



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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Speech delivered by Max M. Kampelman
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at University of Minnesota as part of
program on "COs and World War II"

During the next few minutes, with your permission, let's see if we can more closely relate the so called constructive activities of COs as they try to serve society with the perhaps more fundamental problems facing our democracy as it treats COs during World War II.

We have seen how the growing dissatisfaction of the men in the forestry and soil conservation base camps and their demand for more socially significant work led to the establishment of special service projects, so that today about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the men in CPS are in one form or another of special service project.

The vast majority of the men in s.s. projects are working in mental hospitals and in feeble-minded institutions, usually in menial attendant jobs.

We have, therefore, a situation created where for the first time in the history of the mental hygiene movement, there is a large group of American citizens, who, through first hand experience, are becoming acquainted with the problems and needs of the mentally ill.

An example of what this has meant can be seen in large institutions like the PSH or the Williamsburg Hospital in Va., where the CPS men are practically in complete charge of many departments and work continually toward the improvement of conditions for the patients.

It has been unfortunate but true that the attendant-employee in most mental institutions was of the floater type shiftless variety; for more dependable employees were not attracted by the low wages offered.... In many institutions, therefore, it was not unusual for the patients to be subject to maltreatment.

With the coming of the COs and their philosophy of opposition to violence, a drastic change in many of the institutions has occurred. In one hospital alone, PSH, figures released by the sup't show that "accident" rates in the violent ward decreased by 50% since CPS men took over ---and with a unit of more than 100 CPS men, they have practically taken over.

In another unit, the Cleveland State Hospital, the CPS men, who found the whole hospital administration to be embroiled in what they considered to be an evil situation. At the price of being removed from the institution themselves, their efforts at reform brought about a Governor's investigation leading to the resignation of the sup't, removal of some of the attendants, increase in wage rates for attendants to attract a higher type employee, repairs and plant improvement, and the creation of a mental hygiene movement in the state designed to reform the antiquated institutional system of care in that state.

This is not to say that evil conditions were found in all of the institutions. Most of them were doing the best they could in view of small budgets, manpower shortages and lack of facilities; and they welcomed the assistance of COs and the new approach they contribute.

One of the most important steps coming out of all this is the creation of the CPS Mental Hygiene Movement with the cooperation of some leading psychiatrists in the field. One of the functions of the program is to publish a monthly magazine called THE ATTENDANT, which provides an interchange of

ideas among all the units as to the care of the mentally ill and reaches non-CPS attendants as well.

Another phase of the program includes the study of conditions in the hospitals with an idea as to constructive criticism. This is closely related too to a study of state laws by a number of the CPS men who are attorneys on the subject of the mentally ill. Within the past month or so, in fact, the ACLU has asked the CPS MHP for a draft of model legislation to be submitted to various state legislatures and a few states are now considering such legislation.

Broadly, one of the chief contributions of the CPS men toward the care of the mentally ill, according to Dr. George Stevenson, ~~haxixefixix~~ one of the leading psychiatrists, is the discovery anew that the mentally ill respond to sympathetic, tactful and kind treatment.

The other, perhaps somewhat more spectacular type of s.s. project though just a few hundred are participating, is the guinea pig program of CPS. The DAILY yesterday scooped me on our own sem-starvation unit here, so we'll not go into too great detail here and leave whatever questions you have for the discussion period. Suffice it to say that you saw I ate my own sandwiches rather than your fine food and I assure you it was no reflection on your food; it's just that I'm one of the s.s. gps. "e are now in an unbalanced diet of 1800 calories daily and we expend 3200 calories daily in energy. This should reduce our weight by 20-30% by June.

The purpose of the experiment, of course, is to put into practice

the theories about semi-starvation for application in the war devastated areas abroad. We're being watched very closely; all of our activities are recorded; we take psychological and physiological tests to the point of boredom (though to a layman like me it hasn't quite reached that point) - all for the purpose of determining the degree of deterioration that takes place with semi-starvation and the degree of rehabilitation which follows.

But there are other gp projects you might be interested in.

In a camp in N.H., 32 men volunteered to spend 3 weeks in a typhus experiemnt sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, during which they lived without changing their lice infested underwear. The side camp where they lived was nicknamed the Lyceum. The lice group, incidentally, consisted of a college professor, some school teachers, farmers, artists and an insurance salesman.

They started with 100 parasites each, carefully selected typhus-free specimens they were too. The lice were pla eed under a special flap in the seat of a new pair of underpants and told to go to work. First the nu,ber dminished, then the eggs began to hatch. Every day these eggs were counted by the scientists. Sometimes the number became astronomical. The docs asked the men not to scratch too v ciously. Then, after 2 weeks of incubation, various secret powders were administered. Some of them killed the parasites; some annoyed the parasites; practically all annoyed the men.

