

Dear
pp

Social Welfare Services for Children
mothers in Assembly Centers

SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND MOTHERS IN
ASSEMBLY CENTERS

The word "children" as defined by UNRRA includes those under 18 years of age. For purposes of planning and operations to meet the needs of children it is necessary to distinguish between certain needs and problems of young children and those of the adolescent or older age groups, and, for this purpose, we use the word "children" to include those up to about 14 years and the word "young persons" to include those from about 14 to 18 years although it is impossible to draw a sharp dividing line on a chronological age basis. Likewise in planning for the special needs of these groups it is recognized that there may also be many adolescents over 18 years who need special services and who may be expected to benefit from services provided for young persons.

For purposes of this paper particular attention is given to the social welfare needs and problems of children up to about 14 years of age and those of expectant and nursing mothers as these are related to the general scheme of organization and administration of Assembly Centers for displaced persons. It should be borne in mind, however, that neither plans nor operating programs for children can be undertaken in a void, rather they must be closely integrated with all aspects of planning and operations. The basic material or physical needs of children and mothers are similar to those for the adult population in general, namely, food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. There are, however, fundamental differences in the nature of their needs and it is these differences together with their distinctive needs that call for particular attention on the part not only of the Welfare Officer but of the entire administrative staff.

I. Conditions and Problems

Exact data are not available on the numbers, distribution by age, sex and nationality, legal status or present location of children of United Nations nationality in Germany. This fact magnifies the difficulties of planning for the care of children, on the basis of available information the following estimates have been calculated and are being used for the purpose of estimating supplies for children's services:

under 6 months	-	36,750
6 mths. to 1 yr.	-	36,750
1 yr. to 3 yrs.	-	127,000
3 yrs. to 4 yrs.	-	50,000
4 yrs. to 14 yrs.	-	50,000
		<hr/>
Total	-	300,500 (approximately)

In addition to this total it is estimated that in the first six month period there will be approximately 40,000 births among the displaced population.

Vital statistics from official German publications give the following figures of legitimate live births to foreign women in 63 German and Austrian cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants for the first 45 weeks of 1941, 1942 and 1943:

Jan. 3, 1943 - Nov. 12, 1943 - 38,158
Jan. 4, 1942 - Nov. 21, 1942 - 36,641
Jan. 5, 1941 - Nov. 15, 1941 - 43,094

Figures for the number of illegitimate births are not at hand for the corresponding period.

The latest figures from official German sources for towns of 15,000 or more relate to May, 1943, when legitimate births to Displaced Persons, which included Germans, numbered 10,508 and illegitimate 1,691. Assuming that half the total were to foreigners, this gives 6,000 births for the month. If this is taken as a typical month, it might be assumed that there is an annual average of 70,000 births in the towns of over 15,000 inhabitants, which does not include small towns and rural areas. Some estimates give the total births to foreign women in Germany as in 1943 between 120,000 and 140,000. This figure is based upon estimates of a total of between one and one and a half million foreign women in Germany. As most of these women come from countries with high birth rates and they are all of child-bearing age, a rate of 100 to 150 per 1000 women per year would seem reasonable. On this basis the total births to foreign women would amount to about 500,000 over a 4 year period.

Account should be taken, however, of the fact that prior to the winter of 1942-43 when the German armies began to retreat, expectant mothers were supposed to be repatriated for confinement. In many instances the child was left at home and she returned. Neither the number who returned to Germany with their children nor the number actually repatriated is known.

Aside from the children born in Germany there is no accurate basis for estimating the numbers over 4 or 5 years of age likely to be there as it is not known to what extent children were taken into Germany with their parents or separately. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that the largest numbers will be under 4 and over 10 years of age.

From these scattered data it is hard to know just what the nature and extent of the needs and problems of children will be in any Assembly Center. It is clear, however, that the situation will differ from one center to another and from one time to another in the same center.

In any Assembly Center where there are children they may fall into one of four main groups:

- a) Those accompanied by their parents or an adult member of their own family, or a legal guardian.
- b) Those accompanied by an unrelated adult without legal responsibility.
- c) Those who are unaccompanied.
- d) Those found in institution or centers to which they were evacuated.

Those falling in group) will generally present no special problem from the standpoint of identification or repatriation apart from that of the parent or guardian. It should be noted, however, that under German law pertaining to nationality a child always takes the nationality of its parents regardless of where it is born and children born out of wedlock take the nationality of the mother. This law may render some children born of United

Nations parents in Germany stateless. As for example, a child born of a national of a foreign country in Germany would be considered by Germany as having not German nationality but that of the parent. At the same time under the nationality law of the parents' country he might be considered as deriving nationality from the country in which he was born. Where children are accompanied by the parent, however, it is hoped that no question of the child's nationality as distinct from that of the parent will be raised and it is also hoped that no decision pertaining to repatriation will operate to interfere with the normal relationship of parent and child.

