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SMASH THE LINE!



WAR DEPARTMENT

Commission on Training Camp Activities

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which presents itself in relation to this problem is the policy of absolute repression, and I am confident that in taking this course the War Department has placed itself in line with the best thought and practice which modern police experience has developed. This policy involves, of course, constant vigilance on the part of the police, not only in eliminating regular houses of prostitution, but in checking the more or less clandestine class that walks the streets and is apt to frequent lodging houses and hotels."

NEWTON D. BAKER.

Extract from a letter sent by the Secretary of War to the mayors of the cities and the sheriffs of the counties in the neighborhood of all military training camps. August 10, 1917.

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NLM

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

It is a matter of urgent military efficiency that the community be made safe for the soldier.

It is the business of the War Department to see that the soldier is made safe for the community.

This is **YOUR** business whether you be citizen or soldier.

SMASH THE LINE!

The primary objective of the American men on the western front is to smash the enemy's line, to drive him back, weakened in morale and strategic position, until he is finally beaten.

The chiefs of the allied armies have been forced to rank suppression of vice and prevention of venereal diseases among the great problems of the war.

Venereal diseases are the "camp-followers" of prostitution and alcohol. They are a triple alliance behind the lines, and as much the foes of an army as the enemies in front.

Prostitution, alcohol and venereal diseases must be beaten, just as the enemy in front must be beaten, or they may cripple, even defeat, an army.

A soldier with syphilis or gonorrhea, and one with a wound, are both out of the fighting and a drain on an army. But the former is the more serious, for his disability was preventable and in acquiring it he did not register a blow against the enemy in front but literally gave a victory to the enemy behind the lines. Nor does the consequence of his defection end there, for he may become a carrier of disease among his comrades.

During the first year of the war one nation had more men disabled from venereal diseases than from wounds and disabilities incident upon warfare.

A regiment stationed in a training camp sustained greater casualties from venereal diseases than did another (recruited at the time) in one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

The stronghold of this triple alliance for evil is the segregated or red-light district—the so-called “line.” Here, prostitution, fortified by official tolerance and supposed medical inspection, is strongest. It is in this segregated district, popular misconception to the contrary, that venereal diseases have their widest opportunity to spread, insidiously as a poison-gas attack, and wreak greatest havoc. A careful study shows that the majority of infections have resulted from commercialized vice, for the medical inspection of prostitutes is inevitably inadequate and futile. It is in the segregated district, too, that alcohol is invaluable as an aid to prostitution.

Remember that this problem of prostitution is a problem of public health as well as of morals; that the venereal diseases, in their malignancy, communicability, prevalence, and after-effects, constitute a more serious menace than any of the well-known diseases such as typhoid, tuberculosis, or smallpox, all of which the community is fast learning to control.

We are warned to cherish no illusions as to the possibility of getting rid of the human instincts and appetites to which commercialized vice caters. But let us cherish no illusions either as to the indisputable fact that the volume of commercialized vice and of its by-product, disease, varies according as the attitude of the community toward vice is favorable, tolerant, or antagonistic. The effects of favor or tolerance today in the neighborhood of soldiers' camps and in the cities through which they pass will inevitably be seen in large percentages on the sick list instead of on the firing line.

It is a matter of community history that, *once smashed, this line of evil strength is never reorganized.* Why? Because, not segregation, but constant and persistent repression has proved the most effective method of fighting prostitution and its concomitant evils.

Every member of a community is commissioned by a national as well as a civic responsibility to become an active factor in the elimination of segregated districts.

THE TWO SIDES

It is claimed that

SEGREGATION:—

1. Concentrates prostitution, thus facilitating control and reduction.
2. Decreases prostitution by regulation.
3. Decreases venereal diseases through medical inspection.
4. Enables control of the liquor traffic in connection with prostitution.
5. Prevents crimes against women.
6. Protects the community from offensive and detrimental proximity of prostitution.
7. Decreases graft in connection with prostitution, and the exploitation of the prostitute.
8. Decreases crime by enabling police supervision of a recognized crime center.
9. Safeguards against sexual perversions by providing an outlet for the unrestrained sexual appetites of men.
10. Protects boys and young men from contact with the prostitute by removing temptation from the streets and residence districts.