All in all there are about 25 gp projects. Some of the men in our unit came directly from an atypical pneumonia experiment. Atyp. P~~ne~~^um., you may know, has become widespread during the past 8 years and is a form of pneumonia that sulfa drugs do not cure. The men contracted the disease and submitted to treatment by serums.

Another group of men in Boston is in a malaria experiment to determine the effects of serums on normal organisms.

Some men are finding out what diet is best in a cold climate as they spend their days in a room chilled to 20 degrees below zero and others live in a room at jungle heat to find out about diets for tropical climates.

A group of men were put in a life raft off Cape Cod to determine how poisonous salt water was. They fasted without food or water and drank measured quantities of ocean waters.

Thru a similar experiment too, doctors, faced with the problem of providing lifeboat rations for ~~cut~~ ^{out} ~~sataways~~, devised caramel candies so composed that 10 of them per day provide more nourishment and less loss of precious body water than a day's ration of gardtack and tinned meat kits and take up only a fraction of space.

The full story of the gps units will provbably not be told until some years after the war. You do have, however, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ some sort of a picture of what the men are volunteering for as they search for an opportunity to be constructive in a world which seems bent on destruction.

The picture presented to you so far has attempted to point up the constructive aspects of what COs are doing during WWII. But for an accurate picture, it is necessary that we go farther into the more basic problems which concern us all as citizens in a democracy - And here the picture is not a happy one!

The Sup. Ct. of the U.S., within the next few months, will be faced with a very imp't problem of civil liberties. A series of cases are being brought before it by the ACLU, alleging that the CPS system is not only morally unjust but that it is undemocratic and unconstitutional.

Why? Because for the first time in American life, civilians are being conscripted to perform work for the gov't without receiving any salary for that work, without having compensation provided for them in case of injury during their work, without any provisions being made for their dependents. Such a state of affairs, says the ACLU, is a form of "involuntary servitude" and violated the 13th amendment and further in substance punishes American citizens for their religious convictions, a violation of the 1st amendment.

One of the leading cases being brought before the courts is that of R Boland Brooks, a prominent NY attorney who refused to report to CPS when ordered to do so on the ground that it was unconstitutional.

Here, may I point out that the issues he raises are so fundamental as to obtain the aid of 2 prominent attorneys in his defense, neither of whom is a pacifist: Ernest Angell, formerly head of his American Legion Post in NY and John W. Davis, one of the leading constitutional lawyers and former Presidential candidate.

In this case. Mr. Brooks contends through his attorneys that the 1st WW draft cases were upheld as constitutional by the courts because of Congress' power to raise armies and wage war. In the case of a CO, however, he is not drafted for the army or for any work associated with the waging of war. It is therefore, he says, unconstitutional to conscript civilians for non-defense non-military purposes ---And in that sense, CPS becomes an imp't constitutional issue because of the precedent involved.

Aside from the imp't constitutional issues involved, there are other imp't issues in CPS which should concern us all as citizens in a democracy. I refer specifically to the waste of manpower and human resources which it brings about.

In CPS, we find a boys club worker skilled in preventing delinquency spending 51 hrs. a week pulling weeds out of a grass patch; a physician acting as a carpenter; a college prof scrubbing floors; and an engineer acting as a guardian for a group of feeble minded.

The waste of manpower in CPS is causing society to lose the services of men who could be working at skilled tasks they are trained for as our govt takes them out of circulation and puts them at chopping trees and at other forms of unskilled labor.

Let me tell you about Dr. Don Charles DeVault. (Ph.D. Cal.; teaching and research at Stanford in physical chem; end of deferment; 1A0; no report to army; 18 mos; Parole to CPS in Colo. where from 7:30-5:00 digging ditches, picking up rocks; leisure time he teamed up to work on penicillin; asked ss for change). (Was. Post edit) A

May I quote from a letter which Dr. DeVault wrote to Selective Service as he requested a change to more significant work: "As I work with a shovel or lean on it or drive a truck during the 51 hours per week that I am prevented from being useful in any way comparable to what I can do or to the world situation, I cannot help but worry about the problem. It is not that we object to making sacrifices, because we do not. It is the uselessness of the particular sacrifices that the authorities designate for us".

For his pains, Selective Service transferred Dr. DeVault to its camp at Germfask, Michigan, which the gov't was turning into a punishment center for those who were too insistent in their objections to its policies. (continue with facts: continue penicillin research, furlough, refusal to go on project, research, sentence to 3 years.)