In the case of children falling in groups b), c) and d) above they may be lost or otherwise separated from their parents, orphaned, or abandoned. Many of them may be without identity, either by accident or by deliberate design on the part of the parent for protective purposes, or on the part of the enemy to effect its policies. The situation of those in institutions or centers for evacuees is not easily anticipated.

The most difficult problems from the standpoint of both temporary care and repatriation will arise in the case of those who are unaccompanied and those accompanied by an unrelated person without legal responsibility. It may add to our understanding of the needs of this group to review briefly some of the types of conditions under which these children may have been living and the nature of some of the difficulties they may present in connection with the repatriation and temporary care in Assembly Centers in enemy territory.

- (a) The children and young persons found displaced in Germany may have been taken there with or without their parents, or may have been born there.
- (b) Some children and young persons have been reported as labourers. Most of these will belong to the older age groups and communication with their parents may have been carried on under the enemy regime. It may be possible in most of these cases to ascertain their nationalities, the registration and identification should present no special difficulties except in a relatively small number of cases where they were taken away from their homes at the age of 10 or 11 and have remained isolated from their families for three or four years.
- (c) There are children and young persons who have been in hiding because their parents were looked on with disfavour by enemy authorities on account of race, religion, or political affiliations. It is difficult to estimate numbers, but it is known that there are such children in France, Belgium, Hungary, Poland and in Germany and Austria. Some of these children have been cared for by sympathetic people who had voluntarily undertaken a burden which may have entailed some risk to themselves. Though the risk will disappear with a cessation of hostilities the burden of maintenance may increase and may cause them to bring the children to the nearest Assembly Center. Some of these children may be without identification either because of accident or by deliberate destruction of all identity by their parents in order to protect the child. Where the child was known to the family or the arrangements were made by the parent, there may be no difficulty.
- (d) There will also be children and young persons who were originally reported with their parents but have since become orphans or have been separated from their families. No doubt they will have been

helped by fellow workers of the same nationality but when the time comes for these to be repatriated, they may wish to transfer the responsibility for the children to the repatriation authority. As an illustration of this problem it is known that Polish workers were encouraged to have their wives with them in Germany. Some reports suggest that there may be some 200,000 Polish children in that country under four years of age. It is impossible to estimate how many of them may have been lost or become separated from both parents.

- (e) Another category of children believed to be a large one contains those who have been deported from Poland, Belgium, Luxembourg and possibly other countries and brought up as "Nazi children". It may be difficult to recognize them and their treatment when recognized may present difficult features if they prove to have been effectively Germanized. In many cases the existence of these children may not be disclosed at first by their German foster parents and special measures may be necessary later on to discover them. To deal with this situation, a high degree of technical skill will be required and, consequently, it may be inadvisable to undertake measures for their location and care on an emergency basis. It is likely, however, that in one way or another some of these children will find their way to Assembly Centers. In many of these cases it is known that at the time the children were taken away the parents were killed, and those who were deported may have died since. Clearly this will further complicate the problem.
- (f) There are two other categories requiring special consideration, first, the children of unions between women of the United Nations deported as labourers or political internees and men of enemy nationality; and second, those whose fathers are nationals of the United Nations and their mothers of enemy nationalities. The nature of these problems will vary depending upon whether or not the parents were married or whether the parent of United Nations nationality wishes to return to his or her own country with the child. In many such cases, however, the children may be unwanted and many perhaps may already have been abandoned by both parents. In most countries fatherless children are considered to acquire the mother's nationality but in some cases these children may be non-repatriable, due both to the laws and decrees of their own countries and those of Germany.
- (g) In addition to these complex situations some children and young persons will also be suffering from emotional disturbances or shock: some may be socially mal-adjusted and therefore likely to present minor or serious behavior difficulties. Skilled and experienced personnel may not be available to give the individualized care required for satisfactory treatment of these difficulties.
- (h) Finally, it should be emphasized that many of these children and young persons may have experienced prolonged physical deprivations and exposure, and may be in a serious state of debilitation. This not only necessitates appropriate care at once, but may be a factor delaying return to their homes even after repatriation.

With respect to expectant and nursing mothers, there may be complications resulting from their marital status. Those who are married may be accompanied by their husbands, widowed or separated either by chance, force, or other circumstances. They may or may not know where their husbands or the fathers of their children are. There may be some who are unmarried and in these cases the paternity of the father may or may not be established. Such complications as these have very real significance from the standpoint both of repatriation and immediate care.

In addition to the urgent need for appropriate physical and medical care, these mothers may require individual assistance in working out plans for returning home with their babies, arranging care for other young children during confinement. In the case of those in the later months of pregnancy there may be a question of whether her return home should be delayed and in these cases whether other members of the family should remain with her or go when their time comes leaving her behind. There may be many who are anxious and uncertain about returning home and in the case of those who are unmarried some may be upset to the point of wishing to be relieved of the responsibility of their baby. Their state of mind will be decidedly influenced by the conditions they anticipate upon returning home, their marital status, and the experiences immediately preceding arrival in the center - some may not wish to go back home.

In the case of those who are unmarried, there may be instances where their status may actually interfere with repatriation, though it is hoped that progressive social policies will eliminate the possibility of any such handicaps or discrimination.