The truth is that

SEGREGATION:—

1. Increases prostitution, continually advertising vice by making it familiar. Affords a place of commerce, otherwise uncertain and precarious, to the least competent of prostitutes, mentally and physically.
2. Increases prostitution by increasing the demand, which increases the supply.
3. Increases venereal diseases by deceiving the ignorant into a fancied reliance upon a frequently "faked" and inevitably futile medical inspection.
4. Stimulates an illegal liquor traffic, since commercialized vice fails without liquor.
5. Tends to increase crimes against women by fostering promiscuity and providing a source of sexual brutalization and degeneracy.
6. Exposes the community by advertising vice as a community necessity, making it easily accessible and tolerated, a condition conducive to the moral degradation of the community.
7. Increases graft, by illegal toleration of commercialized vice, tempting the police to exact illegal revenue and confer illegal privilege. Gives free rein to the exploitation of prostitutes.
8. Increases crime by fostering viciousness and disease, providing a meeting-place for the idle and vicious, with whom, rather than with the police, the prostitutes sympathize and usually co-operate.
9. Fosters sexual perversions and abnormalities by educating men in habits of promiscuous sex relations until they cannot be satisfied by the professional prostitute except by perversions which she is compelled to practice.
10. Exposes boys and young men to contact with the prostitute by presenting an ever-present opportunity to "go down the line and see the sights." Provides a show-place for special obscene and depraved exhibitions, to which the youth is lured by "runners" and the sale of lewd pictures.

SUMMARY

SEGREGATION DOES NOT SEGREGATE

The bulk of prostitution is never confined to a single locality. Most prostitutes don't and won't live in a red-light district if they can help it, since it contains, as a rule, only a comparatively small number of hardened prostitutes, the mental ineffectives and defectives, and those eaten up by venereal disease. These accept the district as inevitable because it offers a mart for the barter of their wares, inasmuch as they are incapable of competing with the shrewder and more attractive free-lance prostitute who operates by choice outside the district.

SEGREGATION INCREASES PROSTITUTION

Segregation increases the demand for prostitutes and inexorably this demand increases the supply. The known existence of a red-light district, its adventitious glamor to the uninitiated, its ease of access—these are a persistent lure to boys with a taste for adventure and men with ungoverned sexual appetites. The hideous excesses required of inmates of houses of prostitution quickly render them diseased and unattractive, and others must be drafted into service.

SEGREGATION AUGMENTS SYPHILIS AND GONORRHEA

Medical inspection, a supposed benefit of segregation, is inevitably inadequate. Concealment of venereal infection by prostitutes is possible in a large number of cases, and the physician's opportunity for diagnosis is limited. Further, there is a temptation to issue false "health certificates" for a substantial fee. Regardless of a "clean bill of health," the prostitute's condition is no less dangerous. For there is no way of inspecting the man, and *the prostitute may become a conveyor of disease germs through the first man she serves after receiving the "health certificate."* She may be a disease carrier without showing infection.

SEGREGATION INCITES ILLEGAL LIQUOR TRAFFIC

There is no recognized partnership between the red-light district and the illegal liquor traffic. The house of prostitution must have liquor to stimulate its guests to debauchery—to "promote good fellowship." Efforts to control the segregated districts by elimination of saloons and liquor-selling dance halls have invariably resulted in wholesale violations and evasions of the liquor laws. To

a large extent, prostitution is artificially stimulated by those who have commercialized it and liquor is the chief agent for "whipping it up" to the point where it yields the greatest dividends to its backers. Commercialization is seriously handicapped without segregation.

Segregation creates an illegally privileged class. It benefits only, as a rule, the worst type of prostitutes who, otherwise, could not gain a livelihood by their trade, and unscrupulous property owners to whom it is the source of inflated rentals wrung from this market place for the barter of human bodies.

Segregation is the enemy of health, morality, economic efficiency, and good government. It facilitates the spread of two of the communicable diseases most dangerous to men, women, and children—gonorrhoea and syphilis!

It lowers the moral tone of the individual and the community. It results in millions of dollars of waste by increasing prostitution and disease. It undermines good government because the object of good government is "to make it easy for the citizen to do right and difficult for him to do wrong."

There are two vitally important reasons why every citizen must fight the segregated district:—

1. Because the elimination of the segregated district and consequent repression of prostitution will be mighty factors in winning the war!

2. Because, in this way only, can the finest civilization be promoted, the highest ideals and the greatest economic efficiency be developed—after the war is won!

WORK WITH THE WAR DEPARTMENT
FOR THE PRESENT AND
FUTURE WELFARE
OF THE NATION

HOW TO DO IT

Convince yourself that segregation is indefensible and realize that it is a serious military and economic menace.

Co-operate with the agencies for vice repression already at work in your community.

Communicate, if there are no such agencies, with the

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Washington**