Commenting on this case, the Washington Post in an editorial on Nov. 22, 1944 wrote: "When the Army finds a man physically unfit for military service, it sends him back to civilian life with the hope that his abilities will make a contribution to the war effort. When it finds a man psychologically unfit for military service, it does the same thing. But when it finds a man conscientiously unfit - that is unable to render military service because of conscientious scruples - it treats him in quite different fashion. It packs him off to something called a Civilian Public Service Camp and assigns him to something called "work of national importance" without taking any account whatever of his ability to render more useful service in some other sphere....If there is any sense in this wasting of a man's skill, we cannot see it. If there is any justice in this punishment of a man because of his conscience, it is beyond our discernment. We say that this is stupid and ugly - and unbecoming to a great free people engaged in a war for the freedom of the human conscience".

The dangers in the government's treatment of COs goes beyond CPS, however. We have seen how the law requires that a person's conscientious scruples be founded on "religious training and belief" before they can be legally recognized. But is this real recognition of conscience? (present facts of Private Weber case) According to our law, Private Weber is to be punished for he denies that his motives are "religious", but are his convictions any less sincere?

Let's see if we can analyze a bit this "religious training and belief". It is not a difficult matter to distinguish between a man of conscience and the fraud. But who can say with certainty that a man has or does not have "religion"? Is he who attends church religious? Does he who subscribes to an accepted theology thereby become religious? And if more than this is implied, what are its confines?

(Present following facts:)

1-Original General Hershey ruling required that he recognize "some source of all existence which is divine because it is the source of all things".

2- Federal Circuit Ct. of Appeals in NY in case of Mathias Kauten, illustrator for Gatevepost and an avowed atheist held that humanitarian views rather than theological beliefs are the proper test: "We should regard as a religious impulse...A compelling voice of conscience... The provisions of the present statute take into account the characteristics of a skeptical generation and make the existence of a conscientious scruple against war in any form, rather than allegiance to a definite religious group or creed, the basis of exemption... It is a belief finding expression in a conscience which categorically requires the believer to disregard elementary self-interest and to accept martyrdom in preference to transgressing its tenets...The... response of the individual to an inward, entor, call it conscience

or God, that is for many persons at the present time the equivalent of what has always been thought a religious impulse".

3- SS still refuse to recognize this view, though it goes farther than it first did. In August 1943 it said: "...conscientious convictions held by a man reared in the environment of a religious civilization and exposed, if only subjectively, to its ethical concepts, have their roots in the same soil from which spring religious convictions, and furnish evidence from which may be drawn the inference that he recognizes a deity or a power above and beyond the human".

* * *

The story of man's struggle for freedom of religious and intellectual belief is the story of civilization, for only as he becomes free does man enter that state superior to mere animal existence which may be truly called civilization. The measure of freedom of conscience afforded to those whose scruples prevent them from participating in war may, therefore, be regarded as sort of a metabolic test of the state of health of our civilization. To the extent that COs and other minorities are denied freedom, to that extent are we afflicted with the political disease which has destroyed Europe.

(in place of stars above, use prison facts of following pages)

Additional facts on religious training and prison:

1-Our analysis of religious definitions is imp't because we have seen that there are more than 3500 sincere young men in prison because of conscientious convictions. Some of them are like Dr. DeVault because they could not continue to submit to what they considered an evil; others because they were not considered "religious".

2-It isn't necessary to go into too much detail about the injustices of this. It is evident, I think, that COs are not criminals in the usual sense of the word. They cannot be "reformed"; more often they reform their jailers. Imprisonment is not a deterrent to others as they act on the basis of principle rather than in fear of punishment. There is no reason why they should be sent to prison.

3-COs make up 1/6 of our prison population.

4- Average CO sentence is 30.6 mos. Average for all Federal prisoners is 22.1 mos.. Less severe sentences: violators of narcotic laws 20.8 mos; liquor 10.6 mos.; white slave laws 28.3 mos.; postal laws 27.3 mos.

5- Maintenance of COs is at rate of \$771 per man per year, multiplied by 3500 is \$2,700,000. Assuming 5,000 COs passing thru prisons and staying there for a 2 year average the cost to the nation is \$7,710,000.

6-England has only 200 in prison out of 57,000; or 15 times as many COs are in prison here although there are probably less COs. English sentences are usually fine or a few weeks. 6 mos. is rare.

7- Treated more badly in paroles too. Not allowed to return home as other prisoners are; jobs restricted to hospitals primarily at wages not exceeding \$50 per month. Only about 1/4 of these parole applications granted, while 44.8% of all parole applications are granted.

8- Jenney Yankwich Calif. judges refuse to imprison COs so they place offenders on probation at time of sentencing.

9-2800 out of 3500 COs are Jews.

The Washington Post

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