II. MAJOR ASPECTS OF WELFARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & MOTHERS

There are four main aspects of welfare services for children and mothers in assembly centers.

(1). In the first place there will be the problem of identification and registration, which may be relatively simple in the case of children accompanied by their parents, guardians, or other adults legally responsible or who have accurate information about the child and his family. In the case of those who are unaccompanied, the procedures for identification and registration will be more difficult and there will be the problem of locating their own family and reuniting them as quickly as possible. The urgency of expediting this procedure cannot be over-emphasized for every day that passes jeopardizes the chances of tracing the child's family and of identifying him.

(2). In the second place there will be in the case of unaccompanied children and those accompanied by an adult without legal custody, the matter of fixing legal responsibility pending repatriation.

(3). The third aspect pertains to temporary care and protection for all children and mothers. Although they may remain only a few days or weeks in the Assembly Centers it is of crucial importance that steps be taken to ensure that the period of residence is a constructive experience and that every opportunity for expediting restoration of normal growth and development is fully utilized. As they will have been removed from dangers of one kind and it is essential not to expose them to dangers of a new kind or aggravate the difficulties already present.

(4). The fourth aspect pertains to the preparation for transportation and the care of children in transit to their own homes. It is important to recognize that all aspects of care and services for these groups must be closely interrelated and co-ordinated to ensure the best possible care and protection for these children. This calls for the maximum co-operation between and among all staff members.

Medical care and health services are not specifically referred to as this aspect of care is the function of the Health Division. It is essential, however, to emphasize the necessity for especially close-working relationships between Health and Welfare Officers. Results, however, will not be satisfactory without equal co-operation from the entire administrative staff.

III. BASIC NEEDS AND SERVICES:

Before considering in more detail these four aspects of welfare services, it may be useful to review the fundamental needs of children to ensure their normal development and the effect of displacement and the resulting experiences may have upon them. It should be borne in mind that the early years of life is the period of most rapid physical, mental and emotional development and that every single day is vitally significant in terms of the kind of adult the child will grow up to be.

All children brought up in their own homes or somewhere else have certain fundamental physical needs including appropriate food not only to sustain life but also for growth; clothing sufficient for cleanliness, warmth and health; shelter that is clean, warm and which provides space for rest both during the day and at night and for play; medical care appropriate to their needs; opportunities for the outlet of their energy in wholesome play.

In addition to these physical needs, the normal development of the whole personality depends upon the fulfillment of a child's fundamental needs for love and affection, a feeling of security and safety, a sense of belonging and being valued, close and continuing personal relationship with the same adult who gives him care and training, surroundings that are familiar to him and in which he encounters people he knows, and opportunities for education. It is the members of his own family that mean more than anything else to every child. He wants their love and approval and it is through trying to win their approval and affection that he adjusts his behavior to the demands or standards that he finds pleasing to them. As a child gradually becomes less physically dependent on those around him, his steady preservation of self-confidence and safety depends in large part on his feeling that support is still close at hand and that he can turn to the people that he knows if he encounters things strange or frightening to him.

A child deprived for one reason or another of continuing relationship with the same people and a stable, dependable environment tends to feel unequal to his experience and will become anxious, frightened and insecure. The effects of these feelings and those arising when he is deprived of affectionate care show themselves in various kinds of disturbed behavior. Like grown-ups, they will compensate for their loss or deprivations, only they will do it in different ways from adults. The importance of such behavior lies not so much in the trouble they give to those around them as in the permanent effects upon the child's development for it is during these formative years that the whole pattern of his character takes shape and that he forms habits of reacting to situations and of adjusting to

people that remain permanent.

The children likely to be encountered in assembly centers have little behind them in the way of normal family and home life or of steady reassuring experience in an environment where they feel safe and wanted. They have in many instances suffered great dislocations in the conditions of their lives. Some may have left home as refugees, relatives or friends. Some may have been completely separated at an early age from everything familiar to them. According to the state of the grown-ups by whom they were accompanied, and to their subsequent experience, they may not feel that they have lost everything. They will, however, cling anxiously to the little that is familiar in the strange surroundings, or even to some object such as a fragment of cloth or a broken toy from home.

Children accompanied by adults known to them adjust quickly to new surroundings and are not frightened by such things as bombings unless the grown-up is anxious, disturbed or frightened. In the latter case, the child reacts very quickly. Children who have been entirely separated from all that is familiar to them will be even more anxious and frightened for they are bewildered at finding themselves suddenly without support, surrounded by strange people and with nothing to cling to.

Children who have been born in an alien country, particularly an enemy country, will in many instances inevitably have been unwelcome to their mothers. They will have had little of the normal warmth of feeling which helps a baby to get a good grip on life. Even where the mother has had real warmth of feeling for her baby she will usually have been feeling considerably anxiety on other accounts; and a young baby is quick to sense anxiety in its mother and to respond to it with insecure feeling. These children may also have had little in the way of steady care from their mothers and may have had little continuous care from any particular grown-up. There will rarely have been a father in the child's background with the confidence that he normally gives as the protector of the family and with the added possibilities for the child of the normal development of his emotional life through his much needed relationship to both parents. Insecurity of feeling will have been considerably reinforced by the mother's doubts as to the future.

