³¹ In response to this authorization, the county commission voted \$65 a month for public probation officers of the court, the same amount paid the officers of the Juvenile Court Committee. By 1906 thirty-three probation officers were paid salaries, twenty-three by the county, seven by

the Juvenile Court Committee, and three by other private institutions. Even with this improvement there were never enough officers to carry out properly the tasks assigned to them. In 1906, for example, each officer had 150 to 250 cases in his care, while most experts deemed 50 to 60 to be a proper number.³²

The Juvenile Court Committee continued to lend financial assistance to the court until 1908. In that year the Juvenile Court became a totally public financed project, although the civil service examinations were still drawn up by outside social reformers connected with the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy as well as the Chicago's settlement houses. With the end of its special financial relationship with the Juvenile Court, the Juvenile Court Committee changed its name in 1909 to the Juvenile Protective Association in order to reflect its broader purposes. It has been concerned since then exclusively with community problems affecting delinquency.³³

The new Juvenile Protective Association divided up the city into sixteen districts, each with a paid officer to look after the children's morals. Most of the districts were located in the immigrant ghettos of the city because middle-class reformers believed that it was these children who needed help the most. In 1909, for example, of the 2,593 complaints to the Association of children going wrong, 2,329 were children of immigrants. It was

imperative that the pool halls, dance halls, theaters, and the streets in general, be monitored to make sure that immigrant children came into contact with as little evil as possible.³⁴

Over the years the Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago has had varying success in its drives to censor films, enforce the liquor and tobacco laws, close down "lewd" dance halls, remove penny slot machines, and stop the sale of obscene postal cards. If they failed, it was not for a lack of trying. Usually failure came from the conflict generated when middle-class morality as represented by the association officers who increasingly reflected the values of the outer city's upper class rather than the humanitarian social workers, clashed with that of the immigrant worker ghettos. This conflict was particularly evident in their differing views on the acceptability of saloons and dance halls as means of recreation for young men. In a way the excesses of the Association, in trying to impose middle-class values on the immigrant population, were only the exaggerated goals of the juvenile court. For example, the Juvenile Protective Association on one occasion had cards printed in various languages warning foreign parents that if they sent their children to pick up coal, wood, or iron from the railroad tracks they would be prosecuted by the Association. There was in this affair a rather callous

disregard for the economic realities underlying such an act on the part of a poor immigrant family.³⁵

As with the Juvenile Protective Association, the social reformers and their wealthy allies designed the Juvenile Court to give the middle-class social worker a mechanism for dealing with behavioral deviations among the working class. The Juvenile Court gave the legal power to the social worker to mold those children whom they defined as maladjusted in such a way as to give them an opportunity to compete on the lower rungs of the ladder of economic mobility within a bourgeois urban industrial framework. Although the reformers recognized the fact that this deviant behavior was a result of environment, the major thrust of their immediate program was the effort to raise the delinquent above his background with a little help from his friends, the various agencies of the social welfare system.³⁶

The juvenile court system also functioned in the interest of its upper-middle class financial backers. Graham Taylor, for example, writing in 1921 observed, after feeling the pulse of the upper-middle class, that this group considered juvenile delinquency a major threat to the stability of the society.³⁷ Although its interest in the problem waxed and waned between 1890 and 1932, its basic fear of crimes committed by the lower class youths, especially those committed against property, remained intense.³⁸

The general public, as well as the social reformers, had long suspected that most of the youths arrested for crimes came from the poorer sections of the city. This impression was confirmed by Sophonisba P. Breckinridge in a 1910 study of the court records of 11,329 boys and 2,770 girls compiled during the first ten years of the juvenile court's existence. She divided the backgrounds of these youths into four categories: very poor (not self-sustained), poor (father unskilled with irregular work), fairly comfortable (skilled artisan), and quite comfortable (skilled artisan). The study demonstrated the close connection between crime and poverty with 37 per cent of the youth in the first category, 40 per cent in the second, 20 per cent in the third, and only a meager 1 per cent in the fourth.³⁹

These findings were strengthened by a study carried out in 1912 by Breckinridge and Edith Abbott which correlated juvenile delinquency statistics with geographical distribution. The data for the investigation were made up of the cases of boys and girls brought before the Juvenile Court of Cook County on petitions alleging delinquency during the years 1899-1909. From these data a map had been drawn which showed the location of the homes of these children. It visually displayed the fact that most of the cases were located in the poorer immigrant sections of the city. As the study summarized its finding:

. . . The West Side furnished the largest quota of delinquency across the river. [Other areas included] the Italian Quarters of the Twenty-second Ward on the North Side; the First and Second Wards, which include the district of segregated vice and a portion of the so-called "black belt" of the South Side; and such distinct industrial communities as the districts near the steel mills of South Chicago and near the Stockyards.⁴⁰

To the upper-middle class youthful crime was a threat to stability in the society not only because of its source, but also because of its nature. According to an exhaustive study of the criminal careers of juvenile delinquents between the ages of ten and eighteen carried out in 1916 by Director William Healy of the Psychopathic Institute of the Juvenile Court of Chicago, over 70 per cent of the boys and 30 per cent of the girls had engaged in stealing in which no violence occurred. This figure represented the single largest category for the men with burglary (17 per cent) the next highest serious offense. If street robbery with violence (4 per cent) is added, over 91 per cent of those boys classified as juvenile delinquents engaged in crimes against property. Such crimes particularly offended middle class concern for the sanctity of property.⁴¹

As for the girls, the single largest category was prostitution or promiscuity, a young prostitute, or a girl on the verge of becoming one (73 per cent). Of the boys who were judged delinquents, only 4.5 per cent had engaged in sexual offenses. William Healy defended the Juvenile Court against the charge that it discriminated

against young women by arresting them but not boys on the same charges by showing that there was little venereal disease among the boys in the sample. Perhaps if he had tested among older upper-class men the story might have been different because it was this group that used the prostitutes.⁴² Middle class drives against prostitution were always directed against the lower-class prostitute and not against her upper-class patron. This was true most likely because it was easier to get at the helpless prostitute than her relatively more powerful patron. It may have also been in part a result of the prevailing double standard that boys will be boys, but women must be pure and angelic. What is particularly interesting is the fact that prostitution was usually treated as a moral problem and not an economic question. In 1912 Julius Rosenwald, President of Sears and Roebuck, became extremely upset when some social workers suggested that there might be a connection between low wages paid to sales girls working on State Street and the high rate of prostitution among them.⁴³ As a moral problem, it could be preached about, but as an economic problem some concrete action had to be taken if it was to be eliminated, for example, the payment of higher wages. In addition, if it was a moral problem it could be blamed on the weak character of the participants, but if it was an economic problem the blame lay squarely on those members of the

employing class who by low wages made it necessary for a woman to engage in the practice.

Later studies have confirmed these earlier investigations into the class composition of male juvenile delinquents and the nature of their crimes. A classic study by Shaw and McKay, completed in the early 1940's but still recognized as authoritative, concluded that in the period 1922-1934 there was a definite relationship between rates of juvenile delinquency and certain other community problems. It found a direct correlation between the rate of infant mortality, tuberculosis, mental disorder, relief (1934), dependent families (1931), percentage foreign born, Negro heads of families (1920 and 1930), and the number of cases of juvenile crime in a given district. In addition, there was a negative correlation between rates of delinquency and median rental rates (1920 and 1930). All of these high correlations indicate that there was a heavy concentration of crime among working-class youth.⁴⁴

The study also examined a series of juvenile court cases in the period 1917-1923 involving 8,141 individuals paying particular attention to the nature of the crimes committed. It found that 70 per cent of all juvenile crime involved "stealing." This figure broke down into 29 per cent for burglary, 12 per cent for larceny of automobiles, 21 per cent for petty stealing,

and 8 per cent for holdups, shop-lifting, and purse-snatching. The remaining 31 per cent included crimes such as incorrigibility, 17 per cent; disorderly conduct, 5 per cent; and all sex offenses, 2 per cent.⁴⁵

Thus, from the 1890's to the 1920's juvenile delinquency was a cryptogram for anti-social behavior on the part of lower-class youth that involved attacks on the concept of private property. To the upper-middle class such acts undermined the stability of a society based on the sanctity of individual ownership. Such a refusal on the part of lower-class youth to respect middle-class conventions created an explosive situation.

Perhaps the major reason that juvenile delinquents did not venerate the idol of individual ownership was that they or their families had so small a share of the national wealth. According to one study by Gabriel Kolko, the percentage of national income before taxes received in 1910 by the top one-fifth of the population was 48.2 per cent, while the bottom received a meager 8.3 per cent. In 1918 the figures were 47.3 per cent for the top one-fifth, while the bottom one-fifth received 6.8 per cent. In 1921 the percentages were 51.0 and 6.8 respectively, while in 1929 they were 51.3 per cent and 5.4 per cent. Thus, the lower class received throughout the period an increasingly small and disproportionate slice of the economic pie. If one takes into consideration the top two-fifths of the population, it is clear from the figures that the

old saw "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer," was in a way correct.⁴⁶

Assuming that the circumstances in Chicago reflected the national situation, it is possible that some lower-class youth instinctively understood that the rules of the economic game were stacked against them. They, therefore, directed their anti-social behavior in a serial and disconnected manner against this state of affairs. If they could not win by the rules, they would break the rules. Franz Fannon in his work has graphically demonstrated that such criminal conduct can be the first step toward a revolutionary situation where the oppressed no longer play by the code of the oppressors. What is defined as a crime by a status-quo society may in the future be declared a daring, if confused, act aimed at undermining the old system by a post-revolutionary society.⁴⁷ Take, for example, the 12.2 per cent of the total crimes that revolved around larceny of automobiles. The youth of the upper-middle class especially enjoyed riding in automobiles in the post World War I period. The automobile became a way of life for these youths, a means of expressing independence, individuality, courage, and sexual adventure. The automobile was in effect a ticket out of the local neighborhood to the entertainment centers of the city. The local neighborhood centers were suffering by comparison with the new ones springing up around the

middle-class rim of the city. In short, the automobile was a cultural symbol as well as a means of transportation.⁴⁸

It is not astonishing to find the youth of the lower class, stimulated by the movies, yearning for the pleasures associated with the use of the automobile. The catch was that because of the unequal wealth distribution they were unable to purchase a car. As an alternative they "borrowed" a car from the middle class for the fun of "driving around." If these youth were caught before they abandoned it, they became part of the 12.2 per cent statistic that was charged with larceny of automobiles.

It was the function of the juvenile court to control this dangerous situation. It did this by attempting to eliminate all vestiges of anti-social behavior or to prevent them from appearing among the lower-class youth. Once the raison d'etre of the juvenile court is made clear, its methods of operation become understandable. The non-advocacy system of procedure made it possible for representatives of middle-class institutions to directly intervene in the child-rearing practices of lower-class families at the slightest hint of anti-social behavior. There was no need to convict him of crime, only of the potentiality. The Shaw and McKay study very graphically, but unknowingly, pointed out this facet of the juvenile court when they found that 30.5 per cent of juvenile crime involved such

petty "crimes" as incorrigibility and disorderly conduct during the period 1917 to 1923.⁴⁹

For the earlier period of 1900 to 1906, juvenile crimes were even more weighted toward less serious acts. The authors, for example, of that study concluded:

With regard to offenses, it seems probable that some boys were taken to court in these earlier years on charges for which no petitions would be filed by the police probation officers at the present time [1942]. This is indicated both by the fact that the number of cases in court was greater in proportion to the population than at present and by the fact that the classification of offenses indicated a somewhat higher proportion of less serious charges.⁵⁰

Traditional legal procedures were unable to prevent crime and to accomplish the rehabilitation of the potential non-conformist youthful criminal. A good example of such inability can be found in the records of the Boys' Court of Chicago. Founded in 1914 by the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County under pressure from the Juvenile Protective Association and the Chicago Bar Association as well as by the Chicago Women's Club, it was designed to deal with boys between the years of seventeen and twenty-one. Unlike the juvenile court, it followed traditional legal procedures.⁵¹

In a study made of the first six months' operations of the court, the largest single category of cases (70.2 per cent) involved the violation of city ordinances. Two-thirds of these cases were for disorderly conduct. They included such cases as:

S.T.: First offender, seventeen years. "Found in poolroom. Under age to be allowed there. First time in this poolroom. No evidence of gambling. Several boys arrested."

D.S.: Nineteen years. "Playing cards in a vacant store. Several boys arrested and discharged."

E.H.: "Did not move when officer spoke. Going into dance hall 1:00 A.M. No evidence of disorder."

E.S.: "Was with a man who had a stolen bicycle."

M.S.: "With 16 boys over eighteen years in poolroom raid. Only one gambling; others orderly and of good character."

E.E.: "Playing ball on street."

G.S.: "With two men sleeping in wagon at 2:00 A.M. at Liberty and Halsted Streets." All arrested.

E.F.: "Sleeping in barn."

L.S.: "4:30 A.M. on street." Has been arrested for disorderly conduct numerous times before and since.

C.T.: "Flipping trains into town."

W.G.: "Singing in Lincoln Park at the High Bridge."

A.U.: "Girl said some remarks were made to her on street by defendant. Defendant cannot speak English nor she his language."

P.K.: "Fight in saloon at Wells and Fugel streets. Defendant had a lemon squeezer."

E.N.: "Ran away from home. Not working." Arrested three times for similar offenses.

G.H.: "1.45 A.M. Western Avenue coming home from a party."

J.G.: "Drinking beer on prairie on way from party." Arrested following month for similar offense.

A.D.: "5:00 A.M. refused to move on 'quickly.'"

O.M.: Son and father arrested together. "Driving a horse which ran away in their possession" [sic].

A.F.: "Complainant says defendant throws a dog over the fence."

L.J.: "In crowd over fight."

M.K.: "Fighting with man who refused to leave the hallway, where defendant was working."

H.U.: "In freight yards of railroad."

J.B.: "Two boys sleeping in hallway." Both boys arrested again within a few weeks for similar offense and discharged.

F.W.: "Sleeping outside Polk Street Depot."

F.L.: "2:15 A.M. on street at 44th and Montrose." Three boys arrested.⁵²

The study also discovered that most of these cases of which involved what what we would call today young men

of seventeen to twenty-one, three-fourths were discharged. Of the few cases (18.4 per cent) that resulted in conviction, about 30 per cent resulted in fines, 50 per cent in institutionalization, and 20 per cent in probation. Remarking on the high rate of discharge, the author of the study stated "A new court procedure must therefore be developed . . . if the vast number of trivial cases discharged is to be reduced and if society is to be protected from serious crimes these irresponsible boys sometimes commit, outside treatment and custodial care must be provided."⁵³ In other words, another juvenile court for older boys should be created as a control device to get at anti-social behavior that could not be controlled by normal legal procedures which allow these trivial, but potentially dangerous cases, to slip through its fingers.

The social control nature of the juvenile court became very pronounced with the development of the Juvenile Psychopathic Institute. Founded in 1909 by Mrs. William F. Dummer who paid all the expenses of the Institute for the first five years, it was directed by Dr. William Healy. To discover how many were mental defectives, it gave mental examinations to the children passing through the juvenile court. Finding that very little juvenile delinquency was caused by mental defectives, the Institute broadened its mandate to include the collection of data that would be helpful in formulating a general theory to

explain juvenile delinquency in terms of personality defects. Such evidence would enable the social worker to identify the potentially anti-social lower-class youth before he had a chance to commit his first act.⁵⁴

In 1914 the County Commissioners took over the Institute from its private financial backers. From that point on, its expenses were paid out of public funds. Although Dr. Healy resigned because of political interference, the issue of internal integrity was settled in early 1917 to the social reformers' satisfaction with Dr. Adlers' appointment. In order to obtain the services of a man with such impressive credentials in psychological circles as Dr. Adler, the Board of County Commissioners was forced to agree to abstain from all political interference in the affairs of the Institute. In 1920 it was taken over by the state government through an agreement by the county and Judge Arnold of the Juvenile Court.⁵⁵

Perhaps its main contribution was its studies of juvenile delinquents and of the personality factors which made a youth faced with the stress of poverty and deprivation turn to crime. The effect, of course, was to focus public attention on the individual juvenile delinquent and his "problem of adjustment" rather than on the environmental stresses which caused the behavior in the first place.

It is quite clear then that the aim of the Juvenile Court was not simply to protect the rights of

accused juveniles or even only to protect property by rehabilitating youths who failed to respect this convention. The court was also a means of intervention by the upper class through middle-class social workers in the affairs of the lower class so as to forestall anti-social behavior that was subversive to the status-quo economic and social system; that is, one in which a number of lower-class youth refused to play the economic game which was beneficial to the upper class, but not as beneficial to the lower class.

It is very revealing that the juvenile delinquent, the one who did not accept the one-sided rules of the economic game, was considered the "deviant" by social reformers, while the youth who accepted his proportionally small slice of the pie, representing his share of the total national wealth as the best he could do through the means allowed him by the upper class, was considered "normal."⁵⁶

Social workers did not understand their role in these terms. They saw the juvenile court as "the natural center in the community around which to group all the social efforts made to remedy defective home conditions, to safeguard the health and morals of the young, and to insure the children an atmosphere friendly to the development of the highest citizenship."⁵⁷ The purpose, then, was to better adjust them so they could compete on the lower rungs of social mobility in a bourgeois urban industrial society that was economically controlled by the upper class.

It would be unfair to leave the impression that all attempts at controlling anti-social behavior was completely negative. In the next chapter, mothers' pensions will be described as a charity and as a behavior control device.

Another such device was the building of what was known as "socialized parks" in the working-class districts. Henry S. Curtis in his book, The Play Movement and Its Significance published in 1887, stated that,

Probably more has been said and written about the park playgrounds of Chicago than any other play system in the world. It is doubtful if in any other American city there has been another municipal improvement that has been so splendidly conceived and supported.

Curtis then described the pilgrimage by park boards and businessmen of other cities to see Chicago's effort at public recreation.⁵⁸

Like those of many other cities, Chicago's park system in the period immediately after the Civil War was a scenic preserve. The parks were most often frequented on Sunday afternoons by the wealthy, who would stroll around the park to show off finery and to engage in social conversation.⁵⁹

The major problem from the perspective of the poor was that these parks were built around the rim of the city. They were inaccessible to the working class which mainly lived in the fast growing inner city river wards. In fact

as late as 1904 one million people resided more than a mile from any of these large parks.⁶⁰

There was, therefore, a growing need for parks in the high population density working-class districts. These green oases with built-in recreational centers would relieve the dull, drab, and overcrowded life of the poor, especially the children, who needed some place to play other than the street. Through such play, social workers would gain the opportunity to teach children the necessary values that would prevent anti-social behavior.

In order to meet the recreational privation of the children of the poor, Hull House purchased in the early 1890's a vacant lot near the settlement and transformed it into a fully equipped children's playground with a trained director who organized play activities. Hull House, Northwestern University Settlement, University of Chicago Settlement, and Chicago Commons designed their playground as models for publicly financed and small parks.⁶¹

The first public contribution came in 1898 when the Board of Education of Chicago granted six school yards to the Vacation School Committee of the Chicago Women's Club which it equipped and supervised.⁶² One year later, in 1899, the Chicago City Council, under pressure from the Chicago Women's Club and from various settlements in the city as well as from many businessmen in the Municipal Science Club, a business and professional group concerned

with the city and its problems, built five playgrounds in the crowded districts of the city. A special park commission was set up at the same time to study the advisability of setting up small recreational centers in the working-class districts. By 1904 the system had grown to fourteen playgrounds with two free bathing beaches on the Lake Michigan shore.⁶³ Encouraged by their success in lowering juvenile delinquency in the areas of operation, Chicago was about to embark on a multi-million dollar experiment in social redemption and social control.

The case for a two and one-half million dollar bond issue to build organized recreational areas for the working class was presented to the middle class as an anti-crime and anti-disease program. Mr. Perkins of the Small Parks Commission pointed out that the poorer sections contributed "most to the juvenile criminals and to contagious disease. . . . We must reform the conditions that lead to crime." His argument persuaded the voters to approve the bonds. In the spring of 1904 the city began construction of twenty-eight parks immediately by the issuance of \$2,500,000 worth of bonds. In addition, it budgeted \$12,000 a year for the maintenance of each park.⁶⁴

There were not to be scenic parks but the sites of organized recreational activities. Most of them had swimming pools, children's play areas, and playfields. Some had large fieldhouses, usually with a gymnasium for

girls and boys, two small wading pools, three or four club-rooms, a branch library, an auditorium and dancehall combined, and a small restaurant where food was sold at cost. The fieldhouses were used by school children in the afternoon and by young men and women in the evening.⁶⁵

Instructors organized activities, emphasizing team sports as well as arts and crafts to teach children to become responsible and productive adults. This aspect of organized play was especially appealing to businessmen who were beginning to be convinced by social reformers that child labor did not teach children to be productive adults.⁶⁶

Team sports taught cooperation and the necessity of working with others under higher direction, an important quality for working in a factory or at any other common enterprise. Arts and crafts encouraged attention to detail and patience with close work as well as an appreciation of beauty and skill. As an added dividend, organized play contributed to physical fitness while child labor tended to break the health of the child. Another result of organized play claimed by social reformers was a reduction of the crime rate among children. By 1910, for instance, it was estimated by Romeyn Taylor that in neighborhoods where recreation centers were established the cases of delinquency brought before the Juvenile Court declined on the average of 28 per cent.⁶⁷ All of

these advantages claimed by social reformers for the socialized park made them extremely appealing to upper-class businessmen.

