# B.S.L. NOTES 

## Brotherhood of

St. Laurence

# CONCERN FOR FUTURE OF YOUNG PEOPLE 

Dear B.S.L. Friends,
Some little time ago I addressed a meeting of young school teachers. I was speaking on that subject which is of such vital importance to everyone of us. I refer of course to the international situation and the danger with which mankind is faced. At the end of my address, one young man with a surprised and alarmed look on his face, said "THE SITUATION THEN REALLY IS SERIOUS!" That remark came from a man with education perhaps above the average, a man whose very calling should have caused him to be alert to the situation. That man's chief duty was to prepare children for the future. I am very much afraid that the young school teacher is typical of the majority of the people in this land of ours.

For the last 15 years, in ever increasing numbers, and with ever increasing urgency those in the best position to speak have been warning us that if we are to exist as a nation we must change our outlook on life, we must face facts, and must be "geared" up for peace as in the past we were "geared" for war.

What concerns me about the situation almost above everything else is that we are failing our young people. We are allowing them to think the world they know today is going to be the same kind of world in 5 or 10 years' time, that nothing is going to prevent them finishing and making a success of the careers they are contemplating entering upon. I most certainly am not in a position to know what kind of world this is going to be in 10 years' time, but according to all I have read of recent years and all the talks I have listened to, I know it is going to be a vastly different world from that those boys and girls of ours, and many of their elders too, are visualising.


In writing to you some months ago, I referred to Professor Ritchie Calder's book, "Commonsense about a Starving World". Evidently a large number of people have read the book because I have recently learnt from the Australian agent that there has been an abnormal demand for it and the present stock has been depleted. Being so anxious that even more people should read the book, I have urged the agent to order a fresh supply from London. Being fearful lest he should have copies left on his hands, I have guaranteed him the price of 50 copies of those he has now ordered. The book will not be available in Australia for at least two or three weeks after you receive this letter from me. In order to make sure of a copy I would advise you to order one as soon as possible. This you can do either from us at 51 Royal Arcade, Melbourne or from Mr. S. Farrow, 152 Ryrie Street, Geelong. The price is $7 / 6$. Of course other book sellers may be able to supply your needs, but I feel sure that those ordered from London will soon be sold out.

I have written a lot about this book but I have done so because I think it to be the best of its kind. What encourages me so much about it is that while giving an almost frightening picture of the situation as it is, the writer shows how the situation can be saved. He does however, remind us that time is running out.

As I see it the greatest need for Australia is for us to wake up to the situation, and like the school teacher to whom I referred, to realise that the SITUATION REALLY IS SERIOUS. When we do this, we


Father G. K. Tucker, Superior, B.S.L.
will do something about it and so play our part in saving the situation.

Please excuse me for again writing on this theme, but I always bear in mind when writing to you what a wonderful part B.S.L. Friends have played over the years in creating the right kind of public opinion in regard to matters of vital importance. I am addressing myself to some 6,000 people. Between us all we should be able to make a valuable contribution towards inspiring all people of goodwill to play their part in this, the most critical period of the world's history. If we fail, we not only fail ourselves, but we fail all those bright youngsters of ours and so deprive them of the opportunity of enjoying the benefits of this land on which the good Lord has bestowed so many benefits.

Our Greetings to you all,
I am,


## Community Aid Abroad

Mr. David Scott reports from India that he has found several new projects needing help. After leaving India, Mr. Scott will spend a week visiting community centres in Korea with a view to finding out whether C.A.A. would be able to provide the type of assistance needed in Korea.

Five of the six students who went to India last November on C.A.A. Travel Grants have now returned to Australia. These Grants were provided by the Howard Norman Trust and the B.S.L. Staff C.A.A. Group. Father Tucker welcomed the students home at a Reception held on 18th March, commenting that the real value of their work in S.C.I. Work Camps was the friendship they had established with many people in India.

Each member of the Party gave a brief talk on different aspects of their time in India. The Youth Work Camps are organised by Service Civil International, an organisation in which young people from various nations give their services as labourers, working with the Indian people on work such as the building of a school, or the construction of an irrigation channel. One Camp was held at the Hatibari Leprosy Colony where a great number of tree stumps were dug from the ground to increase the area for the raising of crops. The example set by the Australians in working with leprosy patients inspired assistance from men in nearby villages, whose fear of the disease has always prevented them from giving any practical assistance.
S.C.I. has sent back several reports of the high regard in which these students are held in India, and the value of their work and friendship. Much of their free time was spent visiting C.A.A. projects.