Illegitimacy in the case of these children will prove an added difficulty. Some children particularly those born in Germany, may have been taken away from their mothers and will have suffered not only the anxiety of that separation and the loss of what little security they have known, but will have experienced careful and deliberate effort to destroy their allegiance to the mother and all that she represents. Many of these children will have struggled to achieve some feeling of safety through the anxious acceptance of the standards of those who have replaced their mothers. For many children the more recent separation from the alien background to which they have become accustomed may be an added difficulty.

The actual behavior of these children may take a variety of forms. Some of them will be obviously unhappy, anxious and afraid. Some may appear apathetic and backward. Others of them will be troublesome, defiant and difficult to manage, if not actually delinquent. Others may show more specific behavior disorders.

/It is

It is to be expected that under such conditions large numbers of older children will lose all respect for adult control and supervision and will seek satisfaction of their needs outside the family and home. Yet we know that even in a normal environment a child cannot function independently. Once family influence and protection are broken down, once the emotional ties are severed, children, and especially adolescents, are likely to seek security in collective action and to resort to primitive and violent ways of satisfying their elemental needs. Under normal conditions certain aspects of community life, particularly schools and various types of group activities, supplement family life or even make up for certain deficiencies in the home. But the shattering of family life has been accompanied by the disintegration of community life. Many of these children may have experienced this even before displacement. They have subsequently been exposed to a different kind of community life or a number of varieties. Their arrival at the assembly center may call for adjustment to yet another variety. They may have no confidence in it or the people they encounter there at the outset.

It should be borne in mind that even though services provided in assembly centers are limited and of an emergency nature that makes it difficult to allow for individualized care or individual differences, each child will be reacting to the care given to him in terms of his earlier experiences and his own particular situation and feelings.

These points are emphasized because so often in our zeal to protect a child and to pour out sympathy upon him, we fail to reckon with what is going on inside of him and to appreciate that he is not a doll but a complex human mechanism and, therefore, our methods may do more harm than good. Or again, we may ourselves be frustrated by his failure to respond to our humanitarian gestures or by his aggressive or otherwise unacceptable behavior. They will certainly not be grateful! Nor can we expect them to be. Unless these aspects of child life are understood there is the danger of overlooking them, and of giving exclusive emphasis to their physical well-being and of trying to force upon them a standard of behavior that is ours, not theirs.

Another important psychological aspect that will have significance during the emergency period is the speed with which young children particularly those under three or four years, will forget their parents or shift their affections to new surroundings. In the case of the older ones, while they may not actually forget their parents or surroundings, the images of these, which they remember and dream about, will undergo great changes as compared with the real person or place. Where the child is separated from his family for a period of time and has to maintain the relationship in a world of make-believe, he will tend to exaggerate the reality, or if he feels they have failed him or left him only because they did not love him, he may tend to repress his memories and hence forget them entirely. In general, the young child lives in the present and tends to form new ties quickly, to imitate what he finds acceptable to those whose recognition he craves, and to confuse earlier associations and experiences with more recent ones.

These factors further emphasize the importance of initiating steps as quickly as possible to identify children who are unattached and to restore them to their own families.

/Registration

IV. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

The first contact with displaced children, which will probably occur at the place of collection or registration, and have had significance for their future well-being and should, therefore, be carefully considered. The general procedure for registration of displaced persons will not suffice in the case of children up to about 14 years of age unaccompanied by members of their own family, a guardian or some other adult with accurate information as to the child's identity. It is suggested that special accommodations be arranged for the reception of these unaccompanied children in order to remove them at once from a setting likely to be distracting and disturbing to them. For the purpose of this discussion such accommodations are referred to as a Children's Reception Center. These centers should be located in a house or other available building in close proximity to each Assembly Center. There should be accommodations for consultation and residential care in the same building if possible. In all instances the Children's Reception Center should be entirely removed from the registration or other offices, though easily accessible from such offices.

It will be essential to exercise great care in selecting staff for the Children's Reception Centers. Persons with technical knowledge, special skills and understanding of the strained and frightened mentality which will characterize these children should be assigned responsibility for individual care and for obtaining as much information as possible about each child. This will involve the use of indirect methods of getting the clearest possible picture of the child's background as well as personal identifying information. Wherever possible trained social workers should be assigned to these centers and where a child's nationality is known, persons of the same nationality will be able to work most effectively with the child. Although, in general, women may be preferred for these positions, in many instances men with an understanding of children may be equally successful in dealing with them.