An additional advantage of socialized parks was one of providing social insurance for the economic, social system. Henry S. Curtis in his book, The Play Movement and Its Significance, explained it this way:

A part of the money that is spent on the maintenance of playgrounds may properly be put down as social insurance. There is a growing feeling of discontent among the workers of the world, a feeling that the worker has not had his just share of the product, that present conditions of poverty, low standards of living, and long hours of labor that are demeaning to the spirit are unnecessary and unjust. The worker not only feels that he had not had his share, but he is developing and enlisting leaders for his cause, and he is feeling a new sense of power. . . . The reasons for discontent are not industrial alone. The focus of the whole matter is the difficulty under existing circumstances of leading a life that is worth living.⁶⁸

Considering the support of the executive and professional elite for the play movement inside and outside the Municipal Science Club, the advantages as described by Curtis were not lost on them. Nor were the parks' tendency to lower juvenile delinquency rates among working-class youth forgotten. Speaking in June 1924, Republican reform Mayor, William E. Dever, noted that:

The federal, state, county, and municipal governments are spending annually in Cook County not less than \$40,000,000 for supervision and correction of crime. I wonder whether, if one-fifth of this sum were set aside to provide preventive measures in the way of parks, playgrounds, and organized athletics, such constructive policy might not, aside from its social and human value provide for an even more efficient police service.⁶⁹

Thus, the juvenile court and its probation system was only supplemented by playgrounds where delinquency would be forestalled rather than cured. It was one of many programs designed to change lower-class disfunctional behavior into functional conduct. That is, lower-class behavior which allowed the upper class to continue enjoying the fruits of the unequal distribution of wealth, but at the same time was structured in such a way as to give a lower-class person a decent chance to gain a relatively better life, within the established rules, than he previously enjoyed.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER V

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CHAPTER VI

MOTHERS' PENSIONS AS CHARITY AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Perhaps one of the most controversial programs developed within the context of the welfare system has been mothers' pensions, or what is now called Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Ideally, under such a program the state assumed part of the cost of raising dependent children in their own homes in cases of proven need. It was designed as a substitute for the uncertainties and inadequacies of public relief under the poor law or care by charitable agencies or what had often been called "orphan homes."¹

One of the earliest programs of this kind was instituted by the Juvenile Court of California at the turn of the century. It granted county aid to children in their own homes if it could be demonstrated that such aid would make it possible for the mother to spend less time working and more time supervising her children.² From the very beginning it bore the flavor of social control and its origins in the Juvenile Court classified it as a way of dealing with juvenile crime. This is not to deny that

many of the supporters were motivated by the highest humanitarian goals, but only to recognize that they were forced to operate within a framework of social control in order to translate their goals into concrete action. To sell their programs of aiding dependent children to the public, they linked them with juvenile crime and its suppression. Such a combination was to have momentous consequences later on.

Although the idea spread to some other parts of the country, not much progress was made until the Conference on the Care of Dependent Children was called by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1909. One of its most important subjects of discussion was the harsh and unsystematic treatment of impoverished children by society. Such treatment usually included either inadequate and uncertain public relief or institutionalization in a cold orphan asylum which lacked a mother's love or even individual attention. It was even reported that in a few cases a dependent child was indentured to work for a master in return for his care until he reached the age of sixteen.

Most of the social workers and reformers attending the conference agreed that because "home life is the highest and finest product of civilization . . . the great molding force of mind and character no child should be deprived of his family by reason of poverty alone."³

Unfortunately, they could not agree upon the method by which a dependent child and his family could be kept together. Causing special friction was the question of control and financing. Some participants proposed public financing of a program to be staffed by professional social workers. Others thought that any family care program should be completely private in nature.⁴

After the conference Professor Sophonisba Breckinridge at the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy investigated the relationship between juvenile delinquency and the impoverished family, especially in cases where poverty was caused by the absence of the father from the home. Published in the following year through the school's Department of Social Investigation, the report emphasized poverty and the broken home.⁵

It studied the court records of 11,329 boys and 2,770 girls during the first ten years of the Juvenile Court's existence from 1900-1910. It found that 26 per cent of the boys and 36 per cent of the girls came from broken homes in which one of the parents was dead or separated from the family. It also studied the home conditions of 580 boys who had been brought before the court for the first time during a single year and 154 girls who had been committed to the state training school for girls at Geneva, Illinois.⁶ Of these, 23 per cent of the boys and 25 per cent of the girls were fatherless. The authors

of the study considered this to be an unusually high figure and, thus, an important factor in juvenile delinquency. They reported that poverty was a major determiner, noting that most of the boys taken before the juvenile court were from poor families in which the income level was below that which contemporaries defined as necessary for a decent life style.⁷

Actually these two factors, broken homes and poverty, were interrelated in that the father's death or separation from the family was usually accompanied by even worse poverty and often disaster for the children because the household had depended on him as its chief source of revenue. Such a situation often meant that the mother either had to go to work or increase the number of hours she already labored. The kind of jobs obtained by these working mothers usually involved long hours and low pay. In those cases where the data were available the survey found the single largest occupational category of mothers of delinquent boys was washwoman (a person who cleans clothes in her own home), with scrubwoman, laundry work, keeping lodgers, and seamstress following closely behind. All the rest of the occupations ranked by Breckinridge were also menial tasks usually considered lower class. The only exception was one mother of a delinquent son who was a nurse. Of these women almost one-half had five or more children but held jobs which required them to be away from the home an average of ten hours a day.⁸

Contrary to the common folk wisdom, Breckinridge's research discovered that most of the widowed and deserted mothers of delinquent children were judged to be "fit"; that is, they had no moral deficiencies. A Polish mother, struggling to keep her family of six children together after the father died of insanity, could find no job and therefore "took in washing" at pitiful rates. An Irish widow with twelve children, who took in washing to make ends meet, saw her twelve-year-old boy arrested for breaking a plate-glass window. In an "American family" the widowed mother took over the small family grocery store, spending most of her time running it. One of her boys was in court twice for truancy. It is interesting to note that Breckinridge classified each ethnic group by name, such as German, Polish, Italian, Irish, and Black, but lumped those not so classified as "American." Who rated the title "American" is not certain, but it is clear that those with strong, new immigration characteristics did not. In one last example a German mother was forced to work in a tailor shop by day and as a scrub woman at night to support her family after the father deserted them. Her fourteen-year-old son was arrested in the act of breaking seals on a freight car and stealing the goods. The study pointed out many more such examples of "fit" mothers who, because they were forced to work long hours, could not adequately supervise their children. Sophonisba

Breckinridge suggested that something be done for "Neglected Widowhood in the Juvenile Court."⁹

Judge Merritt W. Pinckney of the Cook County Juvenile Court was also acutely aware of the interrelationship of broken homes, poverty, and crimes by young persons. Under the juvenile court law the judge had the authority only to commit dependent children to an institution if they were to be supported at public expense. If a widowed mother refused to part with her child, the state made no provision in cases of need except for outdoor relief under the pauper law. In Illinois, outdoor relief was not only sporadic, but also inadequate in maintaining the minimum standard of living recognized as necessary to live a reasonably healthy and fulfilling existence.¹⁰

Public relief was a function of the county. In Chicago's Cook County it was the responsibility of the Board of County Commissioners which was made up of fifteen members at large, ten from Chicago and five from the suburban areas. Its major function was to levy, collect, and appropriate money for all county departments, including the Bureau of Public Welfare which administered public outdoor relief; that is, aid not given in an institution which included grants to the blind, war veterans, and the ordinary poor. The last type of relief was divided into four major categories: (1) investigation and transportation of aliens and non-residents to their proper localities, (2) admissions to county and state institutions,

(3) medical corps, and finally (4) relief. In the years 1914-1915 the material relief department of the Public Welfare Department gave \$17,000 to poor families just over \$313,000, two-thirds in food, almost a third in coal, and \$6,000 in soap. These grants were for emergencies and not continuous over a long period of time. For example, over a fourth of the families were aided only once, and 80 per cent received less than five monthly "rations." The average family received a total of \$17. Things had not improved much by 1920 when prices were much higher but the county agent spent only a third more dollars for public relief.¹¹

The monthly allowance in 1914-1915 per family under this program was quite small, \$1.10 for one person, \$2.26 for a family of two or three, \$2.67 for a family of four or five. The list of rations for a family of four or five for a month included four pounds of soup, four pounds of beans, six pounds of rice, six pounds of rolled oats, two pounds of coffee, one pound of tea, forty-eight pounds of flour, six pounds of sugar, five pounds of lard, two and one-half pounds of syrup, six pounds of bacon.¹² Occasionally shoes for children or other such grants would be authorized by the county. The rations given under the outdoor program never satisfied more than 35 per cent of the monthly needs of a family. Therefore, private agencies would usually be called upon to supplement the income of

the welfare recipient. From the figures it can be seen that this type of county aid was designed to meet a family's short-term needs caused by a temporary emergency.¹³

To screen applicants for public outdoor relief, a procedure was adopted that was similar to that used by private charities. In 1916, for example, one central and eight branch offices of the Public Welfare Department served as distribution points for the rations. Forced to line up in front of the office to receive their meager rations, the recipients were humiliated by the public demonstration that they were receiving aid.

A county agent, with a professionally trained charity worker or deputy, supervised eight assistant deputies, operated the various branch distribution centers and investigated each applicant to insure worthiness. Using the case method, the assistant deputy visited and examined the home and then asked questions of the neighbors. As a final step he interviewed near relatives to discover if they could contribute to the family's support. Thus, "everyone" knew of the applicant's poverty and presumed disgrace.¹⁴

Although procedures and appropriations were constantly changing, the essential nature of outdoor relief was not fundamentally altered. A judge of the juvenile court might well hesitate to force a widowed mother with children into such an inadequate and humiliating relief program.

Faced with the dilemma of what to do to keep a widowed mother's family together in the face of extreme poverty, Merritt W. Pickney, presiding judge of the Cook County Juvenile Court consulted with friendly social workers, directed a study by his chief probation officer, and then sent a proposal to the state legislature in 1911 that could enable him to deal with the situation.¹⁵

With minimal study it amended Section 7 of the Illinois Juvenile Court Law properly known as the Funds to Parents Act to provide for child support. It passed without the usual preliminary report by an investigating committee and with very little discussion. The lack of controversy may have reflected a conviction that the statute was a routine administrative matter dealing with the juvenile court. Furthermore, the law contained no provision for the funding of the program other than to authorize any county boards to raise the necessary money if its juvenile court wished to initiate such a program. In short, there were no pressing reasons to refuse Judge Pinckney's request.¹⁶

As it passed, the amendment was extremely vague:

If the parent or parents of such a dependent or neglected child are poor and unable to properly care for said child, but are otherwise proper guardians and it is for the welfare of such a child to remain at home, the court may enter an order finding such facts and fixing the amount of money necessary to enable the parent or parents to properly care for such child, and thereupon it shall be the duty of the county board through its county agent or otherwise, to pay to such parent or parents at such times

as said may designate, the amount so specified for the care of such dependent or neglected child until further order of the court.¹⁷

In essence it removed an elite group of dependent but deserving children whose mothers were worthy widows from the class of paupers which were subject to the horrors of public relief. If aid was necessary to keep the family together, the public, through the juvenile court and county board, would support needy mothers. In return for this succor the mother was obliged to maintain a suitable environment, one in which the child would learn how to be an asset rather than a liability to the society. What it meant to be an "asset" was to be defined by those who administered the program and represented the upper-middle class and its concept of a well-ordered environment.

As it turned out, the law was so vague in the administrative detail, that Judge Pinckney, presiding judge of the Chicago Juvenile Court, turned to a citizen's committee for advice. He appointed prominent businessmen, professionals, and social workers to a commission which, after careful deliberations and numerous conferences, formulated a set of rules to govern the program in Cook County.¹⁸

Under these rules a mother who applied for aid must demonstrate that she had no access to other funds, either her own or that of relatives. Before being considered she must also be able to prove that her husband was either dead or had been absent from the home for a

period of two years. There was, in addition, a county residency requirement of one year. Finally, the dependent child in question must be fourteen years or younger, the age at which children were allowed to work under the state law. The only exception was in the case of a child who was seriously under-nourished, under-developed, or actually crippled. Aid in these instances could continue after the child's fourteenth birthday.¹⁹

A conference of five representatives of the various relief organizations in Chicago, as well as the chief probation officer and deputy, determined eligibility for aid with the review power in the hands of the judge. The Juvenile Court Committee, a private organization with contacts among upper-middle class businessmen and professionals with an interest in social welfare programs, paid the expenses of this advisory group. In addition, the Juvenile Court Committee with the approval of the judge appointed a staff of social workers to investigate the cases brought before the court.²⁰

In the early stages of the program there was some controversy over who had the right to appoint these probation or welfare officers, the county board or the judge of the juvenile court. The issue was finally settled in 1913 when the courts allotted this power to the judge. Judge Pinckney immediately selected a special committee made up of men and women who understood and appreciated "civil service" and "social service ideals." Thus, the

appointment of the social worker staff was controlled by the welfare complex.²¹

A social worker visited the home of the applicant to determine eligibility under the formal requirements of the juvenile court and to evaluate the "suitability of the home." Suitability was determined by applying the question of what would better further the interests of a dependent child and the state, to put him into an institution or to keep him with his family. The power of the social worker was relatively arbitrary in that she alone made the initial decision on whether or not a child would be separated from its mother. On the basis of her decision, the conference committee reported to the judge either the amount of monthly funds to be given or the dismissal of the case. There was little check on the individual social worker's evaluation other than a report to the judge by a visitor from the county agent's office. As a general rule the judge accepted the recommendations of the visitor's report.²²

As soon as the program was launched it came under immediate attack not only from those who were usually opposed to most relief and reform measures, but also from among those who were social workers. Of the latter criticism, most of it came from social workers who lived in New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia which had abolished public outdoor relief and substituted private

charity organizations. Many of the social workers who were employed by these private agencies felt that the propaganda used to promote the Illinois Funds to Parents Act (mothers' pensions) was a criticism of the adequacy of their own agencies' efforts. They also believed that adequate salaries would not be provided for administration, that there would be political interference, increased pauperism, and the end to private charity in this field.²³

That criticism exploded at the 1912 National Conference of Social Work in Cleveland. Mary E. Richmond charged that "no private fund for relief can successfully compete very long with a public fund, whether the latter is adequate or not." She went on to say that "inevitably the sources of private charitable relief dry up."

Frederic Almy, Secretary of the Buffalo Charity Organization Society, flayed public programs arguing that "to the imagination of the poor the public treasury is inexhaustible and their right; and they drop upon it without thrift, as they dare not do on private charity." In summary, these poor widows might begin to look on their pension as a right rather than as a charity.²⁴ This simply would not do.

The chief defender of the concept of mothers' pensions at the conference was Julia C. Lathrop, a social worker from Chicago later to become Chief of the United States Children's Bureau. She believed that public agencies should and could be used very effectively to

meet the social needs of the society. Going further, she contended that the publicly sponsored "Mothers' Pension" program was a step forward in treating the economic casualties in society:

Are we not taking all this in too elderly a fashion? We act as though we were in the afternoon time, and our methods of progress almost finished, when in fact we are in the gray dawn of time as to our expression of public responsibility for the care of the young of the state.²⁵

The controversy over the program spilled over into the pages of the Survey. In two articles Mary E. Richmond asked why widows were put in a class apart. Private agencies were engaged very effectively in family work as a whole. They were making great advances in the adjustment of means to ends with child welfare in view. What was needed now was more personal service, supervision, continuous oversight, and care as well as more adequate material relief. This could not be accomplished through the mechanism of public institutions.²⁶

Perhaps the most devastating argument was offered by Secretary C. C. Carstens, of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children, after a six-week investigation of the Chicago program. Although a hostile critic, his study does yield some valuable insights into its actual operation. He found that families were often made to wait a month or more for temporary aid after requesting a grant, while the office processed the application and the necessary investigations were made.

The entire waiting time for the actual pension was often as much as six months.

The separate investigation by the county agent's department were often carried out, according to Carstens, "with a brutality to which no applicant for assistance should be exposed," partly because it was in the interest of the county to limit the number of applicants who received aid and thus keep taxes low. In one case he alleged that the representative of the county agent, investigating a widowed applicant among her neighbors, insinuated that she was immoral. They were based, according to Carstens, on neither facts nor suspicions but were simply put in the report to arouse interest in his inquiry and, thus, stimulate a series of further investigations that might gather incriminating evidence which would eliminate the applicant.²⁷

Even after a mother was granted a pension, there were further problems. Instead of friendly supervision, the probation officer's investigation often degenerated into an espionage system under which the welfare officer tried to catch the recipient in an illegal act that could terminate her child-support "pension."²⁸

As for the amount of aid, the average family in the program received around \$4.60 a week or \$1.75 a week per child, a sum which was so low that a mother was forced to work to make ends meet. Father John A. Ryan and economists

in the early 1900's estimated that it took an income of around \$600 to maintain a decent standard of living. It was also calculated that the amount of allowance per child was one-half of the cost of institutionalization. Thus, the state, by having the mother pay part of the cost of bringing up the child, was actually saving money.²⁹

Although the national controversy concerning "mothers' pensions" did not impede the progress of the program in Illinois, it did make the local administrators extremely cautious so as to avoid criticism. To meet the charge that the program did not screen its applicants properly, Judge Pinckney appointed a special citizen's committee made up of prominent businessmen, professional men, and social workers to draft revisions to the state's Funds to Parents Act. In accordance with their recommendations, the Illinois General Assembly passed an elaborate statute in 1913, separate from the Juvenile Court Law, to put mothers' pensions on a more regular basis. It left the administration of mothers' pensions in the hands of the local juvenile court judges but set up a more restrictive framework of rules for eligibility.³⁰

Under the new statute widowers were not to receive grants for any reason, even disability. In addition, thereafter no woman who was deserted, divorced, a property owner, or a non-citizen was to receive aid. A wife could collect aid if her husband had been permanently incapacitated for work, but all mothers must have lived in the

county for three years before they would be considered for a child-care "pension." If she met all of these requirements she still must be found physically, mentally, and morally "fit."³¹

This same law also stipulated that a special county tax could be levied to fund the program but it could not exceed three-tenths of a mill on the dollar of the assessed value of real estate. This sum was adequate to finance the program in 1913 but was a serious impediment to its growth in the 1920's. In 1912, the year before the passage of this law, Cook County spent \$76,536 on the mothers' pension fund. That figure had increased almost five-fold by 1920 to \$438,932. During the course of the 1920's, the amount spent continued to increase until 1929 when it reached over one million dollars. In fact, the limitation on the amount that could be levied was one of the prime factors that caused social reformers to look to the state for aid in financing the program.

The state legislature also put a maximum rate on the allowance. This was stipulated at \$15 a month for one child and \$10 for each additional child up to a total of \$50. Representatives expected that the grant would be small enough to force the mother to do some work for pay outside the home. In the inflation of the late 1920's, the maximum was raised to \$60 but its proportion of a family's cost improved but little. This amount represented a reasonable ceiling considering the fact that the

average payments in Cook County before the law was passed were well within these confines. Nevertheless, the effect of this 1913 law was to control the number of recipients and to set limits on the future growth of the mothers' pension plan.³²

The new provisions of the law, which represented a restriction on eligibility, resulted in the withdrawal of a large number of pension grants in Chicago. The June 1913 Cook County pension list showed 532 families with 1,753 children receiving pensions while the July 1913 list drawn up after the new law became effective showed only 332 families with 1,075 children receiving aid. Expenditures for the county program also dropped from \$13,000 in June to \$18,000 in July, a 65 per cent reduction. In effect, between June and July 1913, 200 families with 678 children were dropped from the list largely because their mothers had become technically ineligible. The largest number of children (567) were dropped because the mother was an unnaturalized alien. It was not until 1915 that the law was amended so that alien women were made eligible if they were mothers of American-born children under the age of fourteen and had made a formal application for their first citizenship papers.³³

Considering the fact that the Cook County Juvenile Court had proposed these restrictions to the state legislature and must have been aware of the fact that the

restrictions would cut the size of the pension rule, it might be suspected that part of the motivation of the new law was just such a contraction. This suspicion is heightened by the fact that the projected cost of the program without these restrictions was over \$200,000 or a 100 per cent increase over the previous year. This suggests that the use of technicalities to limit the number of those eligible for public relief has a long history. In a way it may represent a trade-off in that, by cutting the number of recipients, they could offer more adequate aid to the remainder. It is clear that the program was designed for a few very deserving widowed mothers.

Beyond this, the Chicago Juvenile Court adopted a supplementary set of rules and operating procedures. First of all, the court defined "permanently incapacitated for work" to mean that a "doctor certified that a man would not be able to work for six months or more." The Court also decreed that a woman with one dependent child was not to be eligible unless she was unable to do normally hard work. A woman who had an illegitimate child was barred from receiving aid for that child and for any future legitimate off-spring. Perhaps the most extreme limitations, which must have caused great hardships, were the ones which barred any aid to a family which had an independent income of \$50 or more a month, or in which the husband had deserted but had not been gone for seven years.³⁴

All of these limitations based on technicalities may have been necessary if the program was to remain viable, given the framework in which it operated, but they also must have done great violence to the widowed mothers' sense of their own human dignity. The decisions concerning eligibility could be changed from day to day by the administrators of the program with the result of loss of income for certain classes of women on mothers' pensions. Widows under the program must have felt a keen sense of powerlessness over their lives as well as a dependence on the all powerful administrators who could make decisions on near life or death importance.

As for the actual way the program operated, the first step was taken when a mother desiring aid filed an application with the Juvenile Court. The case was then turned over to a social worker for investigation. The social worker began her probe by making a confidential inquiry at the Chicago Social Service Bureau. The bureau kept a file on all aid, public and private, granted to a person. It was, thus, possible to run a check on an individual to see what aid had already been given him.

If it was found that insufficient funds had been granted by private charity to keep the family together, the social worker made a series of visits to the applicant's home as well as those of neighbors, relatives, and friends. The purpose of this investigation was two-fold. The social worker first determined if these friends,

relatives, or neighbors could help support the applicant, and in what amounts. If it was impossible to secure enough funds from them, the social worker then investigated the suitability of the home. Was the mother fit? The answer to this question was made by the case worker after observing and talking not only to the applicant mother but also to her friends, neighbors, and relatives. If the answer was yes a field supervisor, who was an expert on budgets, determined the exact amount needed by the family. This figure was included in the final report sent to the conference committee. Because these investigations usually took an average of four to six months to complete, the waiting time seems to have increased dramatically over that of the original program.

Once the report was in the hands of the Conference Committee, a separate investigation was undertaken by the county agent's office. When its report was completed, the Conference Committee, made up now of the chief probation officer of juvenile court, the head of the aid-to-mothers' department, and the county agent, made a final recommendation to the judge of the juvenile court as to whether or not to grant the aid. Although the judge held a formal hearing on the case with the mother applicant present, he usually accepted the report of the Conference Committee.