The sixth member of the Work Camp party, Miss Brenda Shaylor of the B.S.L. Children's Centre staff, is remaining another month to work in Ceylon. Miss Shaylor has spent considerable time in Tibetan Refugee Nuiseries caring for some of the many children whose parents have to work on road building and cannot themselves provide homes for their families.

## MISS FLORENCE DICK CELEBRATES

Miss Dick, one of the oldest voluntary workers of the B.S.L. celebrated her 87 th birthday on March 23rd. The City Auxiliary, of which she is a member, gave her a party to celebrate the occasion at the home of Miss Frey.

Recently Miss Dick received THE NICEST LISTENER AWARD for her outstanding charitable work in the field of social service.

##  <br> WANTED <br> USED RADIOS DECK CHAIRS OR GARDEN SEATS <br> To be repaired by Youth Club for pensioners at Fitzroy and Mornington Holiday Home. <br> Contact 41-3183 to arrange for their collection.

# NOTES FIEOM CENTHES 

## Social service bureau

One of the problems continuing to worry Social Workers is how to explain what they do. It takes imagination on their part and a patient interest in their listeners to convey an idea of the kind of help that can be given to people by talking around an office desk. It was strongly brought home to us recently during the making of the B.S.L. film that social work is not a photogenic profession. Pictures of substandard accommodation, poorly dressed children and the distribution of Christmas parcels may have their place in confronting us with bad social conditions, but they give no indication of how people can be strengthened and encouraged to solve their own problems.

This year we are going to make a more conscious effort than before to reach the community and make more people aware of our function. Beginning within the Organisation, we will invite new Staff members to our Meetings so that they can hear both discussion of general business and the planning for help to particular clients. We will also continue talking to outside groups and if possible carry out the plan made last year to pay special attention to the ways in which we can
work with the Parish Clergy.
Two or three weeks preceding the writing of this report have been unusually heavy ones as far as new clients approaching the Social Service Bureau is concerned. We have also received a great increase in the number and variety of enquiries from all sections of the community. This is greatly encouraging because it gives a sense of a fairly widespread opinion that if we cannot assist ourselves, at least we will be able to give helpful information. We hope that our service will change as the needs of the community change. In the planning of future developments, the opinion of the community we are trying to serve is of major importance and will always be sought and valued.

## Coolibah club

Club members are beginning to show keen interest in the future of the club, especially in the facilities and activities which we intend to introduce this year.

Negotiations are being completed at present for regaining an Activities room for Coolibah Club members. This room we plan to set up as a room in which members can again take up hobbies and recreational pastimes; or mend, repair or make objects and items that may help themselves or benefit other club members in some way.

A Committee has been set up to help cope with the social side of
the club programme which we also hope to extend to include; sing-song afternoons, social games, discussions, record sessions, Australian afternoon teas, and various outings and visits, etc. They will also help with the establishment of a library and of a club magazine. Thus individual members shall find an opportunity for pursuing some particular interest and of enjoying the social company of the other members.

## Children's centre

A new development has recently taken place in the Children's Centre. The two activity rooms, where the children spend time playing, painting, modelling and so on, have been joined together into a single L shaped building which is both attractive and compact. This required a lot of planning and work on the part of staff members and has already proved popular with the children, who are coming to the centre in increasing numbers each day after school. Staff members, too, have found a great difference. The "new" building is more convenient for supervision and gives a sense of "togetherness" for both staff and children.

The staff feel that this is only one of the steps forward they are shortly to take, and other improvements are already under way in the woodwork shop and storeroom. This looks like being a year of great activity in the Children's Centre.

## HOUSING STUDY . . . Problems of low-income families

One of the first tasks undertaken in the recently begun study of "The housing, problems of low income families" was discussion with estate agents in twelve difierent areas of Melbourne. Questions were asked concerning the availability of accommodation which can be afforded by the family living on $£ 20$ per week or less.