(a) Suggested Procedure for Registration

All unaccompanied children under 14 years of age who are found or brought into Assembly Centers should be taken immediately to the Children's Reception Center. It will be preferable for them not to go through the general registration procedure. In all instances arrangements should be made to receive and register unaccompanied children separately from adults and family groups. Unaccompanied young persons between 14 and 16 years of age who cannot give identifying information or concerning whom the Registration Office has any question, should also be taken to the Children's Reception Center. The Welfare Officer should be notified of the registration of every unaccompanied young person between 14 and 18 years of age not otherwise referred to the Children's Reception Center and should be responsible for seeing that appropriate arrangements are made for their care.

While it is imperative to obtain information as to the child's identity as quickly as possible, in many instances it will not be possible to fill out the registration card form immediately upon the child's arrival at the Children's Reception Center. It will be inadvisable to begin questioning a child directly at this point as they are not likely to be responsive until they have become more accustomed to the new surroundings and gained a feeling of security that restores their self-confidence. Information should, however, be obtained and recorded as rapidly as feasible. A record supplementary to the registration card should be kept and all additional significant facts should be entered as obtained.

In dealing with unaccompanied children in the lower age groups the fact has to be faced that it will be very difficult in the majority of cases to obtain at once the necessary information for identification, to determine their parents names and even nationalities, to know whether the parents are alive or where they are. Those over 5 or 6 years of age may be able to give enough of the particulars shown on the registration record to enable them to be ultimately identified. In the case of the younger ones the process will be slow and will require careful tracing of information from every potential source. This should be undertaken at once in each case since every day of delay may make a difference. All enquiries regarding children should be regularly cleared with the Children's Reception Centers.

If a child is brought to the Assembly Center by a person who can identify him or who has any information concerning where and by whom the child was previously cared for, where he was found, how long separated from his family or other facts about him, complete details should be obtained and recorded at once. In every instance, details as to where, by whom and when the child was found, should be recorded.

Upon arrival at the Reception Center a registration card form should be filled out with any information that is available regardless of whether the child's identity is known. In case an unaccompanied child is not identified, the word "unidentified" should be entered in the upper left hand corner of the registration card above the space for the name. If the child is given a name temporarily this name should be entered on the registration card form and the words "Unidentified-temporary name" should be entered in the upper left hand corner of the card.

Every child should be tagged with its identification at once. If the child is unidentified at the time of reception he should be tagged with the registration number and possibly the name by which he calls himself.

Attention is called to the necessity of the registration officer also ascertaining the correct identification of all children and young persons accompanied by an adult and the relationship to the adult. Unless adequate precautions to safeguard the identity of all children and young persons are taken at the time of registration, it will be impossible for families or relatives from whom they have become separated, to trace them. It is to be expected that in some instances adults who have been moved by humanitarian motives to assume responsibility for unaccompanied children, may have become attached to them and fearing separation may seek to conceal the child's identity and to represent it as being their own. Where this happens all chances for later tracing the child may be blotted out. It is also possible that adults will come with children whose identity they do not know. They may have kept the child for some time; they may wish to return to their own homes with the child. These facts should all be recorded at the time of registration. It is essential that the rights of these children and young persons and the rights of their families be safeguarded and special measures may be required to protect them, especially adolescents, from the possibility of exploitation. For these reasons it is urgent that special instructions be given to registration officers regarding identification information recorded at the time of registration of all children accompanied by adults, regardless of the relationship stated by the adult.

This does not imply that the child should necessarily be separated from the adult.

In each case where the identity of children accompanied by an adult is not verified at the time of registration, the registration officer should interpose on the child's registration form (after the child's name), the word "unidentified"... If the adult has given the child a name, this should be entered upon the child's registration form with the notation "unidentified - temporary name." Under no circumstances, should a child be assigned a name for registration purposes without this fact being clearly stated on the registration card.

In all instances where a child or young person is accompanied by a person other than a member of his own family, the Welfare Officer should be notified and the child or young person, together with the adult accompanying him or her, should be referred to the Children's Reception Center for consultation and a more complete record of the plans for the child's repatriation. It cannot be over-emphasized that no staff member has authority to consent to or arrange for the adoption of any child or young person brought into an Assembly Center. Likewise, no staff member has authority to permit a child or young person under 18 years of age to leave the Assembly Center with any person other than a parent, member of a child's own family, legal guardian, relative or other person designated by the child's own family, or by the appropriate authority of his own country, or by the Military or other control authority.

(b) Suggestions Pertaining to Reception and Identification

An unaccompanied child whose identity is established might be kept in the Children's Reception Center for a very brief time, possibly not more than two days, pending arrangements for care in a temporary hostel or other appropriate place. In the case of those who are without identity it might be advisable to retain them in the Children's Reception Center for a few days longer, during which time they should be given close individual attention. This will afford an opportunity of obtaining information by various indirect methods which will be the most effective way of obtaining information required for completion of the registration card form.

In the case of unaccompanied children the most important thing will be to make them physically comfortable as quickly as possible and to give them individual care and attention in such a way as to allay fear and anxiety. It is most important to create the environment that gives them a sense of safety and security, and that will be conducive to gaining their confidence.