After a pension was granted, the family was put under the supervision of a social worker who made sure

that the grant did not pauperize the recipient by making her unwilling to work for a living, and who aided the recipient in learning to spend wisely. Each family which received funds was expected to adhere to a budget drawn up by a field supervisor which not only allocated proportionately the money for rent, clothing, fuel, light, household expenses, and food but also provided that the family be returned as soon as possible to a completely self-supporting condition. This was done through requiring longer hours of work outside the home as the children grew older.

During her calls on her dependent families the social worker also suggested methods to improve the physical and moral standards of the home and to increase the domestic skills of the pensioned mother. If the visitor decided the home was no longer "fit," the funds could be cut off. One of the major indicators of an "unfit" home, other than evident moral transgressions, was the children's school attendance and school progress record. The case worker either had the report sent directly to her or indirectly through blanks given to the children by the school.³⁵

Although there were endless variations in individual cases, most contemporary observers agreed that the program did operate as a general rule along these lines. Deviance in administration was caused by the lack of

enough trained probation officers as well as inadequate budgets. Even granting that abuses would arise from time to time due to such factors, the accepted methods of operation bring to mind some reservations.

The first of these revolve around the significance of the administering agency. The juvenile court was primarily a social control agency. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, it was used by the upper-middle class of the city to control deviant behavior among lower-class youth, especially when such behavior was directed against property. This association of mothers' pensions raises the suspicion that the program had for its aim not only humanitarian charity, but also social control of the working class by the upper-middle class of the city through the mediation of the social workers. In a sense this was an improvement over the concept that crime was a result of original sin. Whatever the motivations of the social reformers such as Sophonisba Breckinridge, the program was "sold" on this basis to the general public.³⁶

Suppositions concerning the social control aspect of mothers' pensions are strengthened by an analysis of the way the program was administered. The nature of the relationship between the granter of the pension and the one who needed a pension was one of power and powerlessness. A needy widowed mother was forced to beg the juvenile court for a grant so that her children would not

become criminals. She then was subjected to a humiliating and time consuming investigation in which all her friends and relatives were informed that she was in need. If she met all the arbitrary rules, including whether or not in the opinion of a middle-class social worker she maintained a "suitable home," the mother would be granted a pension small enough to force her to work. In effect, the needy widowed mother had to demonstrate that she was a member of a "moral elite" among the poor who were manifestly not poverty stricken because of the sins of indolence, irresponsibility, or immorality.

Once the pension was granted the family was at the mercy of the social worker. The mother must follow the budget set up by the social worker, and was also obliged to supply various pieces of evidence that she was bringing up her family in a proper manner as defined by the welfare system. In addition, she must be willing to allow the social worker into her home so she could check to see if the rules of pension grant were being followed. This, perhaps, was the weakest part of the program, the inherent conflict in the role of the visiting social worker. She was to be a friendly advisor while at the same time the enforcer of the rules with power of the ultimate sanction, the elimination of the grant. Thus, the social worker most likely appeared to the pensioned mother as someone who had to be placated, not someone who could be trusted. The social worker, in effect, became a mechanism of social

control of behavior in that she provided a positive reward, the continuation of the pension, and a negative reward, the withdrawal of a pension.³⁷

In this process of social control the mother who accepted the pension was forced in a way to become a child herself. She was subjected to the probation officer's directives. Her morals and personal life were regulated not by herself but through a public agency in a way different from those who were able to support themselves. This development is a natural outcome of social control aims of the program.

The reaction of the pensioned mother to such a state of affairs is hard to determine because such a question was never asked by the social worker who conducted the surveys. What a poor person speculated about the program was of no concern to the administrators of the program. What they thought might be gleaned from a recent (1968) study of the attitudes of the poor around Hull House. Concerning outside relief agencies the study concludes:

All the other bodies of social control operate somewhat like charities, dispensing their services as if they were gratuitous acts of benevolence. Thus, the residents either shy away from them or receive their services without any sense of debt.

Most of the local welfare agencies complain that the residents are ungrateful or exploitative. Yet, these same agencies go to great lengths to emphasize their liberality and the fact that local residents "really" have no right to demand them. In turn, the local residents can obtain these services only by undergoing some humiliation while

submitting to the qualification of the particular. So far as the residents are concerned, they owe nothing to such institutions, and their own humiliation more than compensates for whatever they receive.³⁸

On the positive side, although the number of aided families was small and one of the aims of mothers' pensions was social control, the program might still have had some beneficial effects if those families had been adequately provided for in a material way. In 1921 Miss Breckinridge and Miss Abbott completed a study to determine how adequate the pensions were. They formulated three standards to test the adequacy of the pensions. The first of these tests was the weakest. It consisted of comparing the actual pensioned income with the estimated essential budget prepared by the field supervisor. This examination had a built-in bias in that the field supervisor was careful to recommend only what she thought was possible to receive from the court. If her suggestions were consistently high in relation to what the court actually granted, her competence might be brought into question. Of the 116 families sampled in 1921, 56.6 per cent had incomes below the budget estimate. The authors of the study pointed out, however, that this statistic did not indicate as bad a condition as might be thought upon first looking at it. The great majority of deficits were very minute. Sixty families, for example, experienced a shortage of less than \$5 a month while thirty-two families experienced a deficit of more than \$5 but less than \$10.

There were, however, twenty-four families experiencing a \$10 or more monthly shortage.³⁹

These deficits were explained in part on the basis of temporary circumstances as well as the provision of the law which fixed the maximum pension at \$15 for a single child and \$10 a month for each additional child. In the case where a mother was too ill to work and had only one child, her income neared \$15 a month. This figure was simply not enough for subsistence in 1921, although it was relatively adequate before the World War I inflation set it. The provision of the law which set a \$60 a month per family maximum also caused hardship. In an extremely large family the mother was often unable to work and at the same time care for her children. The mother's pension was the only source of income and usually inadequate to support the family at a decent standard of living.

On the basis of these data Professors Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckinridge concluded that there was indeed a "certain percentage of pensioned families that may not yet have adequate incomes, but there is a considerable percentage of the non-pensioned families in the community in the same position." Such an attitude is not as acceptable today as it was then when the general welfare level of the working class was much lower than it is today. One might conclude that those privileged mothers receiving pensions were not too much worse off than the

families of unskilled workmen in monetary terms and much better off than families on food relief of public welfare. The price in human dignity was, nevertheless, very high.

Further light was thrown on this subject when Breckinridge and Abbott compared the present income of pension families with that of the family when the father was supporting them. In their sample they found fifty-three families had a present income of within \$10 of their former income, represented by the monthly wages of the father. Actually, if the income loss was less than \$10 a month, this amount represented a larger income per person in the family because the pension was given on a more regular basis than the father's wages, which were subject to periods of unemployment. Another consideration was that the father's wage supported himself as well as his family. In certain circumstances this could total as much as \$10-\$15 a week.

In addition to these families another 53 had a larger income than that of the father's monthly wages. When these families are added to the previous category, the total of 106 families (59 per cent of the whole sample) were better off in terms of per person income. The remaining 74 families with earnings that were \$10 or more below their previous income had a father whose nominal income was \$65 or more with 10 of these getting \$100 a month or more. Most of these men had been skilled

members of the building trades. The conclusion to be drawn, according to the authors, was that "however inadequate the pension incomes may be, if measured by ideal standards they nevertheless measure up satisfactorily to the standard of wages in the groups of the community to which these families belong." If one keeps in mind the thought that the project was not designed to raise living standards in general, but was only to aid a working-class widow to bring up her children, the program seemed to provide the necessary funds to make this goal physically possible.

There were few alternatives open to a working-class mother whose husband had died. Few such mothers would willingly choose to go on public outdoor relief. The horrors of relief were already described earlier. Conditions had not materially improved by the 1920's. Even as late as 1929 expenditures of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare were only \$685,108 with the average amount of relief per case a month totaling \$7.95. At the same time expenditures for mothers' pensions were \$1,063,369 with the average amount of relief per case totaling \$52.91 a month.⁴⁰

This leaves only private charity as an alternative. To test how viable this alternative was, Breckinridge and Abbott did a comparison study between public and private relief. They focused their study on the families that had been transferred from the mothers'

pension program in Cook County to private relief societies when the state legislature tightened up the technical requirements for eligibility in 1913. Most of the mothers were dropped because they no longer met the technical requirements such as the prohibition against aliens receiving aid. Of the families on which information was available (69 out of a total of 172) fifty-five received smaller allowances and most of these reported that they were working at outside jobs more hours than they had been on a mother's pension. Of this number 42 per cent suffered real deprivation to the point of impairment of the family's health. Private charity, when compared with the mother's program, also did not appear to be a viable alternative.⁴¹

As for the question of the public pensions being supplemented by private agencies in order to give the family a higher standard of living, the United Charities took the position that, when it turned over a case to the Juvenile Court, the court was to assume the entire responsibility. The Jewish Charities, on the other hand, took the position that all agencies, public and private, should cooperate to bring family income up to an acceptable minimum. This minimum was to be enough for the Jewish mother to remain in her home and devote her entire time to bringing up her children. In line with this philosophy the Jewish Home Funding Society was to make a contribution not less than the amount the mother was expected to earn

by the Juvenile Court. Thus she could stay at home. It would seem that there was no viable alternative to mothers' pensions which was superior to it.⁴²

The only conclusion possible is that the program was monetarily beneficial to the limited number of people it aided, especially when the options are examined. In the end the mothers' pensions program in Illinois may have been the best that could be formulated given the nature of the alliance between the social reformers and the progressive elements of the executive and professional upper class. This elite, which provided the mainline financial support of the various social welfare organizations involved, saw the program as a moderate solution to the dilemma of keeping working-class families, consisting of a mother and her children, together in such a way as to enhance their function of raising useful citizens.

Mothers' pensions accomplished this task more cheaply than the institutionalization of dependent children. These businessmen and professionals may well have opposed the entire project if it had provided a family income higher than that attainable from unskilled private wages. In addition, the social control aspect was essential to the social reformers and the business backers of the program. The aim was not just the humanitarian concern over the fate of the widow's family, but also the pragmatic goal of manipulating the behavior of the mother

and her children in such a way as to assure them of a competitive position within the corporate economy.

Mothers' pensions in Cook County from the date of their inception continued to develop and expand. In 1913, the first full year of operation, Cook County spent \$86,249; by 1917 this figure had risen to \$281,273 and rose again by 1928 to \$1,046,453. In addition, in 1913 there were 533 families on the average per month, but in 1917 the figure was 966 and in 1928, 2,075. The average amount, therefore, spent per case per year, including the cost of administration, was \$162 in 1913, \$307 in 1917, and \$505 in 1928. In light of this fact, the program must have at least moved in the direction of the objectives for which it was designed.⁴³

With this expansion of the program in Cook County the need for state supervision and later funding, in order to achieve a more uniform level of standards in relation to benefits and operating procedures throughout the state, became more apparent.⁴⁴ To meet this need the Illinois General Assembly in 1929 regularized the entire program on the state level. This new legislation was supported not only by the State Department of Public Welfare but also by the State Federation of Labor and a citizens' group from Cook County. Its major objective was to widen the base on which taxation could be gathered for the pensions. The state government would grant money to the county in

return for which it must abide by newly set state standards.⁴⁵

The advantage of a partially financed plan was that there was no limit on state taxation while the county limit was 25¢ on every \$100 evaluation. In an earlier state court decision it was found that the Cook County tax of three-tenths of a mill on a dollar evaluation for the mothers' pension fund must be included when figuring the county 25¢ limitation. Another advantage of a state financed plan was that it would help equalize the variations in payments from county to county which in 1929 ranged from \$2.50 to \$15 a month per child. In order to take advantage of state grants many counties set up mothers' pension programs for the first time.⁴⁶

Under the 1929 legislation Cook County received a grant of \$134,756 based on a percentage of the total county expenditure for mothers' pensions. The grant was relatively high because the state plan only took into consideration the ability and willingness of a county to appropriate funds. The practical result was that those counties which were already best off remained best off.⁴⁷

To remedy this defect, a meeting of the Governor's Child Welfare Commission, a group of prominent businessmen, social workers, and labor leaders, was held in Chicago in December 1929. The conference agreed upon a new plan which revolved around the principle of equalizing opportunity. Under this plan the number of children in the

county, the value of the property, and the need of the poorer counties for extra help would all be taken into account. Their plan was submitted to the state legislature and passed.⁴⁸

In order to carry out the principles of the conference report, the state legislature set up three related funds: general distribution, equalization, and stimulation. The first fund was to be distributed on the basis of population. It set a ceiling on the amount a county could dispense in the form of mothers' pensions, assuming that thirty needy children in each 10,000 population require such aid and allowing \$120 per child per year. Each county would receive an equal percentage of that maximum figure. If a county had trouble raising funds to meet its needs, it could apply to the state equalization fund for an extra grant.⁴⁹

If a county had trouble meeting these standards it became eligible for a grant from the Stimulation Fund. A county could also be given a grant to improve its standards of work above those set by the state. Such grants might include funds to pay the fees of doctors who were employed to give physical examinations to applicants.⁵⁰

The plan also contemplated state-wide minimum standards. These regulations required that individual counties make and keep case histories of applicants, draw

up budgets for each family prior to the grant, and attend to the strict supervision of the pensioned mothers by social workers. This supervision was to consist of four visits by the case worker to families living in the county seat, two visits to those living outside it. And, finally, the legislature required all counties to report to the State Department of Welfare on each case twice a year.⁵¹

Taking all things into consideration, these state grants and rules actually made little impact on Chicago because its level of pensions was already relatively high and its rules of distribution strictly enforced. The importance of the new law lay in the fact that the state government had for the first time accepted some responsibility in administering this social welfare program. From 1929 mothers' pensions were no longer a local concern, but rather a state function. As it turned out, state administration became the bridge for federal government involvement.

In Cook County the family aid program continued to expand in 1930 with an annual expenditure of \$1,063,396 and with a monthly average of 1,676 families being aided. This expenditure represented 38.1 per cent of the total public welfare budget for Cook County. By 1932 the annual cost of mothers' pensions leveled off at \$1,171,956 and 1,909 families helped, while 1932 saw a slight drop in expenditures to \$908,940 and 1,400 families aided. Most

significantly, mothers' pensions represented only 9.4 per cent of the total public relief cost in 1931.⁵² This percentage distribution drop represents the fact that more and more of the public relief money was going to aid the unemployed. The county along with private agencies was simply being swamped by this burden as will be demonstrated in the chapter on "Unemployment: A Plague." As the depression dragged on and further cuts were made between 1932 and 1933 (for example, there was a 22.4 per cent cut in funds and 22.6 per cent in number of families aided in Cook County), social workers and progressive businessmen in Chicago began to look to the federal government for aid in financing relief.⁵³

There is, therefore, a clear line of progression from the local county program to the Federal Social Security Act of 1935. The Cook County program and the later state program of aid to dependent children were vital links in the growth of a more centralized welfare state. The mothers' pension plan as it was set up in Cook County was also significant in that it was not only a pioneer work, but also became a model for other states as well as for the federal program.

Under the bill passed by Congress in 1935 the state could receive federal aid for its dependent children programs if it provided one-third of the expenditures and if it set up a single agency to administer the program. In addition, the state was required to keep suitable

records that might be inspected by the federal coordinating agency. There was, however, no national standard of need. In short, the state had almost complete discretion in administering the program if it chose to in order to join the program.⁵⁴

In Illinois, for example, although a special state legislative session accepted the federally required county welfare administration law in October 1925 and set up a unified agency through which the federal government could channel its share of the expenditures, the state did not formally join the program for another two years. The reasons for this delay will be fully examined in the chapter on relief in times of depression.⁵⁵

The Chicago experience played a vital role in the development of the modern Aid to Families with Dependent Children program in terms of values, goals, and operating procedures. In short, it helped create the pattern of the modern welfare system, the paternalistic bureaucratic control of potentially disruptive elements of the working class by the middle-class social workers initially acting out of humanitarian concern for the plight of the poverty stricken widowed mother. In their endeavor, the reformers acted with the consent and in many cases the support of the progressive executives of large corporations and the professional elite of the city. The program in no way threatened, but may well have been a help in their desire for a stable society.

As A. J. Davies pointed out in an article published in the American Journal of Sociology in 1930:

If it [mothers' pensions] had been a measure that would interfere in any way with economic interests, then we could have predicted an effectively organized opposition with a strong lobby, and we should have been able to find in one of the political parties some evidence as to whether they opposed or endorsed the idea.

Actually, he pointed out that the program brought relief to poor families at less cost than institutionalizing the dependent children of those families.⁵⁶ In addition, it had the advantage of exerting control over the entire family and not just the institutionalized child. The family could be guided for its own moral and social good, as well as Americanized in the case of ethnic families. The emphasis on the utilization of trained social workers instructed in the methods of modern casework made the program attractive to the professionals within the welfare system. Mothers' pensions were also acceptable to the general public for sentimental reasons. They could all graphically imagine the plight of the poor widowed mother struggling to feed her hungry children.⁵⁷ All in all, the program allowed those elements of the economic elite who were morally sensitive to resolve its dilemma of trying to satisfy its humanitarian urges without challenging the essential power and wealth distribution in the society. As a bonus, they achieved a measure of social control over the lives of the working class.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER VI

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⁵Sophonisba Breckinridge, "Neglected Widow in the Juvenile Court," American Journal of Sociology, XVI (July, 1910), 53-87.

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¹⁰Joel D. Hunter, "Administration of the Funds to Parents Law in Chicago," Survey, XXI (January 31, 1914), 516-18.

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¹⁵Sherman C. Kingsley, "How Mothers' Pensions Operate in Illinois," Conference of Charities and Correction: 1914, p. 437.

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¹⁷Laws of Illinois, 1911, p. 126.

¹⁸Hunter, pp. 516-18.

¹⁹Grace Abbott, From Relief to Social Security (Chicago, 1941), p. 266.

²⁰William Hard, "Moral Necessity of State Funds to Mothers," Survey, XXIX (March 1, 1913), 769-773.

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²⁶Mary E. Richard, "Pensions and the Social Worker," Survey, XXIX (February 15, 1913), 665-66; Mary E. Richmond, "Motherhood and Pensions," Survey, XXIX (March 1, 1913), 774-80.

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³²Laws of Illinois, 1913, p. 127.

³³Breckinridge and Abbott, pp. 15-21.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 15-21; "Funds to Parents," Survey, XXIX (January 4, 1913), 413-14.

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³⁸Gerald D. Suttles, The Social Order of the Slum (Chicago, 1968), p. 45.

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⁴⁴L. E. Mitchell, "Place of Mothers' Aid in a State Program of Child Welfare," National Conference of Social Work Proceedings: 1928, pp. 478-91.

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⁴⁶Edna Zimmerman, "State Aid for Mothers' Pensions in Illinois," Social Service Review, XI (1930), 222-37.

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⁵²Clorinne McCulloch Brandenburg, "Chicago Relief Statistics, 1928-1931," Social Service Review, VI, No. 2 (June, 1932), 270-79; Grace Abbott, "Recent Trends in Mothers' Aid," p. 206.

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CHAPTER VII

CHILDREN AS SOCIAL CAPITAL

A majority of people connected with the development of the social welfare system in Chicago considered the plight of children who were forced prematurely by poverty to compete in the labor market to be a most pressing problem. Social reformers, progressive business executives, and professionals agreed that excessive work early in life often led to physical and mental exhaustion by the time adulthood was reached. They believed that people could only have a rewarding life if their childhood was reserved for school, "chores," and play. In this way a child's physical and mental vigor could be built up so as to make him a more valuable citizen who could function in an increasingly more complex industrial society. Such attitudes led naturally to the support of laws that prevented children from working, and that compelled school attendance, assuming that their idle time was used effectively.¹

Although labor union leaders supported child labor laws for the same reasons as the middle-class social

reformers, they also sought to remove children from the labor market. By so doing they hoped to open up new jobs for adults and remove the depressing influence on wages of under paid children.² Therefore, when it became apparent by 1903 that the child labor laws of 1893 and 1897, described in the first chapter, had numerous defects that needed correction, it was these groups, middle-class reformers, progressive businessmen, and organized labor, that coalesced into a pressure group to lobby for a new one.