House purchase is not a possibility for most families at this income level. With their whole income required for basic necessities each week they cannot save a deposit of even a few hundred pounds. If such a low deposit is raised in some way, the house which it can secure is usually an old property in need of considerable expenditure in addition to weekly repayments which are unlikely to be lower than the rent which would be paid for the same premises.
In seeking accommodation to rent, families including several children are severely hampered. Further obstacles are the sums of money generally required by agents as payment of rent in advance or deposits to offset any damage to the property, and the requirement of various references including evidence on past rent payment and payment of hire purchase commitments.

It is clear that a family which falls behind in the rent for one property, or acquires a poor record of payment on hire purchase thereby faces even greater difficulties in finding future accommodation. The responsibility of estate agents to the owners of property means that they are not prepared to take on tenants who appear to be 'bad risks.'

On the availability of low-rented accommodation, the agents interviewed were uniformly discouraging. Though there are still controlled properties at low rents on their books, when these are vacated they are most often sold, or else re-let at higher rents. Self-contained accommodation at $£ 7$ per week or less becomes available very rarely and infrequently compared with the urgency with which many families must look for accommodation or the very limited opportunities which they have for searching for it. The family forced to leave accommodation because they cannot keep up with the rent, or because the landlady is annoyed by the children, is not able to "shop around" for the weeks or even months which might be necessary to find suitable accommodation within their means. On the current housing market, $£ 8$ per week is a moderate rent for selfcontained premises including more
than one bedroom. Flats are generally no cheaper than houses, and often not available to families with children.
Those families which cannot afford such prices, or for the reasons above cannot enlist the help of estate agents, are usually forced to take rooms and share facilities. Rooms are commonly let through local advertisements or personal contacts; prices vary greatly according to current demand, the urgency of the tenant's search, and the number of children the landlord agrees to allow in the premises. For two rooms and shared facilities, a family may well pay $£ 5-£ 7$; it is obvious that the price of rooms compared with self-contained premises is high in relation to the loss of privacy and convenience.

It was generally agreed by the estate agents interviewed that the family with an income of $£ 20$ a week or less is in a very difficult position. One agent summed up the situation by saying that such families are "not in the race - haven't a hope;" he suggested that their only possibilities of living in reasonably adequate accommodation are to "fluke" an old unmodernised weatherboard cottage at the relatively low rent of $£ 6$ or so, or to secure a Housing Commission dwelling.

## S.O.S. Yoluntary Helpers!

Here is an opportunity to play an active part in the Brotherhood's work. The Salvage Division is seeking the help of new volunteers for the sorting and repairing of clothing and also to re-make adult clothing
into children's wear, aprons, etc.
There also is a great need for men to help with store work, sort metals, furniture, books, etc. Some volunteers have been able to establish special sections such as Toys,

Theatrical Hiring and a Book Department.
Would those who are interested please contact Miss N. Rawlins, phone 41-7055.

## Below: Voluntary helpers sorting clothing at the Salvage Division in Westgarth Street, Fitzroy.



## NEWS FROM THE B.S.L. AUXILIARIES

Ringwood Auxiliary has a number of activities planned for the year, the first of which is a stall to be held on the 20th April outside St. Paul's Ringwood, for which the President, Mrs. Penny, would be pleased to receive donations of cakes, biscuits, goods, Otc, On the 13th May, the group is going on a tour of Heinz Factory, to be followed by morning tea. Cars will leave the car park at 9.30 a.m.

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Camberwell Auxiliary will hold four luncheons during the year, the first being on 4th April at the home of Mrs. T. K. Hurley, 19 Deepdene Road, Balwyn. Dr. Douglas Coats will speak on "Life in a Swedish , Village". Four new members have joined the Committee. They are Mrs. L. C. Bridgland, Mrs. J. K. Coombe, Mrs. T. H. Hurley and Mrs, D. C. Jones.

Brighton Auxiliary have arranged three street stalls so far, the next being at Church Street, Brighton on the 10 th May. On the 23 rd April Edments. Hostess will demonstrate on how to prepare for a formal dinner. On the 24th May the President of the group, Mrs. Bayley, will speak about their auxiliary work with Stephani Bini.

Cheltenham/Mordialloc Auxiliary. The Annual Meeting of this Auxiliary was held on the 5th March, at which Mrs. J. Collins was re-elected as President, Mrs. Lynch and Mrs. May as Vice-Presidents, Mrs. N. E. Ellis as Secretary and Mrs. P. Taylor and Mrs. P. J. Geoghegan as Joint Treasurers. Thanks are due to those who help forward the work of the Brotherhood by undertaking the duties involved in being office bearers in an auxiliary. This group has already held several successful functions this year, and the next activity planned is a street stall on the 19th April in Mentone.