It should be borne in mind that children are quick to imitate or to identify themselves with other children. Where they have suffered from deprivations or anxiety or insecurity, children are likely to compensate through fantasy, or make believe, as mentioned above. Likewise, many children may have been taught to conceal their identity, or due to painful experiences associated with earlier life may have unconsciously repressed their memories. These illustrations suggest factors that will influence the information obtained from children under conditions likely to prevail, and also indicate the reason why it will be essential to have expert personnel available. It is not merely a matter of obtaining specific information but of knowing how to evaluate and interpret the spontaneous actions and responses of the child during the

daily routine. Expert personnel would of course expedite the process and lacking such experts effort must be made to give guidance and instruction to persons available.

Attention is called to the fact that children even 5 or 6 years of age may not know the full name of their parents, particularly if they have been separated from them for two or three years. Similarly they may not know the name of their own country or village of origin. It is possible that children even up to 8 or 9 may not be able to give accurate information depending upon the period of time they may have been away from their homes or the experiences endured in the immediate past. Hence all information recorded should be continuously supplemented. Persons in daily contact with these children should be constantly alert to their conversations with other children, during play, at meals or other activities. As stated above, an important factor in obtaining information from children is to gain their confidence and this is most effectively achieved through close personal attachment to an adult who gives daily care and affection. For this reason, unaccompanied children might best be placed in small hostels that approximate a family home as nearly as possible and which allow for close individual attention and more continuous observation. The staff of the hostel should be carefully selected and instructed in the kind of information they should be alert to pick up and in methods of getting information indirectly from children during the normal routines of daily life.

Usually children will communicate with each other more readily than with adults. If the staff will enlist the cooperation of the older children in getting information it may be most productive and will also give the children a fine sense of responsibility.

There are innumerable types of information that will be significant in identifying children. The following suggestions are by no means complete but indicate possible ways of getting information and the kind of facts to be recorded:

- (1) The child's name as he gives it.
- (2) Detailed physical description, including sex, approximate age, height, weight, color of eyes, hair, complexion, any marks, scars, unusual features or characteristics.
- (3) Names of any persons or places mentioned by the child and where possible notation should be made of the circumstances under which these were made.
- (4) Talk with the child in the course of meals or other enjoyable activities in other languages using words most likely to stimulate memories such as the words for milk or other common foods of different countries, mother, father, brother, sister, games or toys, etc.
- (5) Try telling them the most common children's stories of different countries and sing songs most likely to have been familiar in the country from which he is thought to have originated.

- (6) Observe especially free play or drawings.
- (7) In the case of those of school age, any facts given about school or teachers. Often children may remember a teacher's name or that of a priest, a store keeper, brothers and sisters or friends of the family, where they have forgotten that of the parent or will only answer that his parent's name was "mother" or a similar familiar word.
- (8) Medical history should be checked including previous illness, operations, accidents or injuries, circumcision, immunization, including type of vaccination as indicated by scar or record, family health insurance records, etc.
- (9) Germany's social insurance system involved family records carefully kept there together with police records, especially those for registration of arrivals or Departures from a town, employment records, etc., should be consulted.
- (10) If children cannot be identified by such methods as those indicated above, experts will be required and scientific techniques may have to be tried. Although such techniques are not infallible, it will be highly desirable to explore scientific methods involving examination and testing of physical characteristics to help determine age, nationality, etc.

(c) Suggestions Pertaining to Tracing Parents or Relatives

Immediate steps should be taken to contact all persons in Germany who might have information about unidentified children. This should include any persons who had kept the children, doctors, nurses, teachers, etc. As some children may have parents or relatives going through other assembly centers a careful check should be made continuously through the central registration office. Many of the sources mentioned above, especially insurance, employment and police records will give significant clues for locating relatives who may have been in Germany. These sources in their own countries are also valuable. Another caution might be added regarding reports received concerning children reputed to be of United Nations nationality who are in the homes of German families. Steps should be taken to establish the validity of such reports but under no circumstances should such children be removed from where they are found pending final plans for repatriation, except where the living conditions endanger the well-being of the child. Until the identity of such children is positively verified and return to their homes is authorized, it may seriously endanger the child to uproot him from a home and expose him to the danger of being stranded in a temporary hostel or alternatively being left entirely dependent in Germany.

(This to be supplemented by specific plan for machinery to be used.)

V. GUARDIANSHIP AND LEGAL CUSTODY

In the case of unaccompanied children, or those accompanied by an adult other than their own parents or legal guardian, special precautions should be taken with regard to legal responsibility and the appointment of guardians. The laws of guardianship and custody vary among the different countries and by haphazard appointment of guardians or by carelessly failing to establish legal responsibility, children may suffer serious consequences in terms of their legal rights and property as well as individual care and protection.

It is noted that in the instructions for registration of displaced persons prepared by SHAEF reference was repeatedly made to guardians of accompanied children. No provision is made in these instructions for children unaccompanied by a legal guardian, nor is information included with respect to the appropriate procedure for the appointment of guardians.