Perhaps the greatest deficiency in the 1897 law was the provision that permitted children between fourteen and sixteen years of age to work if they obtained a parental affidavit varifying the age requirement. This led to great abuses. While preventing the employment of many children under fourteen, the affidavit system seemed to encourage the commission of perjury by some parents who desperately needed the added earnings. Coming from rural societies where boys under fourteen worked alongside men in the fields, they saw nothing wrong in the fraudulent affidavit. This loophole made it possible for 3,000 children under fourteen to work with false affidavits in the autumn of 1902, according to Edgar T. Davies, Illinois Chief Factory Inspector. Many social workers in Chicago agreed with Davies that such a situation was intolerable and should be corrected by the enactment of a new child labor law.³

To lobby for such a new law in the Illinois state legislature, a special committee was formed under the chairmanship of Davies. Among the members were:

Edwin G. Covley, Chicago School Superintendent
 Hasting H. Hart, President of Child's Home and Aid Society
 E. P. Bucknell, General Superintendent of the Chicago Bureau of Charities
 Jane Addams, Head Resident, Hull House
 Harriett M. Van de Vaart, Industrial Committee, State Federation of Women's Clubs
 Judge R. S. Tuttle, Juvenile Court, Cook County
 George Thompson, Chicago Federation of Labor
 T. D. Hurly, President of Visitation and Aid Society
 W. L. Bodine, (ex-officio) Superintendent of Compulsory Education, Chicago⁴

The committee was carefully balanced between the various interests supporting child labor legislation as can be seen by the various organizations that each represented. Although there were no businessmen on the committee, their influence was felt through the Chicago Bureau of Charities and other reform and welfare organizations to which they contributed heavily. It should also be pointed out that organized labor had only one representative on the committee, while all the rest of the members belonged to either middle-class reform or relief agencies, or were administrators in state and city institutions dealing with children.⁵

After some deliberation the committee drew up a bill based largely on a Massachusetts' child labor law. The Massachusetts' law had prohibited the employment of children under fourteen at any gainful occupation in any

theater, concert hall, or place of amusement where intoxicating liquors were sold, or in any mercantile institution, store, office, hotel, laundry, manufacturing establishment, bowling ally, elevator, factory, or workshop. In addition, no child might be employed at any work performed for wages when the public schools were in session or before 7:00 A.M. or after 7:00 P.M.⁶

The Illinois law was a major improvement over the 1897 statute in that now age and school certificates were to be issued only by superintendents of schools or principals of parochial schools upon proof of age of the children by records such as the previous school census, birth or baptismal certificates, or school records. If such proof was not available, the parents were asked to take an oath before the juvenile or county court as to the child's age. The court might, if it was satisfied that the parents were not committing perjury, issue an age certificate. A further tightening up of regulations was accomplished by requiring the child worker to demonstrate his ability to read and write by asking him to produce a weekly certificate proving that he was attending evening school until his fourteenth birthday. It also provided that children between fourteen and sixteen years of age might not be employed for more than eight hours in any one day or more than forty-eight hours in any one week and only between 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. Finally, certain

dangerous occupations were prohibited to this age group of children.⁷

Introduced into the House of Representatives of February 5, 1903 by Representative Frederick L. Davies, a Republican from Cook County, the bill was referred to the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Affairs. When it held public hearings, a long line of witnesses appeared in behalf of the bill, including members of juvenile reform organizations, women's clubs, charitable associations, as well as state and local federations of labor. The bill was, however, openly opposed in the Committee by the glass bottle manufacturing interests of the state which employed large numbers of children. They utilized child labor because they needed young, agile and quick employees to run the molten glass to the blowers before it cooled. It was a precarious job since one misstep could mean severe burns by the hot glass.⁸

Social reformers suspected that the bill was secretly opposed by certain other commercial influences which did not want the law extended to their businesses. This was particularly true of the hotel and laundry operators and less so of the department store representatives who had not yet installed the new pneumatic tubes that could replace the running children who made change, at an even lower cost.⁹

It seemed that public opinion had been so thoroughly aroused by the social reformers through speeches, articles,

and pamphlets that few businessmen who depended on the public good-will could afford to openly oppose the bill. In addition, by 1903 most large-scale corporations had found child labor to be unprofitable for a variety of reasons, including the child labor laws of 1893 and 1897, negative publicity, and the increasing need for semi-skilled workers. As early as 1900, 50 per cent of all child labor was located in the small garment sweat shops, the equally small metal and wood working shops, telegraph, newspapers, and department stores. Most of the others were agricultural workers. As the bill exempted employees in the telegraph, newspaper, and agriculture businesses, and with the decline of child labor in department stores, there were few large businessmen who had a self-interest in attempting to continue child labor. In the garment trade as well as wood and metal workings, the individual shop owner had little political power.¹⁰

The Committee on Labor and Industrial Affairs made a few minor changes in the original draft and then reported the bill to the full House with a favorable recommendation. After it was approved with only one negative vote, the Senate passed it by an overwhelming margin and conservative Republican Governor Richard Yates, signed it into law in May 1903.¹¹ Writing in 1907, Edgar T. Davies, the Illinois State Factory Inspector, ascribed its success to the Chicago social reformers, especially Jane Addams whose "influence and ready arguments constituted a strong moral force in

securing the enactment of the law."¹² Perhaps of equal importance was the absence of big business opposition to a law that challenged only the interests of some marginal businesses. Significantly, the money which made it possible for Jane Addams and her co-workers to lobby in Springfield and to arouse favorable public opinion came from the progressive elements of the corporate executive and professional elite of Chicago.

Although after 1910 the federal census continued to experience a decline in child labor, social reformers maintained that there was more child labor in the city than the census recorded but admitted that it was declining.¹³ It is difficult to determine if this was the effect of the 1903 child labor law or just a reflection of the declining profitability of child labor in a maturing economy. The social reformers believed that the provisions of the 1903 law which fined employers for hiring children without certificates, even if only sporadically enforced, increased the risk of employing them.

Another factor which certainly played a key role in the declining child labor rate was the new tough compulsory school attendance law passed in the same year, by the Illinois state legislature. Under it all children between seven and fourteen must attend some public or private school for the entire time during which the school was in session, which by state law was to comprise at

least 110 days of actual teaching. Although allowing exemptions for physical or mental incapacity, the law eliminated those for hardship cases which had weakened the earlier statute. Finally, the appointment of truant officers was made mandatory for the local school board.¹⁴ Passed at the request of the same groups which had pressed for the child labor law, it enjoyed little support from the immigrant families that needed the earning of every member.¹⁵ Speaking for the advocates, Sophonisba Breckinridge promised that it would keep children under fourteen out of the shop and off the streets. It would keep them under the socializing influence of the schools which acculturated foreign immigrant children to the values and life style of the American middle class. It also taught the social mobility myth in which, by hard work, honesty, and thrify, one climbed the ladder of success. In reality the public school helped the talented few rise relatively high, and aided the rest to make modest gains at the bottom of the ladder, from unskilled to semi-skilled to skilled workers, for example, among the Italians in Chicago. The effect of such an education was to make the vast majority of the working class accept the bourgeois corporate industrial system and its role in it.¹⁶

Compulsory education gained widespread support from a variety of groups. Progressive businessmen saw it as an investment in social capital that was spread out through taxation on a broad base, while educators viewed

it as a way to make their work more effective by increasing their audience. Even local shopkeepers welcomed the elimination of pilfering children for a few hours each day. Labor Unionists supported compulsory education as an effective way of keeping children off the labor market. Thus, the law had a little something in it for everyone.¹⁷

Even though the two child welfare laws were enforced to a much greater extent than the earlier laws had been, they too contained loopholes and limitations on application. One such limitation was that the strongest provisions of the child labor law applied only to boys and girls under fourteen. Perhaps more disturbing to social reformers was the lack of comprehensiveness. In order to plug this loophole, the failure to include the street trades, a new child labor bill was introduced into the state legislature in 1911. It was the result of a meeting of representatives from various clubs and reform organizations interested in child welfare called by the Consumers' League of Illinois. Jane Addams and the secretary of the League pleaded for action to relieve the plight of small children ruthlessly exploited by the newspapers, the gum manufacturers, and the telegraph companies which kept children in the streets either selling items or delivering messages late at night and in morally compromising situations.¹⁸

At the League's meeting, the conferees set up a committee to draft a bill to regulate the street trades. Composed of representatives from the Board of Education,

the Mothers' Congress, the Juvenile Protective League, and the Consumers' League, the committee developed a bill that would eliminate children twelve years old from selling in the streets at night. Introduced in the House, the bill died in the Committee on Labor and Industrial Affairs.¹⁹

The defeat may be explained in part by the powerful opposition of most of the Chicago newspapers which pictured their newsboys as junior independent merchants who learned thrift and diligence by selling papers on the city streets. In addition, the labor unions remained relatively indifferent because the street trades in no way affected organized labor interests; these working children neither depressed wage scales nor took jobs away from more mature workers.²⁰

Despite this setback, the Illinois Committee on Social Legislation, a lobbying group to which many of the Chicago welfare organizations belonged, prepared and presented a new child labor bill to the state legislature in 1915 through a Republican Representative from a northern dairy and suburban county.²¹ The bill would bar a fifteen-year-old during the school year and a thirteen-year-old during vacation from working. No child would be allowed to work at any job if he was below the stipulated ages. In addition, work permits for children between sixteen and eighteen, and special summer vacation work permits for children between fourteen and sixteen as well as an eight-hour day for boys

under sixteen and for girls under eighteen would be required. It also permitted no night work except for girls between sixteen and eighteen who could be granted permits to appear on stage. Finally, the age limit for night messengers would be fixed at twenty-one years.²²

The House Committee hearing on this child labor bill lasted almost two months as testimony for and against it dragged on. The main argument against the bill revolved around the special pleadings of businesses that employed children as errand boys, and in other tasks that older workers found either menial or economically unrewarding. Other witnesses thought that the law would be an unjustifiable invasion of the sanctity of the home in the form of a paternalism which was "taking away from the father and mother the responsibility of their brood." This argument does not seem to have swayed minds one way or the other. The 1897 law, which had similarly invaded the home, had passed with only one negative vote. On the other hand several manufacturers wrote to the Committee urging passage of the bill in words such as "the highest business efficiency demands the elimination of children under sixteen years old from industrial pursuits."²³

The bill was finally reported out of committee with eleven amendments which made it less restrictive. Even so, it expired on the order of third reading. The reason for its defeat may be seen in the demands of

Representative William J. Graham, a Republican from a rural county, for substantive amendments. He told the bill's sponsors that he could not support it unless it was changed in such a way as to allow boys to be employed in agriculture, as well as in the distribution of newspapers and periodicals during the hours when the public schools were not in session.²⁴

Both the newspaper and agriculture interests were successful in blocking the legislation by splitting the reformers over whether or not to accept the amendments. In the end the bill died because of this lack of agreement among reformers, and not primarily from the opposition of manufacturing interests. In 1915 the State Department of Factory Inspection made a special investigation of employer attitudes concerning further restrictions upon child labor. It concluded that the majority of the employers who responded to the questionnaire were in favor of additional restrictions, although they were vague as to what concrete limitations they would favor.²⁵ Many, no doubt, agreed in principle but disagreed on example.

While attempting to pressure the state legislature into enacting new safeguards for the child in the store and factory, social reformers were also seeking on the local level to wipe out or at least regulate the street trades. This was not a new concern. As early as 1910

social workers in Chicago had determined to move against this loophole in the child labor laws. The state child labor laws had neglected to mention the child who worked in the city streets as a merchant, buying goods or newspapers on credit and paying for them from the proceeds on sales. There were no rules, for example, prohibiting the smallest child from working long hours at night, so long as he was an entrepreneur rather than an employee.

In order to remedy this situation the Consumer's League of Illinois on November 2, 1910 called a new meeting of representatives of various Chicago social reform organizations. Jane Addams made a very effective plea for a law which would regulate the street trades so as to ameliorate its worst abuses. In response to her speech, the conferees formed a committee of representatives from the Consumer's League, the Juvenile Protective League, the Chicago Board of Education, and the Mothers' Congress to apply pressure to the Chicago City Council. It drafted a model ordinance and presented it to the City Council where it, like the state bill, died a victim of apathetic public opinion and active newspaper opposition.²⁶

In order to mobilize public opinion behind street trade reform, the Committee decided to set up a child welfare exhibit in the city to "visualize and dramatize to the community what could be done for children to better their condition." Mrs. Cyrus H. McCormick, Jr. assumed all the expenses connected with the exhibit while Jane

Addams became its chairman.²⁷ In order to publicize the Child Welfare Exhibit the committee placed advertisements on store and house windows as well as on billboards and in street cars. One of the advertisements was headlined

IF YOU HAVE A CHILD, OR EVEN EXPECT TO HAVE ONE, COME
TO THE CHILD WELFARE EXHIBIT. THE LIFE AND WELFARE
OF YOUR CHILD MAY DEPEND UPON YOUR VISIT.

The committee members hoped that a large number of citizens could be enticed into visiting the displays.²⁸

Opening at the large Chicago Coliseum in May, for two weeks the exhibits contained pictures, signs, charts, and art work showing the results of poor wages and long hours on working children. One section was filled with photographs of little gum sellers, newsboys and girls and other child street venders late at night. The slogan under the pictures read "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy and a truant." On another screen a picture of a small boy was displayed standing between an ash pile, an unpaved alley, unclean streets, and a vacant lot on one side and on the other the question "Is this equation true; a good citizen ten years later."²⁹

As a result of the exhibit the sponsors published a handbook of the various child labor conferences held in conjunction with the project. They made sure that it was distributed free to politicians and prominent citizens who might be influential in getting child labor laws on the books. One section of the handbook addressed itself to the problem of children engaged in the street trades.

These children were pictured as being not only deprived of the normal pleasures of childhood, but also as being subjected to tremendous moral pressures that might incapacitate them for future citizenship. This was especially true in the area of education. In one of the working-class schools of Chicago, the study found that pupils were trading in the streets in addition to attempting to gain an education. The percentage of these working pupils were:

65 per cent of fifth grade children
 35 per cent of fourth grade children
 15 per cent of second grade children
 12 per cent of first grade children³⁰

All of these children with an average age of eight were not only attending school twenty-five hours a week, but in many cases were working an excessive number of hours. The hours as reported by the children were:

1 boy over 50 hours
 4 boys over 40 hours
 5 boys over 35 hours
 7 boys over 30 hours
 18 boys over 20 hours

Their average earnings per week were found to be:

fifth grade children	\$1.18
fourth grade children	.85
third grade children	.60
second grade children	.43
first grade children	.36 ³¹

The Handbook of the Chicago Welfare Exhibit sadly concluded that it was:

. . . a pitiable sum to compensate for the physical weariness and moral risk attending street trades in a large city. School reports show that street trades,

when carried on by young children, lead to truancy, low vitality, dullness, and the breaking down of parental control. Since the children are on the streets at all hours, careless habits are developed which often lead to moral ruin to both boys and girls.³²

In effect the authors were telling middle-class people that the cost of street-trade work by children was too high because it led to moral ruin and juvenile crime. They, as victims of crime, were the underwriters of a hidden cost of the street trades.

The Child Welfare Exhibit was partially successful in its objective to awaken the public conscience, or its fear, for by 1912 public pressure had built up sufficiently to persuade the City Council to pass an ordinance regulating the street trades. At a time when a similar bill again failed to pass the legislature, Chicago forbade any girl under eighteen to sell anything on the streets of the city, and limited a boy under the age of fourteen working in the streets to the daytime hours between eight and five. Certain occupations that were considered to be morally objectionable, such as messengers for the telegraph company, were completely outlawed for boys under fourteen. These boys often had to enter taverns or even houses of prostitution to deliver their telegrams. Finally, boys under the age of sixteen were allowed to sell at night if they obtained an age and school certificate through their district principal verifying that they were at least fourteen years old and were attending day

school. Regular police officers were to report violations of the law to their superior officer who sent a letter of warning to the violator's parents for the first offense and for a second one, took them to court where a fine of not more than \$100.00 could be assessed.³³

In practice the act was a failure, primarily because of a lack of cooperation on the part of the police officer who sympathized with the needs of the poor families from which the young street traders came. They were his neighbors, if not relatives, and he was most reluctant to add to their woes by causing a large fine to be assessed. In fact, he admired the ingenuity and hard work of the working child who was helping to keep his family above subsistence level. Finally, the police officer often had his own son working, or knew an officer who did. In the light of these facts, the attitude of the police is perhaps more understandable than the simplistic approach of the social reformers who prohibited a child from working but did not replace the family's loss of income from that source.³⁴

After the war the defects of the 1912 law became glaringly apparent. Even if the police honestly tried to enforce the law, it was next to impossible to do so. How could a police officer determine the age of a child selling on the streets other than by depending on the child's honesty or his own ability to guess? In addition, by

1922 the fourteen-year-old clause was out of date because the Certificating Bureau of the Board of Education no longer issued work certificates directly to a boy, but handled them directly through the employer. The child selling on the streets had no employer because even when he worked for a gum company or a newspaper he was an independent merchant and not an employee. He bought the papers on credit and sold them for cash at a slightly higher price. The difference between the two represented his profit.³⁵ (As in the role of jobber or wholesaler, the newspaper or the candy company need not seek certificates for its customers.)

The law, on the other hand, was effective in regard to girls. This was largely due to the clause forbidding any work under the age of eighteen, and the ability of police officers to distinguish between a fourteen-year-old girl and one eighteen years old. In addition, the police were willing to enforce this part of the law because it was in accord with their value system that young girls must be protected from the immorality of the streets unless they were already prostitutes.³⁶

On the local level in the 1920's social workers, especially those connected with the Chicago Juvenile Protective Association, continued to focus most of their attention in the area of the child on the problem of the newsboy, gum seller, and shoeshine boy. Of this group

they were most concerned about newsboys because theirs was the one group that seemed to be expanding.³⁷

There was a state law, part of a dependent child law passed much earlier, which prohibited boys under ten from street selling. The statute, however, was widely evaded by using young boys to deliver papers to night newspaper stands but not to sell them. Sometimes the state law was openly evaded and there were many reports in the files of the Juvenile Protective Association of boys under ten selling papers late at night. In one case an agent of the Juvenile Protective Association reported a boy of eight repeatedly selling newspapers at a certain newsstand until after 1:00 A.M. on numerous nights. After an investigation the boy turned out to be the son of a policeman.³⁸

Boys over ten but under fourteen could legally sell newspapers during the day when the school was not in session, according to the 1912 city ordinance. In most cases the state labor law did not apply because the child was not employed, but rather worked independently. Thus, boys over fourteen years old were not covered by state or local law, and could be found working in the streets late at night.

The Juvenile Protective Association decided in 1924 to open a campaign against the street trades, especially against flagrant violations of the weak state and

local child labor laws. As the opening gun of the campaign the Association sent agents to the lower level of a Chicago boulevard where the evening special edition of the next morning's newspapers were loaded onto trucks. These agents, keeping watch each night after 8:30 P.M., found boys between ten and fifteen taking bundles of papers which came down the chutes and loading them onto waiting trucks. Once the trucks were loaded, five to fifteen boys climbed aboard each truck. They were taken out to the various neighborhoods where each was given on credit a quota of papers to sell on a particular street. To allow them enough time to sell their newspapers the truck did not return to pick them up until 1:00 A.M. At that time each boy paid for the papers he had gotten on credit.

About one-third of the boys were then dropped off at convenient corners so that they could go home. The rest, however, remained on the trucks and returned with them to the garage at about 2:30 A.M. In a small upper room over the garage the boys would sleep and often gamble. According to the Juvenile Protective Association this was the method that most of the morning newspapers such as the Chicago Tribune used to enlarge their circulation.³⁹

The results of this situation came to the attention of the Juvenile Courts repeatedly during the period 1924-1927. According to F. Zeta Youmans speaking in 1927:

Boy after boy came before Judge Bartelme with the same story. Truant from school. Away from home. Working at night for the paper. Sleeping in the garage. . . . Hours spent in cheap shows. . . . Raids on lunch wagons for food. . . . Money lost at gambling, filched from pockets when asleep. . . . Boys away from home months at a time.

The method of employing newsboys was undermining the social control by the community over the child by creating deviant children, especially in the area of morals.⁴⁰

The child-labor reformer of the twenties seemed more concerned with the fact that the child was given an opportunity to gamble than they were with the social-economic facts which forced lower-class children to earn a living. It is significant that most of those engaged in the news trade were lower-class youth. Economic necessity must have played the major role in propelling them into the streets to work.

In spite of these economic facts, the main thrust of the Juvenile Protective Association's argument against the street trades was that it continued to cause juvenile delinquency. To prove their argument the Association made a check at the Chicago Parental School in 1924. Of the 300 boys there, it found that 164, more than half, had been truant from school, away from home, and earning their way by newspaper selling. All of the boys were under sixteen. Many were too young to be granted work certificates.⁴¹

The Juvenile Protective Association decided that the quickest method to clean up the situation was by

direct action, as the legislative route seemed to be blocked on the issue. The officers scheduled a series of conferences with the assistant to the president of the worst offending newspaper, the Chicago Tribune, who assured them that steps would be taken to correct the situation. Despite these assurances, the same practices continued,⁴² much to the disappointment of the reformers.

The Association thereupon decided to intensify its campaign by asking the Judge of the Juvenile Court to invite the distribution manager to appear before him to explain why so many Tribune newsboys working under him were becoming juvenile delinquents. Under the pressure of publicity and possible legal action, he agreed to check on the ages of all boys directly or indirectly involved with the Chicago Tribune. In addition, he approved a new set of work rules under which no boy under fourteen would be allowed to buy the evening special edition of the next day's paper for resale, nor would any boy under sixteen be allowed to sleep in the garage or about the plant. This time the promise seems to have been kept, although the older boys probably now slept under bridges or in cheap hotels. A small advance in controlling the situation was made, and the moral outrage of the middle-class child labor reformers, such as Catherine de Bowen, were satisfied with what they thought to be the removal of temptations. Boys, nevertheless, continued to work long and hard hours out of economic necessity.⁴³

The nature of this limited advance in protecting children is clearly illustrated in the case of Joseph, who was nine years old when committed for the first time to the Parental School for truancy. He had left home in November 1924 and upon arrest had been away from home for three months. In order to support himself he sold papers from 9:30 P.M. to 2:00 A.M. making about fifty or sixty cents a night. The explained the reason for his working:

Sometimes I took money to my mudder. She always needs money. My fader died eight years ago. My mudder cleans a building at night. I got three sisters, one older, two younger dan me. Nobody works except my mudder. I wanted to help her so I went selling papers.⁴⁴

In effect, because Joseph by economic necessity was forced to work, he was made a semi-criminal and placed in an institution for "rehabilitation" by the welfare state system. Such case studies formed the basis for the Juvenile Protective Association's demand for more restrictive legislation concerning child labor without a word about the injustice of a system which forces children to work. Those few social workers who did speak of the injustice of such an economic system found they could make little headway toward fundamental change. Jane Addams argued that children should not be forced to support their families because their parents earned an inadequate wage. The children should be in school preparing for their own future. To keep them there she proposed subsidies paid by the state to finance the cost of their education and

provide for the loss of income to their families. Her proposal never left the ground because it was more simple and inexpensive to outlaw child labor.⁴⁵

That approach led to the Illinois effort to obtain the ratification of a federal amendment to allow Congress to legislate against child labor. After the Supreme Court in 1922 made it clear that any federal law which attempted to regulate child labor was an unwarranted extension of Congressional power to regulate interstate commerce, the National Child Labor Committee, of which many Chicago social reformers such as Jane Addams were members, began to demand an amendment to the Constitution. In 1924 the Congress approved such an amendment and sent it to the states. It specified:

Section 1. The Congress shall have the power to limit, regulate, and prohibit the labor of persons under eighteen years of age.