Warrandyte Auxiliary. This group has several activities planned for the year, the first was a street stall held on the 23 rd March. It is hoped to repeat last year's very popular Progressive Dinner on Saturday, 15th June.

Box Hill Auxiliary has a very interesting programme arranged for the year. The meetings take place at the home of the President, Mrs. Henry, 51 Combarton Street, Box Hill, at 1.45 p.m. (89-9889). On the 23rd

April, there will be a meeting and social gathering at Mrs. Henry's home, and on Saturday, 27th April, there will be a Card Night at 7.45 p.m. At the meeting to be held on 27th May, there will be a speaker on "Antique China", also a "Prettiest cup and saucer" competition.

Dandenong and District Auxiliary. On 30th April, this Auxiliary has planned a street stall, and for the May meeting on 22nd May a "From your Garden to Mine" has been arranged. There is always a wellstocked Opportunity Table at these meetings.

Glen Iris Auxiliary is holding its Annual Meeting on Monday, 6th May, at 2 p.m. at the home of Mrs. A. H. Smart, 181 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris. The film, "The Brotherhood Story", will be shown on this occasion.

Caulfield-Armadale Auxiliary has changed its day of meeting to the third Wednesday in the month and is held at the home of the President, Mrs. E. Smith, 21 Anderson Street, Caulfield. Mrs. Smith would be very pleased to receive any goods for the Opportunity Table.

Fortunas Auxiliary. This group of "young marrieds" has a very full programme arranged for the year. The next two dates are a Cake Stall on Friday, 19th April, and the Progressive Dinner on 4th May. There is also a monthly morning coffee gettogether.

Melbourne Younger Set. The annual St. Valentine's Ball organised by this active young group of people was a great success, both financially and socially. Further functions to be held during the year are being planned.

Sunshine Auxiliary. Mrs. A. Doak was re-elected president of the Auxiliary, when she thanked the people for electing her again. She said "since viewing the film The Brotherhood Story,' I feel that I want to do much more to help the Brotherhood with the task they have undertaken". The group will hold a picture night at Mrs. Doak's home, 35 Glengalla Road, on April 6th.

Fitzroy Auxiliary which was formed by Father Tucker 26 years
ago still has five of its original members working at our Salvage Department helping to sort and also helping in the Fitzroy shop. Very appropriately, Mrs. O. Healey, one of our original members, is President of the Auxiliary.

Hughesdale-Murrumbeena Auxiliary works for the Malvern shop and will take more responsibility while Mrs. Rogers is away on sick leave. The group wishes her a speedy recovery. The next meeting will be at the Malvern Shop on Monday, May 13th.

Heidelberg Auxiliary are very sorry to lose their very popular president, Mrs. W. J. Curtis, whose husband has been transferred to Canberra. Mrs. Curtis brought a wonderful sense of humour and sincerity to her position as President. We will indeed miss her. The group will hold a Kraft Cheese demonstration at St. Stephen's Hall on April 30th.

Mornington Auxiliary has already held a very successful luncheon this year, at which the Guest Speaker was Miss Ellison Harvie. Their next function is to be an exhibition of antique lamps to be held at Lady Garrett's home on the 30th and 31st March.

Ormond Auxiliary. The Auxiliary's shop continues to do very well. The Annual Meeting of this Auxiliary will be held at the home of Mrs. Simpson, 28 Lillimur Road, Ormond, at 2 p.m. on 25th March.

Wangaratta Auxiliary. This country auxiliary is working very hard, and has already this year sent a number of parcels to our Salvage Division.

Preston Auxiliary. This very active auxiliary continues to function smoothly and its shop is doing well. New members are always welcome. Please contact the President, Mrs. Gardiner (47-5833), if you are interested.

## STAMPS WANTED

Mr. Parker, who has for many years been the Brotherhood's voluntary worker who washes and prices used stamps to sell in the B.S.L. Opportunity Shops, would be very pleased of any used stamps. They may be left at the Brotherhood's Opportunity Shops, or forwarded to 51 Royal Arcade, Melbourne.