The question arises, therefore, as to legal procedures within Germany and the extent to which UNRRA or the liaison officers of the country concerned might be designated as guardian ad litem. These questions have been raised but to date we do not have any ruling. We shall pass on to you in due course some statement of policy or suggestions as to the procedure to be followed.

In the meantime, particular attention is called to the importance of safeguarding the rights of every child and of protecting every child from the hazards of remaining forever separated from his own people and his own community. There will be many people perhaps who will eagerly seek to take children or to adopt them. Some will be moved by humanitarian motives, others may have lost their own children and there may be those whose motives look towards ulterior material gains or even exploitation. Regardless of the motive, every unaccompanied child has the right to be restored to his own family if possible unless this endangers his well-being. Similarly, every family has a right and a responsibility to have their children restored to them.

Furthermore, we are not a child placing agency and as mentioned above, we have no authority at this time to place children permanently and their departure from an Assembly Center should not be authorized unless they are accompanied by a person with legal responsibility or who has been authorized by the appropriate authority to escort the child to its own home.

It should be borne in mind that responsibility for the long-time planning rests with appropriate bodies in the child's own country and that those who are not identified or who cannot be repatriated become the responsibility of the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees. Our task is to establish identity if possible, and to provide temporary care and protection pending repatriation or other more permanent plans.

VI. TEMPORARY CARE AND PROTECTION

Children in assembly centers with their own families or people they know as well as the unaccompanied ones will be in surroundings strange to them. Their mothers and the other adults around them will be occupied with plans for returning home and many will, themselves, be suffering from anxiety, fear and uncertainty, or apathetic and unresponsive. The children will, probably, be asked to behave in a different way from what has been usual in their recent homes. They will be under the feet of people who are too

busy to attend to them and unless specific arrangements are made to look after them and to keep them occupied they will find destructive things to do. It will be hard for the parents to give the kind of care or supply facilities needed in the temporary home or quarters likely to be available in assembly centers. If families are billeted, the homes will probably be overcrowded; the population will be transient; the mothers will feel their own lives are cramped and will find it difficult to give their children the care they need without special services and facilities outside of the home or other living quarters. Where assembly centers are located in enemy territory the difficulties will be greater for local services such as schools, playgrounds, etc., which are generally available in normal communities may not be accessible.

For all of these children, the first consideration will be how to provide the kind of care that will restore to them something of a safe and secure feeling and how to safeguard them from the tensions and distress of the adults around them. Wherever possible, they will need to remain with their mothers and certainly to live in a group whose language is their own and where there is someone they already know. They should have their meals with their mother, sleep near her, and spend their time where they know she can be readily at hand. It may be found that some mothers are themselves in such an anxious state that their anxiety acts as a severe handicap to the child, and it may be more helpful for him to spend clear periods of time away from his mother in a nursery group or play center so that he may regain some assurance that there are safety and friendliness somewhere in the world.

For children without a mother and without familiar adults some form of secure substitute for family life must be constituted as soon as possible even in places where children are expected to spend only a little time. This will mean putting children to live in small groups, approximating a family and in the care of confident, friendly grown-ups. It will be essential that personnel caring for them not to be shifted. It may also mean giving them additional help during their waking time in the form of day nurseries and recreation or occupation centers. Good planning for the use of children's time will be another effective means of helping to restore their sense of security, for well planned time gives a feeling of reliability to life. Care will, however, be needed in many cases to avoid overstrain, since the great need of many children may be for rest, and those who are ill-nourished as well as anxious may tend towards over-exertion. As few changes as possible should be made in the children's living arrangements once they are settled. They should be able to regard a definite place as "home" and they should remain in the care of the same grown-ups, wherever possible.

Over and above the difficulties of general dislocation and insecurity, many children will have suffered other severe experiences. They may have suffered prolonged hunger and lack of shelter. Where it has been impossible to find any sure means of satisfaction and protection, anxiety will be deep, and children may seem depressed, apathetic, dreamy or more or less oblivious of what is going on around them. They may show intense greed, which will demand the greatest care and kindness, since it may be necessary in the face of their anxiety to seem to frustrate them still further by regulating the amount and kind of food they can for the time being be given. Others of them will have found it possible to survive only by stealing and since it will have been a matter of great merit to steal enough to keep oneself and one's companions alive, such behaviour should not suddenly be labelled as delinquency. These children will need to be given constructive and difficult and thrilling jobs of some kind if they are to be helped to relinquish their primitive way of earning their living (examples given).

Some children may feel themselves to be the victims of persecution for racial and other reasons; they may have witnessed violence against their relatives and friends, and experienced it in some degree themselves. They will tend in consequence to be frightened and distrustful, to regard other people as enemies, and tend to hit out first in case some harm befall them. In some instances, they may be liable to outbursts of rage and violent behaviour. In others, they will at first appear cowed and anxious.