Section 2. The power of the several states is unimpaired by this article except that the operation of state laws shall be suspended to the extent necessary to give effect to legislation enacted by the Congress.⁴⁶

One historian believes that it passed the Congress because in an election year the Progressives were threatening to form an independent third-party, and liberals in both parties sought to head it off. As it was necessary for three-fourths of the states to ratify the amendment, senators and congressmen could vote for the amendment without the burden of final responsibility.⁴⁷

Once the amendment was passed by Congress the ratification battle in the various states began between its proponents and its opponents. Those who favored the adoption of the child labor amendment in the Illinois legislature were, according to Graham Taylor, "women and teachers, organized labor, social workers and churches." In addition, many manufacturers and merchants who believed that child labor was unprofitable as well as unjust to public interests also supported the amendment.⁴⁸

It is necessary to translate Taylor's idealistic terms into concrete groups. The Illinois Federation of Labor, for example, whose members did not want children to depress the wage scale or flood the labor market, supported the amendment. Other supporters included upper-middle class women's organizations that were traditionally sympathetic to the welfare system as it pertained to women and children, as well as those teachers and social workers whose profession was involved in protecting children from the rigors of industrial exploitation. The descendants of the genteel Protestant social gospelers could also be counted among its supporters. As for the "many manufacturers and merchants who believed that child labor was unprofitable," they were in large part the progressive corporation executives and professionals that usually supported the welfare system. On this issue, however,

many of them lacked their customary enthusiasm for reform measures.⁴⁹

Graham Taylor defined the opponents as "those that think it is a local or state area of action, and those who feel that it is an invasion of parental right." In more concrete terms, Taylor identified the Illinois State Manufacturer's Association and the textile and glass industries as well as seasonal employers of labor. This group was primarily made up of small manufacturers who could not, if forced to employ fully paid adults, compete with large established corporations and farmers as employers of seasonal labor.⁵⁰

In 1925 the Illinois Joint Committee to Urge the Ratification of the Child Labor Amendment was formed by the Child Welfare Committee of the Illinois Consumers' League as an umbrella organization for those who favored the amendment. A prominent member of the Women's City Club, Mrs. Anne Davis, was elected chairman by a board of social reformers selected by the Illinois Consumers' League.⁵¹

To finance the ratification campaign in the state legislature, the Joint Committee sent letters to businessmen thought to be sympathetic to the cause. Almost every returned letter expressed opposition to the amendment. A member of a Chicago meat-packing family that had supported other welfare proposals, Laurance A. Armour, offered a typically negative reaction:

I doubt very much the wisdom or the necessity of so drastic a federal measure as this act would pave the way. I do not believe it possible to rectify economic and social law by mere statute law. To a certain extent this is a condition which must work out its own salvation and it should, I believe, be regulated only in a local way. I am afraid that the evil issuing from a sweeping Federal law would far outweigh the good. . . . Besides . . . some children are better off in the "School of Everyday Experience" . . . [others can] contribute to the family income.⁵²

In the returned letters, the three most frequently mentioned objections were that the amendment and possible resulting federal legislation were an unnecessary interference with the function of the state, that it should be limited to those sixteen years old or under, and that it was economically unsound.⁵³

The question of why there was such intense business opposition to federal child labor regulation when there was so little on the state level is difficult to answer. Perhaps they simply did not want to give the federal government the power to interfere in employee-employer relations for fear that this would establish a dangerous precedent for more extensive regulation. Their strong prejudice in favor of decentralized governmental functions, state over federal action, must also have played a part. Such a motivation was clearly a factor for child-labor reformer, Henry P. Chandler, who believed that it was the duty of the state to regulate child labor and was afraid of giving the federal government too much power in the area of social welfare.⁵⁴

Of all the letters, the most favorable one simply stated: "I will give it careful thought." As a whole, they were so negative that Mrs. Bowen despairingly wrote to a friend and fellow worker for the child labor amendment that the letters "are all full of the same old arguments. I wish they would get a new line."⁵⁵

Perhaps the reformers should have anticipated business hostility, for the Chicago Industrial Club by a unanimous vote at one of its meetings came out in a public stand against the ratification of the child labor amendment. This position by the Industrial Club was extremely significant in that among its members were many of the progressive businessmen who had in the past supported social reforms. Their silence in the face of public apathy and the active opposition of more reactionary businessmen, as well as the rural employers of seasonal labor, spelled disaster for the amendment in the 1925-26 session of the state legislature.⁵⁶

The hard core progressive social reformers were not completely discouraged by the defeat of the amendment in the 1925-1926 session of the legislature, and began to plan a renewal of the fight. In anticipation of the 1927-1928 session they reorganized into a group named the Illinois Child Labor Committee. Although Miss Anne S. Davis remained chairman of the Committee, a number of new organizations were added to its membership and the goals were broadened to include the promotion of "constructive

legislation relating to child labor in Illinois." Its program was no longer limited to ratification of the amendment.⁵⁷

It is clear from the evidence that this reorganized committee was an attempt to unify the social welfare alliance which had split over the issue of federal regulation. In a speech to the members and potential members of the Illinois Child Labor Committee at the Chicago Women's Club in October 1926, Mrs. Blaine carefully pointed out that many persons in the organization thought that federal regulation was unwise. She went on to identify the vice-chairman of the organization, Henry P. Chandler, as one such person. She made it clear that the committee was moving its interest from federal to state legislation.⁵⁸

Soon the Illinois Child Labor Committee decided to concentrate its efforts on the state level while not forgetting the federal child-labor amendment. The drive for ratification was no longer to have first priority. Instead it planned to carry on a campaign of education throughout the state to awaken its citizens to the fact that Illinois had not done all it could have done to protect the children of the state against hazardous employment. This line of attack was designed to take advantage of the employers' defense that they were against federal regulation of child labor because this was an intrusion into the function of the state. In effect, the child

labor reformers said all right we believe you but now help us up-date state reform.⁵⁹

To give businessmen and upper-class people another incentive to join the crusade each piece of stationery of the Illinois Child Labor Committee carried the slogan in red, "Social Justice Is the Best Insurance Against Social Unrest." Once again the social reformers appealed to the upper class's fear of unrest and violence among the working classes. The best way to dampen down that restlessness was to ameliorate some of their grievances against the capitalist system.

By analyzing the various organizations which were members of the Illinois Child Labor Committee one composite picture of the type of person actively campaigning for further child labor reform legislation in the 1920's can be obtained. The following is a representative sample of the type of member organizations:

I. Church Groups:

1. Chicago Church Federation
2. Christian Citizens' Council
3. National Council of Jewish Women (Chicago Chapter)
4. Protestant Women's National Civic Federation
5. Scholarship Association for Jewish Children
6. Young Women's Christian Association

II. Public Agencies:

1. Chicago Board of Education
2. Cook County Board of Public Welfare

III. Social Groups:

1. American Association of University Women
2. Chicago's Women's Club
3. Illinois Federation of Women's Club
4. Junior League of Chicago
5. Norwegian Women's Federation Society
6. Women's City Club

IV. Political Clubs:

1. Cook County League of Women Voters
2. Illinois League of Women Voters
3. National Socialist Party
4. Woman's National Republican Club
5. Woman's National Democratic Club

V. Social Reform Organizations:

1. Chicago Council of Social Agencies
2. Chicago Federation of Settlements
3. Immigrant Protective League
4. Juvenile Protective Association

VI. Labor Unions:

1. Illinois State Federation of Labor
2. Illinois State Teachers Association

3. Illinois State Women's Trade Union League
4. Woman's Trade Union League of Chicago

VII. Miscellaneous:

1. Elizabeth McCormick Memorial Fund
2. Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers
3. Illinois Home Economics Association⁶⁰

Although there were representatives from organized skilled labor, the Jewish Community, and democratic socialism, the typical activist was a white, Protestant, upper-middle class woman who was actively involved in civic affairs. Thus, the movement was in effect one class legislating for another. There were no representatives on the committee from the poor immigrant families which were most likely to have a child working. Because of such a situation there was a heavy emphasis on the moral evil of child labor in the 1920's and very little stress on the economic reasons which often made it necessary for a child to work. There was also a vigorous accentuation on the value of education as a method of separating a potential middle class from the working class. To accomplish this goal, as many children as possible had to be in school and not working; thus, the need for further restrictions on the opportunities for the child to work.⁶¹

Their motives can be seen in the Committee's program for 1926. The main item on the agenda was a drive to get the Illinois legislature to pass a bill requiring an eighth grade education before children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen could be employed. In addition, the Committee called for wider opportunity for continuing education of those employed up to the age of eighteen as well as for further protection of children in unhealthy occupations.⁶² In 1927 the state legislature turned down the bills that would have incorporated the Illinois Child Labor Committee's programs into law. It seemed that many men wanted no further regulation of their businesses even on the state level. They joined with agricultural interests to block the legislation. This action on the part of businessmen casts some doubts on those who argued earlier against a federal amendment. It is only fair to point out though that as of 1927 Illinois already had some of the most restrictive laws concerning child labor.⁶³

Perhaps the single most important achievement of the Illinois Child Labor Committee was the 1929 legislative resolution directing Republican Governor Louis F. Emmerson to set up a state Committee on Child Welfare Legislation. The governor appointed an officer of the Child Labor Committee, Henry P. Chandler, as its chairman. Other members of the state Committee included Sophonisba Breckinridge and Joel Hunter, Superintendent of Chicago's

United Charities, as well as a host of other social workers.⁶⁴

The Committee formulated a series of proposals for new laws as well as improvements in existing ones. The Illinois Child Labor Committee in 1931 took these goals as their own and began to lobby through the Illinois State Federation for their incorporation into law. They included:

1. state supervision of compulsory school attendance
2. educational factories to care for non-academic type pupils in all communities
3. 18 years old as the age of release from compulsory education
4. 16 years old as the age set for leaving school for work regardless of the reason
5. the requirement of a state certificate for employed minors 16 to 18 years old to be issued only in cases of need
6. the requirement of special workmen's compensation for illegally employed minors under the age of 18 set up twice the rate of ordinary workmen's compensation [this provision was designed to make child labor unprofitable for the employer by raising the risks for him.]⁶⁵

Surprisingly, there was no reference to the proposed child labor amendment to the Federal Constitution. In the light of this fact, it is understandable to learn that in the 1931-1932 session the amendment remained bottled up in committee and never made it to the floor of the assembly for a vote. Even outside the ratification fight, the Illinois Child Labor Committee saw little of its program adopted before 1933. Henry P. Chandler later in 1931 remarked, "It is a matter of regret to report that the bills recommended by the Child Welfare Legislation

Committee all failed, with a few minor exceptions, in the closing days of the sessions of the House of Representatives."⁶⁶

Some of the apparent reluctance to continue expanding child labor laws in the 1920's may have stemmed from the fact that the state had some of the best laws in the nation already on the books. According to a report of the Federal Children's Bureau, entitled Child Labor in the United States, the Illinois child labor laws as of December 1, 1923 "were equal or superior to the standards set for factories of the first and second federal laws as well as most other state laws."⁶⁷

Thus, social workers in Illinois were caught on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand the usual business supporters of the social welfare system were against giving the federal government too much power over their business practices and were, thus, largely against federal regulation of child labor; while on the other hand they were against pushing Illinois child labor laws too far out in advance of other states. They did not wish to give their competitors an "unfair" advantage in the market place. Neither did they want to carry prohibitions on child labor too far for they believed that, if children were given too long a period of relative freedom from work even in school, they might never wish to go to work. In addition, this leisure time could breed subversive ideas. Perhaps

these businessmen were correct in their assessment if we look at the results of prolonged youth on the children of the 1960's and 1970's.

The example of the attempts at organizing a united front to pressure the state legislature to ratify the federal child labor amendment demonstrates the limits of progressive business social welfare reform. When many progressive businessmen and professional men came out against the amendment as "going too far," it was doomed to defeat in spite of the efforts of those social workers who favored it. In fact, within two years after Congress passed the amendment and the businessmen came out in opposition, the drive was blunted for ratification by the reorganization of the original committee into one with only peripheral interest in the issue, at least until 1933. The failure of the drive was written in the negative letters received by Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen. Many progressive businessmen in this situation believed that their interests were threatened, and the drive for the amendment was in effect stopped. With the opposition of agricultural interests, the Catholic Church, and reactionary businessmen, it is entirely possible that even though labor supported the amendment it would have, no matter what, failed in the state legislature, but without active progressive business support the amendment was doomed to failure.

In the next year a revolution occurred in Illinois politics when the Democratic party captured the governorship

and both houses of the state legislature, a phenomenon rarely seen in Illinois since the Civil War. Henry Horner was elected governor on a reform platform supported not only by the Chicago Democratic machine and The Chicago and Illinois Federation of Labor, but also by many of the city's most advanced progressive reformers. With his administration there was a decided shift toward the interests of organized labor, so much so that the Illinois legislature in its 1933-1934 session finally passed the Child Labor Amendment, despite the reservations of businessmen.

The suddenness of its passage leads to the speculation that as organized labor became more politically powerful and as the Chicago democratic machine became receptive to social welfare programs, the social reformers found themselves less dependent upon their business supporters. The social engineers could now work directly within the mass political New Deal coalition of ethnic groups, Blacks, and organized labor, instead of trying to convince the upper class to use its influence to secure the enactment of progressive legislation. In such a situation, there was the potential for a genuine radical reformation of a society freed from the restraints of upper-class interests.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER VII

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³⁶Ibid.

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⁴²Roger H. Freund to Miss Binford, January 29, 1925, Juvenile Protective Association MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Robert McCormick to Miss Jessie F. Binford, July 20, 1923, Juvenile Protective Association MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library.

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⁴⁴Youmans, "Kindergartens of Crime," p. 582.

⁴⁵Jane Addams, The Spirit of Youth (New York, 1910), pp. 107-35.

⁴⁶Willlliam E. Leuchtenburg, The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-32 (Chicago, 1958), pp. 99-100; Clarke A. Chambers, Seedtime of Reform (Minneapolis, 1963), pp. 29-40.

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⁵²Laurance H. Armour to Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, December 27, 1924, Juvenile Protective Association MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library.

⁵³Henry Farrot to Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, January 2, 1924, Juvenile Protective Association MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library; J. J. Donelly to Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, December 29, 1924, Juvenile Protective Association MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library.

⁵⁴Minutes of the Meeting of the Illinois Chicago Labor Committee, October 15, 1926, Anita Blaine McCormick MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

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⁵⁷Minutes of the Meeting of the Illinois Child Labor Committee, October 15, 1926, Anita Blaine McCormick MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

⁵⁸Illinois Child Labor Committee Paper, January 29, 1926, Ester Loeb Kohn MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library.

⁵⁹J. J. Donnelly to Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, December 29, 1924, Juvenile Protective Association MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library.

⁶⁰John B. Andrews to Ester Loeb Kohn, July 6, 1928, MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library.

⁶¹Illinois Child Labor Committee Pamphlet, 1931, Lea D. Taylor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library.

⁶²Meeting of Illinois Child Labor Committee, October 15, 1926, Anita Blaine McCormick MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

⁶³"Illinois Child Labor Committee History and Origin," December, 1952, Ester Loeb Kohn MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library.

⁶⁴Memo Regarding Bills Introduced in the Legislation on Recommendation of the Illinois Committee on Child Welfare Legislation, Julius Rosenwald MSS. University of Chicago Library.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Henry P. Chandler to Ester L. Kohn, June 26, 1931, Ester Loeb Kohn MSS. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library.

⁶⁷U.S. Children's Bureau, Child Labor in the United States (December 1, 1923).

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CHAPTER VIII

FEWER HOURS FOR LESS PAY

In 1909 there was no statute in Illinois limiting the maximum number of hours that a woman was allowed to work. Although the Sweat Shop Act of 1893 prohibited the employment of females in any factory for more than eight hours a day or forty-eight hours in one week, it had been declared unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court in 1895. Citing the Fourteenth Amendment, the judges had decided that sex alone could not be considered sufficient justification for restricting the fundamental right of a citizen to enter freely into a labor contract with an employer. The case against the law had been ably argued by lawyers hired by the Manufacturers' Protective Association (later known as the Illinois Manufacturers' Association) founded by small businessmen to block labor legislation.¹

The prospect for restricting women's hours looked hopeless in Illinois until 1908 when the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Oregon

ten-hour statute. In that case the judges ruled that a woman's health would be impaired if she was allowed to work over ten hours. The court had been impressed by a brief of more than 100 pages prepared by Louis D. Brandeis and Josephine Goldmark, President of the National Consumers' League.²

With the exception of two pages devoted to the traditional legal aspect of the case, the brief concentrated on documents made up from the "accumulated mass of British and Continental factory inspectors' reports, commissions, and enquêtes, as well as the observations of medical men and economists." On the basis of this brief the court rejected as a fiction the right of free contract regarding work and declared that "her physical nature and the evil effects of over-work upon her and upon her future children justify legislation to support her from the greed as well as the passion of men."³

In response to this decision the Women's Trade Union League of Illinois, with cooperation from one of its affiliated unions of waitresses, presented a bill to the Illinois legislature in 1909. It provided that women would not be allowed to work more than eight hours in factories, stores, laundries, telephone and telegraph offices, as well as a number of other establishments.⁴

Founded in 1903 the Women's Trade Union League was a coalition of the dominant middle-class

well-educated women social reformers and their allies among the more skilled unionized Americanized women immigrant workers. Because the alliance was largely directed by middle class-reformers and financed by sympathetic and enlightened members of the upper class, President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor never recognized it as a genuine trade union. In 1905, he permitted its delegates to sit but not to vote at the national convention.⁵

As might be expected from the character of its leadership and financeers, the Women's Trade Union League was relatively prudent in its demands. To a fellow businessman, Julius Rosenwald wrote one time that he was in the practice of contributing to the organization because it was led by reasonable women who were conservative in nature. He went on to assure his correspondent that, although he did not agree with everything that the League stood for, it was better for class relations if the workers graphically understood that capital was interested in their problems than if it seemed to them that capital was indifferent.⁶

Julius Rosenwald was certainly correct in his analysis of the Women Trade Union League's demands. In 1909 its published program included legislation to prohibit women from working more than eight hours a day or any hours at night. In addition, the League called for a

statute that would require employers to provide safety-regulated machinery, ventilated rooms, seats with backs, and separate toilet and wardrobe rooms. Finally, it wanted state legislation to keep married women from working immediately before or after childbirth.⁷

The League's leadership elite was also conservative. The Chicago branch of the league, for example, was led by middle-class social reformers. In 1908 its officers were Mrs. Raymond Robins, President; Miss Mary McDowell, Vice President; Miss Emma Steghagen, Secretary; and Miss Agnes Nestor, Treasurer. The only working class woman was Agnes Nestor, who was the President of a local Chicago glove-making union.⁸

In many ways Agnes Nestor was typical of working women who were members of the League. Most of them were in the garment trades where they labored at the relatively skilled jobs of glove, boot, shoe, and suspender making. The rest were largely either bindery workers or waitresses. In each of these trades there were fairly strong unions which were able to bargain effectively for better pay, shorter hours, and more humane working conditions. Most of the women were Americanized second and third generation immigrants. The single largest ethnic group represented was the Irish, rather than any of the newer Eastern and Southern European groups. Among bindery women, for example, only 1 1/2 per cent of them were immigrant girls

(first generation), while in the glove, boot, shoe, and suspender trade only 1 per cent of the workers were newly arrived foreign girls. The same low percentage was also found among the waitresses. These women represented the aristocracy among female labor and were closely allied with the trade unionism of the American Federation of Labor. If Gompers had been less suspicious of women as trade unionists, these groups would have had little need for the Women's Trade Union League. Even with his hostility, many of them, such as the waitresses, became recognized A.F.L. unions. All of them were able to bargain collectively with their employers with some measure of success with the financial and moral support of the Women's Trade Union League. Although most of these trade union groups had bargained for and received working conditions as good as, if not better than, the laws proposed by the Women's Trade Union League, they did have a significant problem.⁹

The great mass of women workers were unskilled recent immigrants who came from Southern and Eastern Europe and were divided by their language and cultural differences. They, like their unskilled menfolk, were difficult to organize because they were engaged in an intense struggle for existence under adverse circumstances. As they saw it, their only hope of escape from this dreary wheel of existence was the romantic dream of becoming,

as one social analyst phrased it, "the queen of some American's heart." Thus, they

prefer scrubbing in restaurants for five or six dollars a week which gives them a miserable existence in Polish town, to three or four dollars a week in addition to a good home in a private American family, because a private family with its long and uncertain hours, and Sunday work would interfere with their social pleasures and aspirations.¹⁰

Female trade unionists considered such a romantic attitude toward marriage as the answer to all problems to be irresponsible. Perhaps more importantly they feared that, in a situation where the mass of women workers were terribly exploited, it would be difficult to maintain their own higher standards. Thus, they could utilize the Women's Trade Union League not only as a source of middle-class funds and moral support, but also as a lever to pressure the state legislature to pass laws that would impose the obligation on employers to provide better working conditions for the majority of unskilled immigrant female laborers. Such action was rationalized as a humanitarian effort to help those immature women who could not or would not help themselves.

As a part of this effort to impose better working conditions on the unskilled female laborer, the League's attorney, Harold Ickes, persuaded Senator W. Clyde Jones, a Republican from Cook County, in March 1909 to introduce a women's eight-hour bill. It was immediately referred to the Committee on Labor, Mines, and Mining, where it

received a sympathetic hearing. After listening to the arguments of the lobbyists from the League, including Jane Addams, Emma Steghagen, Agnes Nestor, and Elizabeth Maloney, the committee reported the bill out with the recommendation that it be passed on the grounds that the limitation on hours was necessary to maintain a woman's health and morals.¹¹

At this point the Illinois Manufacturers' Association suddenly awoke to the fact that the eight-hour bill had a good chance of becoming law. In order to stall the progress of the bill while mustering the necessary strength to kill it, the Association demanded a new open hearing before the entire Senate on the grounds that it was their understanding that the bill was not to have been let out of committee so quickly. By vote of the Senate a new hearing was granted and scheduled.¹²

At the April hearings close to 400 lobbying manufacturers appeared to answer the pleas of the eleven persons that the league was able to send to Springfield. Each side was allowed three speakers who presented the advantages or defects of the proposed legislation. The manufacturers contended that the bill was unconstitutional and that, if it passed, their women employees would lose their Saturday half-holiday, receive less pay, and ultimately be displaced by men. They also brought from their factories a batch of petitions signed by their female

employees demanding the defeat of the bill. Even taking into consideration the facts that the petitions were drawn up by employers and that only a minority of their total working force signed them, it seems likely that many unskilled female workers opposed a forced shortening of hours with a parallel cut in wages. One manufacturer poked some fun at the upper-middle class "ladies" who supported the bill accusing them of coming from the class which created the need for long hours by generating great pressure at certain seasons such as Easter "when they would and must have their hats."¹³

Miss Maloney, a lobbyist for the bill, answered indirectly that it was the "wives and daughters of the manufacturers who got their Easter hats before Easter, but the working girls who were fighting for this bill have to wait until the prices are marked down."¹⁴ What she did not add was that the group for which the bill would have most effect, the unskilled immigrant female worker, could not afford to buy a hat before or after Easter. Nobody at the hearing was a member of this class; it had no voice of its own. Although the reformers claimed that long hours were a threat to a woman's health, they never explained how a struggling unskilled immigrant woman already on the verge of starvation was to make up the wages she lost when she was forced to work only eight hours a day instead of fifteen.

As the debate came to a close, Senator Jones came to the conclusion that the eight-hour bill could no longer be passed in the face of united small business opposition. In order to split this hostile block, he introduced a ten-hour bill that excluded hotels, retail stores, and restaurants from coverage. This maneuver not only lessened opposition among the excluded businesses, but also among many manufacturers that had already voluntarily established a ten-hour day in their plants. The manufacturers who employed women for more than ten hours or were antagonistic to the bill because of the possible precedent of state interference in the labor contract, were effectively isolated.¹⁵

In a last ditch effort to defeat the bill, Senators amended it so as to strike out the ten-hour section and add an eight-hour provision, realizing that it could not pass in that form. When the manufacturers' lobbyists heard that the bill was reported out of committee with the amendment, they went home thinking that the reformers had fallen for their trap. Senator Jones, with the approval of the Women's Trade Union League, struck out the eight-hour amendment. The bill, now for a ten-hour day, passed with large majorities in the Senate and the House. A rather conservative Republican, Governor Charles S. Deenen, then signed the bill into law. The friendly greeting between Chicago legislators in the closing moments of the

forty-sixth session of the Illinois Legislature was "The girls have won!"¹⁶ The question is, however, what did the girls win? It seems that all they gained was fewer hours for less pay.

The law, as finally enacted, simply provided that no female shall be employed in any mechanical establishment or factory, or laundry in this state, more than ten hours during any one day. The hours of work may be so arranged as to permit the employment of females at any times so that they shall not work more than ten hours during the twenty-four hours of any day.¹⁷

The State Department of Factory Inspection was given the duty to enforce the law.

The significance of the new law is hard to judge. The statute did not affect large numbers of women because the ten-hour work day, or even less, was prevalent in many industries, especially in large corporations and in the more skilled trades. Waitresses, glove-makers, and most others in unionized skilled trades already had won the ten-hour day through collective bargaining. The law was also limited to manufacturing and laundry establishments, thereby excluding the many women working in the hotels, restaurants, and telephone and telegraph establishments. Even where the law was applicable, it may have caused some severe hardships as unskilled women suddenly had their pay cut along with their hours.¹⁸

On the other hand it was a step toward the effective regulation of women's working hours by the state. Looked

at in this light, it had great educational value. Perhaps most importantly, it gave the Illinois Supreme Court a chance to reverse its earlier decision to bring it into line with the 1903 United States Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Mueller vs. Oregon*.

As soon as the law went into effect, W. C. Ritchie and Company, a box manufacturing concern, petitioned, along with the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, the courts to grant an injunction restraining the factory inspectors from enforcing the ten-hour law. They claimed that it interfered with a woman's freedom and prevented her from earning a living. In response, Judge S. Tuthill of the Circuit Court of Cook County, granted the restraining order on the grounds that the law was unconstitutional because it "virtually relegates women back to dependence," while it is the "constitutional policy of this state . . . to advance the cause of women and place them on an equal basis with men."¹⁹

The stage was set by this ruling for an epic battle before the state's Supreme Court between those who wished to limit the maximum number of hours a woman could work in any one day, and those who wished no such limitations. To argue the case for the law's constitutionality, the services of Louis D. Brandeis were secured as a special counsel for the state's attorney by the Chicago Women's Trade Union League. Miss Josephine Goldmark

of the National Consumers' League and Brandeis prepared a 610-page brief which represented years of work on the part of the organization. The brief was made public before the case began so as to arouse public support. The Russell Sage Foundation raised one-half the funds necessary to distribute the brief while an additional one-fourth was contributed by the National Consumers' League. The remaining one-fourth was collected in Illinois, not through a mass appeal but from a small number of interested people. The first donation was made by Mrs. Mary J. Wilmarth who was also a large contributor to other social welfare projects.²⁰

In essence, the brief documented the difference between men and women and the special dangers of long hours on women. Josephine Goldmark introduced the section containing a doctors' testimony with the statement that "the dangers of long hours for women arise from their special physical organization taken in connection with the strain incident to factory and similar work." All of the declarations which followed supported her contention. C. T. Graham, M.D., New York Medical Inspector of factories, typically reported:

The average healthy woman is very much inferior in physical strength and endurance to the average man. Her physical conformation is different, and the physiological and social parts that she plays in life differ from those played by man, therefore we find her more susceptible to the effects of hard

labor and prolonged or sedentary occupation, which susceptibility is increased during the child-bearing period.

For Goldmark, the conclusive proof that women were physically inferior to men was the statistical fact that, in all countries where statistics have been kept by sickness insurance societies, the rate of disease and death at an earlier age of women had been found to be higher than that of men.²¹

Once the brief was made public, large segments of middle class opinion were rallied to support the law. Graham Taylor reported that there was scarcely any dissent among the press of Chicago in its positive attitude toward the ten-hour statute. In addition, the Chicago Federation of Labor and the Illinois State Federation of Labor agreed that the law was essential in order to protect women from arduous factory work. Most of the city's women's clubs and churches also called on the Illinois Supreme Court to uphold the constitutionality of the law. The State Convention of the Baptist Churches passed by unanimous vote a resolution expressing their

heartiest interest in this call of our brothers of the Chicago Federation of Labor for our assistance, and pledge them our cooperation in their noble fight for shorter hours of toil for the women and girls of Illinois.²²

When the case opened before the Illinois Supreme Court in February 1910, the chambers were filled with representatives of Women's Trade Union Leagues of Chicago

and St. Louis, the Illinois branch of the American Association for Labor Legislation, and the Illinois branch of the National Consumers' League. They were there to give silent testimony to the fact that the best citizens were supporting the bill.²³

Although the Illinois Manufacturers' Association presented a strong case based on precedent in that a previous state Supreme Court had declared a similar law unconstitutional, the court held on April 21, 1910 that the law was acceptable. The judges were especially impressed by the brief submitted by Brandeis and Goldmark.²⁴

As soon as the Court made public this opinion, the Women's Trade Union League began to build a coalition to secure a new law that would extend the ten-hour limitation to women employed in telegraph and telephone, restaurant, hotel, retail, and transportation businesses. The coalition included the Chicago Federation of Settlements, American Association for Labor Legislation, the National Council of Women, Illinois State Federation of Labor, National Consumers' League, the Socialist Women's Organization, the Illinois State Federation of Women's Clubs, the women's colleges of Illinois, and the Young Women's Christian Association. The alliance had a very middle class coloration, the only exceptions being the Illinois Federation of Labor and the Socialist Women's

Organization. The rest were the usual social reform organizations backed financially by progressive business and professional men.²⁵

The coalition began its work for a new female labor law during the elections of 1910 for the General Assembly with the publication of a poster showing how each member of the last legislature had voted on the ten-hour bill of 1909. Social reformers believed that as a result of the mass distribution of the advertisement, a number of legislator candidates were defeated for re-election because of their opposition to the bill. Each candidate running for election was also questioned concerning his position on a new law that would extend protection to more occupations. The vast majority responded that they would support such legislation.²⁶ This information was also published in time for the election.

Filled with optimism, the organizations supporting a new female labor law appointed a legislative lobby committee of seven members, five from Chicago and two from Springfield. Most of their expenses were to be paid by the Women's Trade Union League. This committee submitted to the state legislature at the beginning of its session a new ten-hour bill that extended coverage to a variety of new occupations. In addition, it provided for a maximum fifty-four hour week commonly thought of as a five and one-half day week. It further required each employer to

keep a written record of the hours worked by their female employees.²⁷

An amended law striking out the fifty-four hour provision was easily passed through the state legislature with little opposition from the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, most of whose members were already covered by the old ten-hour law and, therefore, were untouched by the proposed law. Working alone, the representatives of the vulnerable hotels, retail shops, restaurants, and telegraph or telephone establishments did not have the political clout to stop the bill.²⁸

In addition, many of the larger department stores, restaurants, and hotels had already decided that a ten-hour day was a good policy on practical business grounds. Therefore, men like Julius Rosenwald, President of Sears Roebuck and Company, did not obstruct the ten-hour bill. He no doubt believed that the working of women over ten hours a day was detrimental to their health and that it was, therefore, immoral to force them to do so. He would not work his women long hours at Sears Roebuck but he could control the actions of his competitors only through legislation. It may even be argued that it was in his economic interest to force his smaller competitors to adhere to high standards in the area of female working conditions. Such norms, by increasing the labor costs

of the small retail shop, made it more difficult for them to compete with the large department stores.²⁹

Even though they lacked support, the opposition tried one last ploy to stop the bill from becoming law. They requested Governor Charles S. Deneen to veto the bill, but after a hearing open to both sides, he approved the bill.³⁰ In two separate cases heard during 1912, the Illinois Supreme Court declared the new law to be constitutional.³¹

In the next few years the state legislature passed no laws further restricting women's working hours. From this point on the forces which desired more regulation met the combined opposition of small manufacturers and the other small employers of females, creating a stalemate.³² In the 1913-1914 session the state legislature defeated a fifty-four hour week bill for women supported by the Women's Trade Union League. In addition, the very cause of regulation of conditions in relation to women's labor was almost set back when certain employers and rural interests secured the passage of an amendment exempting canneries from the women's ten-hour law.³³

Agnes Nestor and the two other representatives of the Women's Trade Union League in Springfield prepared a brief urging the governor to veto the amendment as a threat to the health and future of the state's small children and their mothers. In addition, they argued

that it could be an opening wedge in a movement to destroy the entire ten-hour law by making it unconstitutional on the grounds that it was class legislation. This last argument seemed to persuade the Democratic Governor Edward Fitzgerald Dunne, who was sympathetic to social legislation, to veto the bill.³⁴

Although no new legislation concerning women's labor was passed from 1912 through World War I, the Illinois General Assembly did authorize Governor Lowden to appoint a commission to look into the industrial problem, including that of women's labor. The governor created and charged the Illinois Industrial Survey Commission, among other things, with making a complete investigation of all the industries of Illinois in which women worked. The commissioners gave special attention to the effect of long hours of labor upon the health of women workers.³⁵ Composed of two represent employers, two women trade union labor leaders, and four non-partial experts, it found after a thorough investigation that:

1. Laws of the various states showed a definite tendency toward the shorter work day for women.
2. Most Illinois employers employed women for shorter hours than the maximum permitted by law.
3. Most physicians working in the industrial field agreed that women needed an eight-hour day for health reasons.
4. Surveys showed that a shorter work day meant better efficiency among the workers.
5. The same employees produced more in eight or an eight and a half-hour day than when working longer hours in the same establishment.

6. The shorter work-day showed an output steadier and better maintained throughout the length of the working day.
7. In seasonal industries, long hours resulted in a marked drop in production early in the busy season, while short hours in the same field showed production maintained or increased throughout the busy season.
8. Accidents were often caused by fatigue.
9. Workers on a night shift showed a lower level of production than equally experienced workers on a day shift.
10. The eight-hour day from a physiological viewpoint was desirable for the health of the worker, as well as for the possible increase in volume of production.³⁶

On the basis of those findings, a majority recommended the adoption of an eight-hour working day and a forty-eight hour working week for women in industry. In addition, they asked that the state legislature set up a further study of night work by women, their need for rest periods, regulation of time for lunch. The majority believed that its suggestions were in the interest of efficiency and health.³⁷

The two employers on the commission filed a minority report in which they charged that the majority had made unwarranted conclusions on the basis of incomplete data. There was no need for a law enforcing the eight-hour working day and forty-eight hour working week for there was little connection between health and longer hours per se. In addition, if it was actually in the interest of the employers to limit hours of women, they would do it voluntarily.³⁸

Social reformers, in order to put pressure on the state legislature to formulate the recommendations of the commission into law, formed the Illinois Joint Committee for the Women's Eight-Hour Bill with Mrs. R. M. Reed as its chairman. This committee was in reality an umbrella organization for all of the groups interested in limiting women's working conditions. They included:

Catholic Woman's Club

Chicago Woman's Club

Illinois Committee on Social Legislation
(An umbrella organization of Illinois settlement houses.)

Parents, Teachers Association

Illinois Women's Legislative Congress

Women's Church Federation

Legislative Committee, Women's City Club

Women's Trade Union League of Chicago

Industrial Department of the Central Field Committee

National Young Women's Christian Association.³⁹

With the partial exception of the Women's Trade Union League of Chicago, all represented upper-middle class clubs and groups.

A knowledge of the class composition of those organizations which supported regulation of women's working conditions goes a long way toward explaining their approach to the question. If women worked too long, one had only to limit their hours giving no thought to the

economic necessity which drove them to work those hours in the first place. The crucial problem for women who worked was usually an adequate wage or, even more fundamentally, adequate pay for their husbands. One employer perhaps understood his female employees better than the social reformers when he wrote that what they wanted was more pay and not shorter hours.⁴⁰

The limiting of hours also put another burden on women workers in that they often could not compete with men for jobs. Earlier a woman telegrapher wrote to Jane Addams complaining that, if the law restricted the number of hours a woman could work without doing the same for men, it would mean that she would be fired and a man hired in her place because no employer could leave a post unattended for the two hours that the men worked after the women had gone home. The reformers were not in fact using the frailty of women to limit the hours of men because this would have brought them into direct conflict with the Illinois State Labor Federation which was opposed to any state interference in the hours a workman was employed. The social reformers, by insisting that women needed limitations on their hours of work and by incorporating that belief into law, were declaring the inferiority of women through the official voice of the state.

Another weakness in the movement was the fact that even in 1928 there were about 95,000 women engaged in

domestic service in Illinois, or about a half of all women workers. These women were not even covered in the 1912 ten-hour law.⁴¹ The evidence is overwhelming that as each ethnic group moved up the economic social ladder its women moved out of domestic service, because it was hard and demanding work with long hours and a six to six and a half day work week. Was it only an over-sight that these upper class women did not press for limitations on the hours worked by their servants who made it possible for their mistresses to attend meetings at which to agitate for other reforms?

Unconscious of the fundamental problems, or indifferent to them, social reformers continued to push for the eight-hour day for women throughout the 1920's. They made special efforts in the legislature of 1925 and 1927. Every attempt failed. Generally, manufacturers opposed in the 1920's the further mandatory reduction in hours for women because they did not want to accept a precedent for state intervention with their male employees.⁴²

Perhaps it was all for the good, as modern women are presently trying to achieve equality by repealing these limitation laws so that they can compete on an equal level with men in the job market. Be that as it may, the case of women's labor reform graphically illustrates the danger of one class of people attempting to

speaking for and defining the needs of another class and then endeavoring to legislate paternalistically for that class.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER VIII

¹Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House (New York, 1910), pp. 201-02; Florence Kelley, "Hull House," New England Magazine, XVIII (June, 1898), 560-62; Ritchie v. People, 155 Illinois .98 (1895).

²Josephine Goldmark, Fatigue and Efficiency (New York, 1912), pp. 558-63, 252; Muller v. Oregon, 208 U.S. 412 (1908).

³Ibid., p. 252.

⁴S. P. Breckinridge, postcard, March 18, 1909, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library.

⁵Howard Wilson, Mary McDowell, Neighbor (Chicago, 1928), pp. 115-30; Olive Sullivan to Agnes Nestor, September 26, 1919, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Margaret D. Robins to Agnes Nestor MSS. January 5, 1907, Agnes Nestor, MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Margaret D. Robins to Agnes Nestor, March 20, 1907, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Record of Contributions, Women's Trade Union League of Chicago, November 12, 1910, Anita Blaine McCormick MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

⁶Julius Rosenwald to Ezara J. Warner, October 12, 1925, Julius Rosenwald MSS. University of Chicago Library.

⁷Survey, XXIII (December 11, 1909), 513.

⁸Letter Head--The Women's Trade Union League of Illinois, July 30, 1908, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library.

⁹ Agnes Nestor, Woman's Labor Leader (Rockford, Illinois, 1954); Agnes Nestor's Diary, June 24, 1900--September 23, 1900, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Elias Tobenkin, "The Immigrant Girl in Chicago," Survey, XXIII (November 6, 1909), 189-93.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Mary E. McDowell, "The Girls' Bill--A Human Proposition," Survey, XXII (July 3, 1909), 508-13.

¹² "The Eight-Hour Fight in Illinois," Leaflet #4 (1909) Women's Trade Union League of Chicago.

¹³ McDowell, p. 512; Graham Taylor in the Daily News, April 3, 1909, Graham Taylor MSS. Chicago Newberry Library.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 513.

¹⁵ Eugene Staley, History of the Illinois State Federation of Labor (Chicago, 1930), p. 272.

¹⁶ McDowell, pp. 508-13.

¹⁷ Illinois, Laws of 1909, p. 212.

¹⁸ Survey, XXVI (July 29, 1911), 620-21; Margaret D. Robins to Agnes Nestor, May 8, 1910, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Legislation in the 46th General Assembly of Illinois: 1909, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹ Survey, XXVII (December 11, 1909), 346.

²⁰ Ernst Freund to Anita Blaine McCormick, January 26, 1910, Anita Blaine McCormick MSS. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library.

²¹ J. Goldmark, Part II, pp. 1-25; Survey, XXIII (December 11, 1909), 344-45.

²² Survey, XXV (November 6, 1909), 205-06.

²³Survey, XXV (February 19, 1910), 758-59;
Beckner, p. 202.

²⁴Survey, XXV (April 30, 1910), 170-71.

²⁵Survey, XXV (December 10, 1910), 331-32.

²⁶Survey, XXV (December 3, 1910), 331.

²⁷H. Reid to Agnes Nestor, February 12, 1912, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; H. Reid to Agnes Nestor, February 15, 1912, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; American Magazine article on Agnes Nestor, February, 1912, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Record of expense account from the legislative committee of the Women's Trade Union League of Illinois, 1911, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library; Staley, p. 272.

²⁸Agnes Nestor, Woman's Labor Leader, pp. 100-20.

²⁹Florence Kelley to Julius Rosenwald, July 31, 1920, Julius Rosenwald MSS. University of Chicago Library.

³⁰Nestor, pp. 100-20.

³¹Survey, XXVIII (July 6, 1912), 490-492.

³²Staley, p. 272; Expenses at Springfield for Week of July 16 to 21, 1913, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Society Library.

³³Nestor, pp. 137-38.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Mr. Hershel H. Jones to Agnes Nestor, October 26, 1917, Agnes Nestor MSS. Chicago Historical Library.

³⁶Illinois Industrial Survey Report (1918) p. 15.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 103-06.

³⁸Beckner, pp. 216-19.

³⁹Illinois Joint Committee for the Women's Eight-Hour Bill Pamphlet, 1922, Lea Taylor MSS. Chicago Historical Society.

⁴⁰Mary E. McDowell, "The Girls' Bill, A Human Proposition," pp. 508-13.

⁴¹Illinois Department of Labor, The Labor Bulletin, (June, 1928), pp. 192-93.

⁴²Beckner, pp. 218-22.

CHAPTER IX

UNEMPLOYMENT: A PLAGUE

The maturing welfare system developed a series of state and local programs in the years 1890-1932 to aid the victims of downward swings in the economy. Like the medieval plagues, these depressions visited the industrial cities of the United States, including Chicago, with terrifying frequency. In both situations, the causes and the cures of the affliction were unknown. All that could be done was to take care of those that were struck down. In the depression of 1932, Professor Edith Abbott saw the role of the social worker to be similar to that of a physician during a great epidemic in that they both cared for the men, women, and children who needed assistance.¹

The most serious casualties in a depression were usually members of the working class. A substantial downturn in the economy meant loss of jobs for many of them, the fear of such a loss for many more, and reduced income for others because of lowered wages, shorter hours, or the sharing with relatives. In times of relative

prosperity the semi-skilled or unskilled laborer was usually paid only enough to cover the daily necessities of life; when he was unable to sell his labor in the market place he had no reserve on which to fall back. It was only a matter of time before he and his family were forced below the subsistence level.²

The upper class executive and professional elite were always very concerned over the adverse conditions suffered by the working class during depression periods. This anxiety, although no doubt stimulated in part by humanitarianism, was also motivated by other considerations, including a fear of possible violence as well as the deterioration of the physical and psychological morale of the lower class. This last factor was particularly important to employers, who would need a healthy and spirited labor pool when prosperity returned.

For many in the executive and professional class, repression was the answer to maintaining stability, while ordinary charity was enough to care for the truly needy. A minority, more attuned perhaps to the plight of the unemployed and the possibilities of non-violent social control, believed that more was needed. This progressive upper class turned to the social workers and the welfare system for an evaluation of working class unrest and for programs to stabilize the situation.

In the first chapter the earliest faltering steps toward the formulation of unemployment relief programs were described. Once the severity of the depression began to subside in 1898 the issue of unemployment was superseded in the minds of the reformers by other more pressing social questions such as adequate working-class housing.

--1907--

The attention of the social workers, however, was jarred back to the unemployment problem when the numbers of jobless dramatically increased in the year 1907. The nationwide financial slump had begun in the autumn of 1907 when depositors learned that several New York City trust companies had failed in an expensive attempt to corner the copper market. Consequently, runs developed not only on these banks but also on many others that were more sound forcing many banks, including some in Chicago, to close their doors. All of the nation's banks began to call in loans to meet the demands of depositors for their money, causing a bank panic. In the end J. P. Morgan with Federal government aid was able to save the day by supervising the pooling of the funds of the leading Manhattan banks to support the institutions under attack. This effort brought the panic to an end, but not before it caused a temporary rise in the

unemployment rate as productive facilities expanded beyond the country's immediate capacity to consume.³

In Chicago it was not long before the sensitive listening device of the welfare system, the social settlement, began to record more unemployment in the working-class districts. Other indicators, such as the vast increase in the numbers of unemployed men seeking lodging in the corridors of police stations and in the Municipal Lodging House also pointed to a tightening labor market.⁴

Through the Chamber of Commerce progressive businessmen in Chicago took action to provide relief to the unemployed in January 1908 by organizing a "Business Men's Relief Committee." The Chairman of this Committee was William V. Kelley, President of the American Steel Foundries. Other men included Edward B. Butler, President of the Butler Brothers (wholesalers); W. L. Brown, President of American Shipbuilding Company; Ernest A. Hamill, President of the Corn Exchange National Bank; John A. Spoor, President of the Chicago Junction Railway Company; David R. Forgan, President of the National City Bank; and Judge Julian W. Mack, a trusted advisor to Julius Rosenwald on philanthropic matters.⁵ These men represented some of the most successful businessmen in the city.