Bombing and battle conditions may have been the experience of some children. Those who had the good fortune to be in the care of relatively confident grown-ups during such times may not have been seriously affected by what has happened, particularly if they are young children. Older children and those without grown-up help or in the care of frightened panic-stricken older people, will have suffered severely. Some of them will be protecting themselves from their anxiety by outbursts of violent behaviour. Others of them will find satisfaction of a different kind in being violent, for there is something in the nature of these violently destructive happenings which coincides with their own feelings of primitive aggression. Some children, on the other hand, will show evidence of shock in more apparently frightened and timid behaviour. They may tend to withdraw from the painful reality of life around them and engage themselves in a world of make-believe, or they may revert to infantile behaviour such as thumb-sucking, bed-wetting, etc.

In helping all these children, we shall have to rely largely on giving them as much security and personal attention as possible wherever they may be and for however short a time. We must at the same time give emphasis to what they can do for themselves. The normal function of play activities at any age is in large part the constant maintenance and restoration of the child's balance. It is possible for him to relieve stress and tension within himself largely through his own activities. He can put his ideas into some form, express his problem, reduce it to a manageable size and deal with it. And having done this, the stress from which he suffers is relieved and he is at ease within himself. While he is busy mending himself he needs someone who will keep his behaviour within reasonable bounds, and see to it that he is restrained from damaging the things round him, from damaging other people and from damaging himself. It is no cure simply to allow him to do as he pleases; but within these limitations he can be allowed to use his materials in his own way for the solution of his problems.

To this end, we must see to it that he has time every day for his own pursuits and we must see to it that he has useful things to do.

Children who are members of family groups or with adults known to them should never be separated from them unless there are special circumstances which make separation necessary in the interest of the children. The parents or guardians should be responsible for their ordinary care and special services provided for them should be on a daily basis or for part of the day.

Depending upon the circumstances in any particular Assembly Center, any one or a combination of all of the following services and facilities may be needed:-

- (a) Special feeding arrangements, such as Milk Kitchens, (importance of ensuring proper supplies).
- (b) Arrangements for replacing or supplementing clothing

(c) Daytime Activities:

- (1) Day Nurseries for children up to 5 or 6 years
- (2) Play Centers for children about 6 to 14 years for after school hours, or if there is no school, for all hours in the day. Depending on the numbers activities should be organised separately for those from about 6 to 9 and 9 to 14 years of age.
- (3) Educational activities or school.

(d) Child Welfare Centers:

For all children up to at least 4 years of age and for expectant and nursing mothers. These centers should combine social welfare and health services. They might be organized as mobile or stationary units, located conveniently for mothers. It is anticipated that these centers could serve as Children's Reception Centers, Day Nurseries and temporary hostels as well as for regular attendance by mothers and children every fortnight who are not served through these channels.

- (e) Special provision for delicate or handicapped children. These may require separate living accommodation, special nurseries or occupational centers apart from those for normal children. Arrangements could be similar but with a different routine, less strenuous activities, closer medical supervision, etc.
- (f) Sick Bays: Depending upon circumstances, these may be required for minor illnesses or diseases.
- (g) Special care may be required for children with serious behaviour difficulties - importance of not labeling them "problem children" and recognizing behaviour is natural response to the environment and experience.

In the case of unaccompanied children, some of the needs will be the same as for those who are with their parents and should be met by the same services already mentioned. There will be other essential needs, particularly for the form of home life. The additional services for these children include in particular:

(a) Children's Reception Centers: for purpose already discussed:

- (1) Registration and identification services
- (2) Medical examination and cleansing
- (3) Observation before placement, or where there has to be a change in places.
- (4) Assignment to hostels

(b) Temporary hostels:

Small groups of 12 to 15 children of ages ranging from infancy to 14 or 15 years of age, both sexes. Separate hostels may be needed for special groups and for young persons. Importance of this method of care and objectives to be achieved.

It may be advisable to call attention to the question of billeting. A child should not be billeted unless as a last resort and never in a German household.

VII. TRANSPORTATION:

In the case of unaccompanied children under 14 years of age, the welfare officer shall be responsible to see that appropriate adult escorts are designated and duly authorized to assume responsibility until the child is placed in the hands of his family, the appropriate national authority or its authorized agent. For children under 5 years of age, there shall be one woman escort for six children. For children 6 to 14 years of age, there shall be one escort for ten children. It will be preferable to have mixed age groups in each party as this will enable older children to assist the escort with the younger ones.

Prior to departure every child should be tagged with proper identification and particulars regarding his destination and the persons into whose charge he is to be placed on arrival. This information should be contained in a substantial envelope and securely tied around the neck of each child. It may be advisable in the case of children under 2 years to place a strip of cloth, or adhesive tape, if available, around the child's body with his identification and destination written on it in indelible ink.

The welfare officer should co-operate with the transport officer to ensure that proper accommodation, food including prepared milk for infants, water and other services are provided for all children and mothers during transit, at any transit centers or other places where there are stop-overs.

If for any reason, such as acute illness, the transportation of an unaccompanied child under fourteen years has to be interrupted, he should never be left alone unless adequate arrangements can be made with the appropriate local officials to ensure his care. The welfare officer in the center from which the child is transported should be notified immediately of any such delay and should take any necessary steps to safeguard the child and to provide appropriate care.