At its first meeting the Business Men's Relief Committee set a fund raising goal of \$100,000 which appeared adequate to meet the relief needs of the city.

Of this figure, 35 per cent was to be distributed through the Bureau of Charities, while 30 per cent was to go to the Relief and Aid Society. The remainder would be given to numerous small sectarian relief societies.⁶

Although men like Julius Rosenwald gave a generous \$1,000 contribution to the fund, only about \$58,000, three fifths of the projected goal, was actually raised.⁷

Graham Taylor thought the reason lay in the fact that "the task of obtaining money for relief is . . . increasingly difficult . . . as those who furnish charitable funds have suffered severe losses. . . ." ⁸ His statement highlighted the main dilemma of private relief funds, when they are needed most is the moment when they are the hardest to raise as upper-middle class businessmen cut all but the most necessary expenditures in the face of their own relative economic adversity.

The \$58,000 raised by the Committee was not adequate to meet the needs of the unemployed, even by its own conservative estimate.⁹ To make the situation more desperate, by 1908 even this meager succor was exhausted in the face of continued high levels of unemployment. In the month of March 1908, for example, an average of 1,000 men came each night to seek shelter at the Municipal Lodging House. The total number of men taken care of at the House that month was almost 15 times the number taken care of in the same month of the previous year.¹⁰

The private agencies also experienced a sharp increase in demands on their services. In the first ten days of March 1908 the Bureau of Charities received applications for aid from about 1,300 families, a figure equal to the number for the whole month of March 1907.¹¹ In the three-month period November 1907 to February 1908 the Relief and Aid Society granted aid to 2,544 families, a figure equal to that for the entire twelve months from November 1906 to November 1907. With the heavy demands on their services, private relief agencies also quickly ran out of funds, even though they were augmented by emergency contributions from the businessmen's committee.¹²

The Businessmen's Relief Committee not only raised funds and distributed them to established relief organizations, but it also served as a central co-ordinator for the relief activities of the city. It engaged in an active campaign to suppress breadlines and soup kitchens that had been organized by churches for conversion purposes and by newspapers for publicity. This action was taken in the belief that giving the working class something for nothing led to their moral decay. Most of the city's newspapers enthusiastically discouraged street begging and cooperated with the campaign. A special sub-committee of businessmen and relief workers continued the program of closing down all relief sources except those under the control of the main charity organizations in the city.¹³

This sub-committee, for example, induced the Chicago Commissioner of Health to prevent the Salvation Army's 5¢ lodging house from taking in more men than they could accommodate with beds. This ruling limited the house's effectiveness to 150 men each night. Before the ruling the house had been accepting many more men if they were willing to lie on the floors or sit in the loft. For such lodging they were not charged a fee. If the men involved had been asked, they would have probably told the sub-committee that they were very satisfied to lie on the floor in the warm lodging house rather than on a cold winter sidewalk. The sub-committee, nevertheless, strongly believed that the Salvation Army's operation was demoralizing because the men were not forced to work in return for their lodging. At the urging of the same Committee the police also closed their station houses to the homeless after they were convinced that private charity could do the job better.

Private charity proved unequal to the task of providing adequate relief to those who were unemployed. The Relief and Aid Society, for example, during the period 1907 to 1908 gave relief to the unemployed in return for shoveling snow in the Winter and for cleaning streets in the Spring.¹⁴ The homeless man was given lodging and food at the Municipal Lodging House in return for this work while the man with a dependent family was given a 15¢

an hour wage. The maximum allowed in a day was \$1.35. In the Spring, because of the small sum left for distribution, the pay was cut to 5¢ an hour with a \$1 the daily maximum, plus a free luncheon of hot coffee and a sandwich in the gym of the Eli Bates Settlement House. In addition, a man was limited to five days of work. Even though the wages were below the average for unskilled work in the private sector of the economy, the program had many more applicants than it could employ. The number of men employed by the program averaged around 30 to 40 men a day.¹⁵ Assuming that most of them worked the full five days, that is one week, less than a thousand received work relief out of the tens of thousands in need.

The Chicago Charity Organization began another work relief project on June 6, 1907 in the twenty-second ward where 320 men were employed to clean up vacant lots in the area each day. The average number of days allowed on the project was seven. While a man was given work relief, a social worker attempted to get him a permanent job. The search was not always successful. According to one of the people involved with the program, "At the expiration of this period their pleadings for a longer chance are most pathetic."¹⁶

Although relief payments were inadequate, the sub-committee was successful in centralizing relief operations in the hands of the major welfare organizations

such as the Chicago Charity Organization, and the Relief and Aid Society. In the eyes of social workers and progressive businessmen this centralization was necessary in order to control the dispensing of relief and thus to implement their concept of scientific charity.¹⁷ They desired to grant funds through work relief programs only to the truly needy in such a way as to safeguard the unemployed workers' morale. The determination of "need" was made only after an exhaustive study. So as not to attract the unemployed to the city and to give case workers a chance to find the truly needy,¹⁸ publicity concerning relief funds was to be kept to a minimum.

Although these projects give some insight into the philosophy behind distribution, the question still remains as to why businessmen felt impelled to organize the Business Men's Relief Committee in the first place. Although humanitarianism played a part, they were also motivated by their desire to preserve stability in the immigrant working-class districts of the city. Whether or not there was any serious unrest in these districts due to unemployment is open to serious question. What is not open to question is the fact that the middle and upper-middle class believed that there was unrest. This anxiety is well illustrated by the Averbach Affair.

Jerevich Averbach was a young Jewish unemployed workingman who was shot and killed by the Chicago Chief

of Police in the hallway of his residence in early March 1908. Chief John Shippy, whose officers had the slogan "Drive Anarchy From Chicago!," seized the young man when he knocked on the officer's door. As the boy struggled to release himself, the police chief drew his revolver and instantly killed him. Liberals in the city suspected that Shippy could have arrested Averbach peacefully with the aid of three members of his family and the police chauffeur, all of whom were on the scene.¹⁹

Graham Taylor, Jane Addams, and other reformers discovered upon investigation that the youth had been living with his sister, a hard-working seamstress. They were poor Russian Orthodox Jews who had fled the bloody pogrom at Kishinev three years before. Both the sister and the boy's former employer stated that the young man was industrious, quiet, and of high moral character. Although it was true that Jerevich had gone on at least one occasion to a meeting of a local radical group, there was no evidence that he was an advocate of violence. Most of the boy's friends thought that he had most likely gone to the police official to obtain a permit to seek employment in another city, as he would have been required to do in Russia.²⁰

Whether or not the boy was guilty of attempted murder is not as important to us today as the reaction it touched off among many middle and upper-middle class

persons who believed that this was an attempt to take the life of the chief of police by a far-reaching conspiracy of anarchists bent on killing prominent city leaders.²¹

With the support of a number of Chicago newspapers the police conducted raids into the immigrant sections of the city. They ransacked all the printing offices in the foreign Jewish colony and searched the homes of individuals for photos and papers of alleged revolutionaries. They even went so far as to raid and destroy a restaurant in the Jewish section for the offense of giving food at cost to the unemployed. The police not only arrested friends of Averbach but also his sister, Olga. Subjected to what police called the "third degree" or "sweating," she was intensively questioned for long periods of time without food or water. As part of a psychological attempt to break her down and get her to confess a conspiracy, the police forced her to view her brother's body for a long period of time.²² Olga never confessed, perhaps because she knew of no conspiracy.

Although they found no evidence of any kind in their raids, the police continued to assert their conspiracy theory. Certain Chicago newspapers, which were hostile to progressive reform and thought violent repression to be the answer to all social problems, played up these theories of conspiracy. They began their articles with scare headlines on the dangers the city faced from

anarchists. One headline read "Anarchist Plot to Kill City Officials Failed."²³ The Inter Ocean went so far as to link the settlement movement with the plot in a sub-headline which read "Institutions Where Meetings of Revolutionists Are Held and Sectarian Theories Are Thought To Be Examined."²⁴

Most progressive businessmen thought that this attack on the settlement movement had gone too far. The Chicago Daily News, published by Victor Lawson who was extremely sympathetic to the aims of the social reformers, launched an editorial counter-attack representing the views of the progressive upper class:

Because settlement residents living in the midst of the Italian, Russian, and Jewish people naturally inquire of their neighbors concerning their knowledge and attitude toward the issues raised by these tragedies, and because the interpretation of these neighbors did not coincide with the suspicion against them entertained by the police and in other circles, the settlement interpreters were immediately charged with being in sympathy with the crime and even an accessory to it. Were not these the better citizens who claimed what they knew to be the fact, that the suspected races in loyalty to law disavowed all sympathy with the deeds of violence, that there was no evidence of conspiracy and that there is less dangerous radicalism in Chicago now than there has been for many years.²⁵

In a letter to the editor of the Chicago Evening Post a man who signed himself B. F. perhaps summed up best the true role of settlements when he wrote that they were a "force for stability in times of panic."²⁶

The Averbach incident illustrates the generally fearful climate of the possibilities of working-class

unrest that ran through the middle class. All that was needed to translate this terror into support for violent repression of the working class was the death of an unemployed Jewish immigrant in an alleged attempt on the life of the police chief.

Progressive elements of the executive and professional elite seem to have accepted Jane Addams' version of the incident as evidenced by their continued support of the settlement movement and the social welfare system in general. They nevertheless shared the rest of their class' fear of unrest. Graham Taylor, in attempting to raise funds for relief, repeatedly played on this anxiety when he warned them of possible unrest if aid was not given.²⁷ In a way, it was a symbiotic relationship with progressive businessmen desiring to give aid as a means to control the working class through amelioration rather than repression. The social workers, motivated by a more humanitarian concern, used their desire to obtain money for relief.

Thus, the Averbach incident demonstrated the progressive businessman's and professional's commitment to amelioration instead of repression as means to achieve stability. Although the police used repression while the settlements used amelioration, they both had the same goal of stability. When the repressive agents began to attack the social settlement they perhaps unwittingly

began to step on the toes of some very powerful people in the city who were committed to an ameliorative approach.

As an editorial in the Chicago Evening Post stated:

With respect to the newspaper attack, that may be discounted because of its source. Jenkin Lloyd Jones and Lincoln Center, Graham Taylor, Hull House, the settlements of Chicago need no defense in this community. But when the chief of police declares that settlements are first cousins to the anarchists, it is time that the official intelligence be brought to the realization of the nature of our institutions for social amelioration, their functions, their rights, and the places they hold in respect of the intelligent class of the community.²⁸

The police backed off and the settlements and more generally the social welfare system continued to develop techniques of social control of the working class by the upper class through a maximum of amelioration and a minimum of repression.

--1913--

When relative prosperity returned, the social reformers again shifted their attention to other pressing problems. It was not until 1913 when a sharp rise in unemployment again forced the progressives to focus their attention on the unemployment question. The first indicator of the coming storm of distress was the usually accurate barometer of unemployment, the Municipal Lodging House. In relatively prosperous times the lodging house provided 300 to 500 men a night with a place to sleep. This figure usually tended to increase somewhat in the early winter

when casual and seasonal workers were less likely to find jobs. Even granting this seasonal increase, the winter of 1913-1914 saw an exceptional rise in unemployment as indicated by the fact that 1,800 to 2,000 men were seeking shelter each night at the lodging house.²⁹

When the 1914 war interrupted the export trade, the unemployment rate continued to rise. United Charities estimated that in Chicago over 100,000 men were idle and \$17,000,000 was lost in wages in the two years, 1914 and 1915. The same charity organization also reported that it had found in 1915 "a volume of want greater than had come to any other single charity of its kind in the United States in a single year," over 22,105 families.³⁰

The response of progressive businessmen and social workers to the unemployment problem of 1914-1915 was not only shaped by their experience in 1907-1908, but also by some planning done in 1912. At the suggestion of the business dominated Executive Committee, General Superintendent Eugene T. Lies of the United Charities had sent a letter to the City Council of Chicago and the Mayor in January 1912 urging them to authorize a commission to study and report on the effects of unemployment. The request was prompted by the lingering effects of the economic slump of 1907-1908.³¹

The City Council answered favorably by setting up a committee to investigate unemployment and to make

recommendations for the amelioration of the problem. It directed the Committee be made up of five members from itself and ten others including prominent businessmen and social workers.

At its first meeting on February 1912 the Committee decided to consider seven subjects: the nature and extent of unemployment, employment bureaus, immigration, vocational guidance, adjustment of employment, emergency relief, and the repression of vagabondage. In order to study each of these subjects with care, the Committee appointed a series of sub-committees made up of specialists. After careful research the sub-committees were to report back to the full Committee which would then make recommendations to the Mayor and the City Council.³²

The first recommendation of the entire Committee was made in May, 1912. It unanimously supported a reorganization of the free state employment bureaus in order to make them more efficient and more available to those that needed to use them.³³ With the support of the Council its report went to Governor John Dunne who set up the Illinois State Commission on Unemployment composed of employers including Oscar G. Mayer, employees such as John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and social workers Mrs. Raymond Robins and Graham Taylor.³⁴ In spite of an inadequate \$5,000 appropriation its work was useful in that it did recommend a general overhaul of the

state's free employment bureaus. As a result more branch offices would be also added in the working class districts of the city and lists of state-wide and local job openings would be kept in each office. These policies were implemented by the state legislature with the support of social workers, progressive businessmen, and organized labor.

A later recommendation for a state employee-employer financed unemployment insurance program was not accepted but it touched off a heated debate which gave wide public exposure to the philosophy behind unemployment insurance.³⁵

The City Committee, after making a plea for state employment bureau reform in 1912, became largely inactive. Its importance lay in the precedent it set of public and private cooperation in the area of unemployment. Thus, when unemployment became a pressing problem in the winter of 1914-1915 the City Council established a reconstituted City Commission with Charles Henderson, a professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, as its chairman. After a few meetings the new commission set out its plan to meet the unemployment crisis. It asked all private employers to hire as many men as possible because "such measures will mean the conserving of efficiency and physical well being of the employee for a time of return prosperity." One way this could be accomplished was by a part-time sharing of the work system. In addition, new jobs could be created if businessmen would begin now the

work they had planned for the future. The Committee persuaded the Pennsylvania Railroad, for example, to begin construction of its freight and passenger terminals in Chicago, at a cost of \$65,000 and with a labor force of 12,000 men. The railroad was willing to undertake the work ahead of schedule in part because it could take advantage of the lower wage rates in this depression period.³⁶

The City Commission asked the city to enlarge the capacity of the Municipal Lodging House and hire a professionally trained job counselor for the employment department there.³⁷ Both of these proposals were accepted and implemented by the City Council.

The Commission also agreed that women who were householders should be urged to hire the unemployed for menial jobs around their homes such as white-washing the fence and painting the house, inside and out.³⁸ The Commission, however, found itself split on whether or not a businessmen's committee should be formed to raise a central fund of \$500,000 for relief. After a vigorous debate a majority decided not to set up such a committee, reasoning that such a fund would not only lead to a congestion of applicants attracted by the publicity concerning the raising of the money, but would also lead to indiscriminating treatment. On the same grounds they decided to urge the City Council not to appropriate relief funds

either.³⁹ Instead, the Commission chose to encourage existing public and private agencies to strengthen their machinery to deal with relief giving. It concluded that these private agencies had the necessary experience and philosophy to administer work relief programs without destroying the morale of the worker or his will to labor in the capitalistic market place.⁴⁰

The Commission finally recommended that it should be made "a definite duty of a public body to make an honest attempt to provide employment on a very large scale to prevent unemployment in the future."⁴¹ In effect this government body was to become the employer of a last resort. A combination of public, private unemployment insurance plan was also to be part of the program. The commissioners, including the business representatives such as R. T. Crane and Julius Rosenwald also held that a combination of public and private unemployment insurance plan should be part of the program, reasoning that government-made work and unemployment insurance was necessary because the old method of "passing the hat was not good business."⁴² Private charity alone could not prevent unemployment, nor could it fairly distribute the relief funds unless it did so in good economic times through an unemployment insurance program.⁴³ In its efforts to plan for an unemployment crisis in the future the Mayor's Commission made significant progress over

earlier efforts to deal with this situation. After receiving his commissioner's report, Mayor Carter H. Harrison agreed with all its recommendations except that the city expand its "public works" as a means to supply unemployment relief. The Mayor pointed to the stark fact that the city had no money for such projects. On the other hand, he did approve of unemployment insurance and recommended it to the state legislature which took no action. As a result of the lack of appropriations on the local level, more advanced progressives such as C. R. Henderson now believed that the next logical place to look for aid was at the state, and then if necessary at the Federal level.⁴⁴

The city of Chicago did, however, act in one area of concern during the depression of 1914-1915. With the support of most of Chicago's social workers, Alderman and Professor Charles E. Merriam of the University of Chicago petitioned the City Council to set up a public welfare department in 1915. Conceived of as an unemployment measure and as a general welfare bill, the City Council passed it quickly and with little opposition. With an initial appropriation of over \$30,000,⁴⁵ the new department organized bureaus. The first would operate the municipal lodging house and collect information on working conditions and relief measures of the unemployed; the second would conduct social surveys covering such areas

as living conditions in the city, facilities for recreation, the causes of vagrancy, crime, and poverty. It would conduct its surveys with an eye to providing the necessary data for social welfare ordinances.⁴⁶

During the terms of Mayor Harrison the department conducted some very significant social surveys, but under his successor it became little more than a political patronage plum, accomplishing next to nothing until 1923 when reform Mayor Dever appointed the settlement worker Mary McDowell as commissioner of public welfare. Under Mary McDowell the department became the central bureau co-ordinating and complementing the work of all the relief agencies in the city. It also conducted some important surveys in the areas of housing, employment, and the increasing Negro immigration from the South⁴⁷ which resulted in the construction of model tenements for Blacks by Julius Rosenwald.

The progressive elements of the executive and professional elite were interested in the amelioration of the unemployment problem for a variety of reasons in the years 1914-1915. Even hard-headed businessmen came to the conclusion, according to Charles R. Henderson, that passing the hat was not a satisfactory method of collecting money for relief because it was inadequate to "relieve the suffering and evils caused by unemployment in all its forms."⁴⁸

One such evil was the unrest which the upper class thought it perceived among the unskilled laborers who were most grievously affected by the plague of employment. The violence connected with the organization of a group of unemployed men who called themselves the Brotherhood of the Unemployed was a prime contributor to this fear. Each Sunday afternoon during the winter of 1914-1915 it met in one of the large halls at Hull House. Its demand for relief payments in return for city jobs was moderate, considering that it was identical with one of the recommendations of the Mayor's Unemployment Commission.⁴⁹ In addition, the fact that the group was allowed to meet at Hull House is persuasive testimony to its essentially temperate nature.

Trouble began, according to Survey magazine, on January 17, 1915 when more people wished to attend the Sunday meeting of the Brotherhood of the Unemployed than could be squeezed into the hall. Many persons were forced to stand outside. As the meeting came to an end one speaker suggested that the large number of people inside and outside the hall be organized into a street demonstration to dramatize the plight of the unemployed. When lines began to form, disguised detectives who were spying on the meeting showed their stars and demanded to see a police permit allowing them to march. Because the protesters had no permit, the officers ordered the marchers

to immediately disperse, and at the same time called for police reserves. As it became evident that the demonstrators were continuing to march up the street, the plain-clothed officers, without waiting for the police reserves, attempted to stop the peaceful but illegal parade by seizing the banners, especially the black banner bearing the word "Hunger." Fights broke out as some of the unemployed men put up fierce resistance.⁵⁰

Upon the arrival of police reserves, the crowd quickly dispersed with no further organized resistance to police authority. Despite this fact, the police clubbed the fleeing men and arrested scores of others on charges ranging from resisting officers to engaging in rioting. Apparently most of the arrested men were not among those who originally fought with the plain-clothed police.⁵¹

Friends summoned Miss Jane Addams from a public meeting and told her about the incident. She immediately began to collect funds from businessmen sympathetic to the welfare movement in order to meet the bail of those arrested. Believing that the meeting was orderly and a useful outlet for the frustration of the unemployed, they thought that disorder in the streets after adjournment was due to the "tactless and violent action of the officers without uniform, rather than the impulsive desire to make a public demonstration of their needs upon the part of the unemployed."⁵²

Less sympathetic businessmen, who were prone to answer any unrest with repression, and their newspapers saw "the bloody riot at Hull House" as part of a plot to overthrow the government and establish anarchy.⁵³ Many of the city newspapers, including the Chicago Tribune, blew the incident out of all proportion. This reaction on their behalf was no doubt due in part to their desire to increase circulation to a frightened but curious middle and upper-middle class. The newspapers, thus, played on and increased the fear of those classes concerning worker unrest. Their praise of the police action must indicate their approval of the idea that the correct response to unrest is repression.

Even though the progressive businessman and his ally, the social worker, did not interpret the incident at Hull House as an anarchist plot to overthrow the government, as evidenced by their support of Jane Addams, they too worried about unrest among the working class. Many believed that, if this dangerous situation was not dealt with by amelioration, it had the potential to burst forth into a major crisis of class conflict.⁵⁴

How far progressive businessmen were willing to move to control unrest through ameliorative action is unclear in the period of 1914-1915. Some at least were willing to call for state and federal aid to meet the unemployment situation, including public work relief and

an unemployment insurance system.⁵⁵ All efforts to mobilize support for such programs were cut short by the return of relative prosperity in 1916 because, once the crisis of unemployment began to fade, it was easy to fall back into old habits of thought. Graham Taylor, in various speeches and articles in the Daily News, tried unsuccessfully to stem the tide of indifference. In one speech, for example, he declared that it was an opportune moment to

. . . pause and consider in ample time what would be proper and fitting to prevent a repetition of the distress among the working classes of the winter of 1914-15. Do not let us wait until conditions of distress and danger are again upon us, but let us now prepare for another condition of general unemployment.⁵⁶

Despite this forceful appeal by Graham Taylor, interest continued to shift toward international affairs. By February 17, 1917 the Survey magazine was bemoaning the fact that "most communities are strangely oblivious to the after-effects of the plague of unemployment." In Chicago, for example, there was a sharp increase of acute and chronic illness in 1916 that could be traced to under-nourishment and exposure due to unemployment in the winter of 1914-1915. There was, in addition, a backlog of families that were deserted in the depression by an unemployed father and still had to be cared for in 1917. The same situation was apparent in the area of intemperance. A man became a drunk due to the pressure of unemployment and remained a drunk in the relatively prosperous year of

1917. In light of such facts the Survey article suggested that if a businessman wanted a healthy stable working class in times of prosperity, society would have to provide "economic shock-absorbers" in times of depression. The time to act was now, in time of prosperity.⁵⁷

Nobody seemed to be listening as they were absorbed in war news, wartime jobs, prohibition, baseball, politics, crime, scandal, and vice.

--1921--

Social workers and progressive businessmen did not again give serious thought to the problem of unemployment until after World War I. In the period 1921-1923 the United States experienced a short economic down turn as well as a residual fear on the part of the middle and upper-middle classes of unrest growing out of the earlier Red Scare.⁵⁸

The fear of unrest was fed in 1919 by a high incident of strikes by workmen not only in Chicago but also in the country as a whole. In a letter dated May 28, 1919 Graham Taylor pointed out to Mrs. Stanley McCormick that "never in all the twenty-five years I have been here have I been called upon so often by influential groups of employers and professional men to tell them how the trade winds are blowing, where the industrial rank and file dwell and take counsel together."

The anxiety of the upper class was strengthened as tension increased between Blacks who had been attracted to Chicago's war-time industries and the returning drafties who wanted the jobs. Periodic violence between these groups finally climaxed in the Chicago Race Riot of 1919.⁵⁹

In the after glare of the Riot of 1919 ministers, club women, social agencies, as well as progressive businessmen and professionals formed a committee that would make sure that unemployed Blacks were fed and sheltered. This effort was necessary because many of the established private agencies and public agencies were either unable or unwilling to give aid to these unemployed Blacks without jeopardizing their relations with the ethnic groups which they mainly served. This was especially true in the aftermath of the race riot which had pitted the white and Black lower classes against each other.⁶⁰ Although unemployment hit the Blacks first in 1919, it was not limited to them for it spread to the working class as a whole between 1921-1923.⁶¹

On the national level President Harding set up the President's Conference on Unemployment in 1921 to organize various committees to study and make recommendations concerning the unemployment situation. The Committee on Civic and Emergency Work, which became a clearing house on local activities, was the most active of them all. Part of its function was to put pressure

on local mayors to take the lead in calling, organizing, and guiding local committees to deal with unemployment, especially emergency relief.⁶²

In Chicago, Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson, one of the city's more corrupt mayors, did all he could to prevent the formation of a local city sponsored unemployment commission. He publicly stated that it was his belief that a political controversy between two local newspapers, one that supported him and one that opposed him, would wreck the possibility of any real accomplishment for the commission. Some social reformers charged that the real reason was that Thompson was punishing them for having tried to defeat him in the last election.⁶³

President Harding's Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, became exceedingly upset with fellow Republican Thompson for his seeming unconcern with the plight of the unemployed and his willingness to play politics with human suffering. After a verbal battle with Hoover which was fully reported in Chicago's newspapers, Thompson made a gesture of peace by appointing a sixty-eight-member Mayor's Commission in 1923. With his own henchmen composing a majority, the Commission was predictably ineffectual, recommending study rather than appropriations. By that time employment was rising and the Mayor, like Secretary Hoover, turned to other matters.⁶⁴

On the private level the Chicago Council of Social Agencies, a co-ordinating organization of the local charities, set up three months before the Mayor's Commission a voluntary unemployment conference.⁶⁵ It was financed largely by the Industrial Club of the Chicago as well as businessmen: Phillip Armour, G. F. Swift, Charles R. Stevens, and Edward L. Ryerson. Representatives of the Association of Commerce, Chicago Federation of Labor, The Women's Club, The Illinois Department of Health, and the Illinois Free Employment Service were all members of the conference.⁶⁶ Because of the interest on the part of businessmen, it was able to secure a donation from the Commercial Club to staff an emergency department in the Illinois Free Employment Bureau to actively go out to find jobs for the unemployed. That department was particularly successful in finding employment for the returned veteran.⁶⁷ The conference also gained an appropriation of \$18,000 from the City Council to establish a successful central clearing bureau for homeless men in the municipal lodging house.⁶⁸ In response to its appeal for public support, the Women's City Club sent out volunteers to locate odd jobs for the unemployed needy. The newspapers also promised the conference to suppress publicity on relief needs and emergency measures to meet them so as to avoid an influx of non-Chicagoans into the city to claim benefits, and to give case workers time

to go out into the neighborhoods and find the truly needy.⁶⁹

In comparison with earlier attempts to deal with unemployment, the period 1920-1922 produced little fresh thinking. Part of this sterility was due no doubt to the fact that this economic slump and the resulting unemployment was not as severe or as protracted as the earlier depressions of 1907 and 1913. Another part of the answer, however, lies in the fact that when the call came for funds in 1921-1922, many businessmen added to their usual reluctance to give in a time of personal adversity, an opposition to the welfare system as a promoter of the kind of unrest that characterized the Bolshsevik threat of the Red Scare.⁷⁰ Graham Taylor, in a letter to S. J. Duncan Clark in 1921, complained that it was "increasingly difficult to hold some of the most fundamental work steady. . . ." This was due, according to Taylor, mainly to the shrinkage in the number of donors and in the size of contributions in general. He went on to say that "the widely prevalent unrest is aggravated by increasing unemployment (and) the sudden reduction in the standard of their income." This fact made the welfare system "never more important than now, . . . absolutely necessary to public security and progress."⁷¹ Taylor unhappily summed up the situation as:

A transition period--when little progress seems likely for a little while at least, to be

dead-locked in its struggle with dangerous reaction, such centers of understanding, information, and interpretation, are needed more than ever to stand between the racial, and factional lines that otherwise may make a serious cleavage in the bonds of good fellowship which had held us together so marvelously during the war.⁷²

In effect Graham Taylor in this article and others written at the same time was admonishing his business and professional supporters with the threat that if they did not increase their support of the ameliorative approach they might well find themselves face to face with a proletariat, driven to the point of desperation, demanding a radical shift in society.⁷³ The ultimate questions again did not have to be answered, and general prosperity began to return by late 1922 and early 1923. The upper class fear of the working class began to moderate.

During the later 1920's the social welfare system did not make spectacular gains by adding new programs, but it did continue to expand projects under way. The Mother's Pension Program and Public Relief Programs, and the attack on juvenile delinquency, for example, were expanded in the 1920's. "Employers," recorded Graham Taylor in 1925, "formerly forward facing who leaned over backward for a while recovered their poise and faced about again." Thus, the local welfare system remained intact to deal with the problem of unemployment when it emerged in late 1929 and early 1930.⁷⁴

--1929--

Although the era of prosperity came to a spectacular end in the Fall of 1929 with the stock market crash, the long range effects, especially in the area of unemployment, were not immediately recognized. As early as 1928 settlement houses were reporting higher levels of unemployment in their neighborhoods as greater demands were placed on their services.⁷⁵ Despite these warnings, many members of the social welfare system could not believe that there was anything amiss. In 1929, for example, relief expenditures of the major public and private relief agencies in Chicago increased by only 4.1 per cent over 1928. This figure represented a 2.5 per cent increase in the expenditures of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare and a 7.9 per cent increase in the expenditures of the private charities such as the United Charities.⁷⁶ Although most of this increase occurred in the few weeks after the Crash, public and private agencies only spent slightly more in 1929 than in 1928 for relief.

In the year 1930, however, most social workers could no longer deny the fact that the unemployment rate was rising at an alarming rate. The settlement house, that sensitive barometer of the needs of the working class, was beginning to forecast storm warnings. Mollie Ray Carroll, a worker at the University of Chicago Settlement House, recorded the scene there:

It is eight o'clock in the evening and we have interviewed the last of the line of people waiting for clothing, waiting for legal advice, waiting in the vain hope we can find them a job, and waiting for relief because they are out of coal and food, with credit gone and rent in areas. . . . Unemployment is straining every resource of the house.⁷⁷

With the rise in unemployment Graham Taylor and the other social workers began through speeches and articles to try to mobilize support to meet the needs of the unemployed.⁷⁸ They were aided in bringing both the plight of the unemployed and their potential threat to stability to the attention of the business and professional class when in March through June 1930 there were a series of meetings and marches in the city by the men out of work. When the police broke up the meetings with force, the resulting violence made the front pages of the city's newspapers.⁷⁹

The social welfare system, with the support of the progressive elements of the upper class, swung into action when Governor Louis F. Emerson, a rather conservative Republican, appointed a Commission on Unemployment and Relief. The Commission was made up of six members recommended by the Association of Commerce, another six by the Council of Social Agencies, two by the Mayor of the City of Chicago. An additional nine members were appointed by the Governor to represent the public at large.⁸⁰

The Governor's Unemployment Commission raised and spent between October 1, 1930 and March 31, 1931 over \$1,100,000 through public appeals. Most of the money was channeled through local private agencies which had been endorsed by the various Chamber of Commerces. This decision had the effect of centralizing relief programs and putting them under the control of the business elite rather than under that of precinct captains and the political machine. Part of the money, for example, was earmarked in September 1930 for a fund that would be operated by Chicago United Charities in cooperation with the Illinois Free Employment Bureau to pay unemployed men to do publicly beneficial work in the city.⁸¹ Despite the fact that in 1930 the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare increased its relief expenditures by \$1,750,176 or 71.5 per cent over 1929, the private fund under the vast numbers of the unemployed was exhausted in August 1931.

To meet the mounting crisis Emmerson re-organized his Commission in the Fall of 1931 by setting up a separate organization, The Joint Emergency Relief Fund of Cook County, to deal with unemployment there. Directed largely by businessmen and professionals, it raised mostly through large private subscriptions over \$10,000,000 for relief programs in the city. Although the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare raised an additional \$2,000,000

during the Winter of 1931-1932, the combined expenditure of \$12,000,000 proved to be insufficient to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing numbers of unemployed in Chicago.⁸²

Private relief agencies increased their relief load in 1931 by more than seven hundred per cent over 1928 to meet the relief needs of the unemployed. The private charity agencies did a credible job in meeting the crisis, considering the capital they had to invest. United Charities, for instance, maintained a stable relatively high rate of relief per family from 1928-1931 despite the soaring number of cases, 968 per month in 1928 to 13,500 per month in 1931. Considering the fall in prices, \$52 a month may actually represent an improvement in the living conditions of those on relief. The Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, on the other hand, maintained a low but sharply rising rate of relief per family, from \$7.28 in 1928 to \$8.57 in 1931. This was a difficult task to accomplish because the case load increased from 4,658 to 23,450 per month in the same period.⁸³

Given the rate of dispensation for public and private relief agencies, it is not surprising that the entire fund was exhausted by February 1932. Anticipating this situation, representatives of businessmen, social workers, and public officials had demanded as early as

December 1931 that the state appropriate public funds to meet the crisis. Because downstate representatives did not want to assume responsibility for Cook County's unemployed,⁸⁴ no action was taken by the state legislature until private funds actually ran out on February 1, 1931. The state legislature finally acted under severe pressure from Chicago's politicians, businessmen, social reformers, and labor unions as the doors of the city relief agencies began to close on the estimated 100,000 destitute families in Chicago. A compromise proposal was agreed upon by which Chicago and Cook County would take care of their own but the funds to finance the program would be raised through the credit of the entire state.⁸⁵

The plan as adopted by the state legislature called for the immediate raising of a fund of \$20,000,000 by the sale to the public of anticipation notes on a state-wide ad valorem tax of \$25,000,000. This tax was not to be levied if a state bond issue of \$20,000,000 was authorized by the voters at the general election in November 1932. The principle and interest on the notes was to be paid over a period of years from the county's share of the state motor fuel tax.⁸⁶ In November the voters, both downstate and in Cook County, voted for the bond issue by wide margins. The bonds sold well and a total of \$18,750,000 for relief was raised. This relief became

available February 7, 1932 but was exhausted on August 1, 1932.⁸⁷

In the Winter of 1932-1933 it has been estimated that over 175,000 families in Chicago received relief from the major relief-giving agencies in the city. The need was even greater with over 850,000 men without jobs and countless numbers under-employed.⁸⁸ With such needs the state's public and private agencies were at the end of the line. First private capital then public capital was exhausted with the needs of the unemployed still growing, not diminishing.

Luckily for the unemployed in Illinois the Federal government began in August 1932 to make available funds totaling \$25,238,228 for relief through the Reconstruction Finance Corporations. Upon the receipt of the first allotment of federal money the Governor designated the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission as his agent for handling the grants. There was no change in policy or procedure. The only significant change was that the Federal government was providing the capital in increasing proportions to operate the relief program.⁸⁹ The philosophy and operating procedures of the welfare system in relation to relief was developed to meet the needs of businessmen and the needs of the unemployed as interpreted by the social workers on the local level before federal

intervention. By the time federal aid arrived in August 1932 the mold had been set for the welfare state.

In the eyes of those primarily inspired by humanism, private relief was at least partially successful because it ameliorated some of the worst aspects of unemployment for the destitute. For those who were also motivated by the practical concerns of order, private relief seemed to have prevented serious bread riots and forestalled a demoralization of the working class. On the other hand, few supporters of these programs claimed that the grants were adequate to tide a worker over the period of temporary unemployment with a relatively decent standard of living. The fact remained that there was never enough money to go around. The social reformer was faced with the dilemma that, when the times were bad, the wealthy became very close with their money, while in good times they lost interest in the problem. The only private solution was an insurance program, but it too ran into trouble because it had to be set up in prosperous times to be effective. However, at these times potential support was hard to mobilize. The only other solution lay in public credit being mobilized for relief. In a prolonged depression with high levels of unemployment only the Federal government had the necessary resources. Thus, in 1932-1933 relief was nationalized by Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Along with this centralization,

many other welfare programs also became a function of the Federal government as local governments failed to support them during the final crisis.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER IX

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Since the primary purpose of this study is to trace the development of the impulse toward the welfare state in Chicago during the years 1890 to 1932, it would be impossible or at least not very useful to list all of the sources that I have consulted. The footnotes should give an accurate outline of the material utilized. Instead, the following essay is a brief discussion of the sources I have found most helpful in my work and believe would be of interest to others involved in the study of social reform.

The most significant primary sources are the personal papers of the leading decision-makers of the social progressive alliance. Of these the Graham Taylor papers (Newberry Library, Chicago) provide a major fountainhead of information concerning the inner workings of the welfare coalition in the city. The importance of his correspondence is heightened by the fact that Taylor was actively involved in every aspect of reform. Of equal significance is Taylor's weekly Chicago Daily News column which spanned almost the entire period of the study. His articles were designed to inform the general public of the activities

and motivating philosophy of the social progressive movement. The best secondary work on Graham Taylor is Louise C. Wade's Graham Taylor, Pioneer for Social Justice 1851-1938 (1964). His autobiographies, Pioneering on Social Frontiers (1930) and Chicago Commons Through Forty Years (1936), are extremely well written and insightful.

The personal papers of other social reformers while not as comprehensive as Taylor's are invaluable for the light they throw on the operations of the organizations in which they were primarily interested. Agnes Nestor's papers (Chicago Historical Society) contain the necessary documents for the reconstruction of the history of the Chicago Trade Union League and its fight for better working conditions for females. Her autobiography, Woman's Labor Leader (1954), is not very useful except for its coverage of her lobbying activities in Springfield on behalf of shorter working hours for women.

Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen's papers (Chicago Historical Society), on the other hand, supply an important source of data on the founding of the Juvenile Protective Association and its attempt to stamp out crime among youth. There is an abundance of material on the development of the Juvenile Court. Her autobiography (Growing Up with Chicago, 1926) is not very helpful except in its portrayal of the spirit of an upper-class reformer.

The Anita McCormick (Mrs. Emmons) Blaine papers (Wisconsin State Historical Society) furnish a huge and

significant collection of material. Although they contain important information on all aspects of social reform, because she was involved both as participant and as financial contributor to many organizations, they are especially useful as a source of data on the Juvenile Protective Association and the Chicago Housing Association.

Jane Addams' papers, which have been microfilmed and are available at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus, illustrate the role of settlement workers in reform. Although the collection contains the correspondence both to and from Jane Addams, most of the material concerns her peace activities. Her memoirs, Twenty Years at Hull House (1910) and The Second Twenty Years at Hull House (1930), seldom mention a date or a name, but do capture a spirit and determination. Mary McDowell's papers (Chicago Historical Society), on the other hand, furnish the reader with information concerning the role of the University of Chicago Settlement in social reform. The collection contains an unfinished autobiography on the activities of Mary McDowell, particularly in the 1904 stockyards strike. The best source of information on the activities of the social reformers in the 1920's and early 1930's are the Ester Kohn papers (University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus).

Of lesser importance are the Sophonisba Breckinridge papers (Library of Congress), Alice Hamilton papers (Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College), Raymond Robins papers (Wisconsin State Historical Society), and the Julia Lathrop papers (Rockford College, Illinois). All of these unpublished documents are extremely thin in their coverage of social reform in Chicago.

The point of view of the businessmen involved in social reform is abundantly illustrated by the papers of Julius Rosenwald (University of Chicago), President of Sears and Roebuck. The importance of the collection is increased by the fact that he corresponded with almost all the social reformers in the city. In addition, because other businessmen wrote to Rosenwald asking and giving advice, his papers are an invaluable guide to the thinking and activities of these men as well. A very significant and well-written biography is M. R. Werner's Julius Rosenwald, The Life of a Practical Humanitarian (1939). Although its coverage of Rosenwald's Chicago activities is sparse, it does provide some useful insights into the character of the man.

Victor Lawson's papers (Newberry Library, Chicago), on the other hand, are mostly devoted to his activities as publisher of the Chicago Daily News and not as important as Rosenwald's. They do give some clues to the businessman's role in social reform. Like the papers, Charles H. Dennis' Victor Lawson: His Time and His Work (1935) is

very limited in its coverage of social reform. Much more useful are the McCormick Family papers, especially those of Stanley and Anita. They are quite extensive in their coverage of social reform in Chicago.

In tracing the development of the welfare movement in Chicago, the papers of the various reform organizations proved helpful. Of particular interest because of their wealth of data are the records of the Chicago Bureau of Charities (Chicago Historical Society), the Juvenile Protective Association (University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus), Illinois Immigrant Protective League (University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus), Hull House Association (University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus), Chicago Commons (Chicago Historical Society), and the Chicago area chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (Chicago Historical Society).

Of all the printed material of the period, the most extensive collection of data on the activities of the Chicago reformers is contained in Survey, a national magazine devoted to social progressivism published by the Charity Organization Society of New York. It gave extensive coverage to Chicago because Graham Taylor was an associate editor. The magazine's life spans the entire period of the study, from December 1897 to October 1905 under the name of Charities, from November 1905 to March 1909 under the name of Charities and Commons, and until 1952 under the name of Survey.

In order to list the most useful primary and secondary printed sources in a clear and logical manner, one must divide them according to specific areas of reform. The most worthwhile book, for example, on housing conditions among the working class and the efforts of reformers to better them is Professors Edith Abbott's and Sophonisba P. Breckinridge's The Tenements of Chicago, 1908-1935 (1936). It is based not only on the personal observations of the authors but also on the work of their students, particularly in the coverage of the years 1908 to 1915. The studies by their students were published separately in a series of eight articles in the American Journal of Sociology between 1910 and 1915. For the years before 1908 Hull-House Maps and Papers (1895); Robert Hunter, Tenement Conditions in Chicago (1901); and Sadie T. Wald, "Chicago Housing Conditions 1900-1905," Charities, XV (January 6, 1906), 455-61, all contain graphic first-hand observations on the foul working-class housing conditions.

The best introduction to the progressive reformers' attitude toward juvenile delinquency before World War I is the book, The Delinquent Child and the Home (1912), by Sophonisba Breckinridge and Edith Abbott. The most useful single work on the history of the Chicago Juvenile Court is Helen R. Jeter's leaflet by the same title published by the United States Children's Bureau in 1922. An

earlier work by Clark Kelsey, "Juvenile Court of Chicago and Its Work," Annals of the American Academy, XVII (March, 1901), 298-300, proved to be an invaluable source of information on the philosophy motivating those who were influential in creation of the new court. An intellectually stimulating book on juvenile crime and the attempts of reformers to deal with it is Anthony M. Platt's The Child Savers, The Invention of Delinquency (1969).

The author suggests that children caught in the bureaucratic web of the juvenile court fared rather badly. The court then was not such a dramatic humanitarian step forward as had been thought by those who accepted the rhetoric of the reformers at face value instead of looking behind the scenes to see what actually happened.

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Although Charles Hoffmann's book, The Depression of the Nineties, An Economic History (1970) was written from a national perspective, it contains some excellent material on the efforts of Chicago reformers to deal with the plight of the unemployed. An older work by Leo Hannah Felder, Unemployed Relief in Periods of Depression (1936)

although useful is strictly a narration of the action taken by Chicago and other cities to meet the problem of unemployment. The most valuable primary articles on relief are B. Rosing, "Chicago's Unemployed Help Clean the City," Charity, XXI (March, 1908), 47-51; "Special Measures for Chicago's Unemployed," Survey, XXXI (January 17, 1914), 457; "Chicago's Plan for Meeting Unemployment and Destitution," Survey, XXXIII (May 28, 1914), 217-18; Philip Klein, The Burden of Unemployment: A Study of Unemployment Relief Measures in 15 American Cities, 1921-1922 (New York, 1923); Clorine McCulloch Brandenburg, "Chicago Relief Statistics, 1928-1931," Social Service Review, VI (June, 1932), 278-78. All of these works, based on first-hand observation, provide a valuable source of data for those interested in the history of relief programs.



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