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State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES
TRENTON 7

[Summary report. 1948/49] 1948/49

June 13, 1949

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
STATE BOARD OF CONTROL:

I have just completed four years of service as Commissioner of the Department of Institutions and Agencies and, as has been my annual custom, I am submitting a brief report recounting some of the highspots of accomplishment during the year just closing.

May I say that my service with you has been one of the most satisfactory experiences in my whole life.

We have held forty-eight meetings and I continue to be grateful for the sympathetic cooperation and understanding which you have brought to bear upon the complex activities and problems of this Department. I express again to you my gratitude.

This report does not pretend to be a complete one. We undertake each year in November to file with the Governor a financial and statistical review of the year's doings, with a more complete statement of our activities.

Our outstanding embarrassment during the past year has been due to lack of financial support necessary to carry

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out new projects and the expansion of existing activities. The budget for the current year contains no provision whatever for any new employees nor for any non-recurring projects in the way of replacements or extensions.

I mention this first because we sometimes think that the whole success of this Department depends upon a prompt solution of the State's financial difficulties if we are to maintain the splendid record of the years gone by and to keep pace with our neighbor-states who seem to be much more fortunately placed with reference to their fiscal resources.

Notwithstanding our straitened circumstances, we try not only to carry on our twenty-one institutions and our various extramural agencies with fidelity to the best ideals but also to make such advances in our field of operations as are consistent with progress.

I. PREVENTION ACTIVITIES:

In this regard we have not felt that progress in the welfare field would be measured by the number of persons who become dependent upon public aid. In the same way that for many years we have sought to prevent the development of mental disease through our mental hygiene clinics, and in more recent years have given attention to the prevention of

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crime and delinquency in our localities through our Division of Delinquency Prevention, we are definitely shaping our course with reference to public assistance, with the ultimate aim of establishing independence rather than dependence as the goal towards which we should work.

That this has been more than a pious wish on our part is amply demonstrated by the comparison of the number of persons on old age assistance and aid to dependent children in New Jersey as compared with the rest of the country. I need only say that in Louisiana 72 out of every 100 persons over sixty-five are on public relief; whereas in New Jersey the figure is 6.7 per cent. Instances will be given later in this report of specific attempts made to carry out this plan for prevention of dependency.

II. STATE PAROLE BOARD ESTABLISHED:

After a quarter of a century of anticipation the State-wide professionally qualified parole board has been appointed. They have been given quarters in our Central Office; we are greatly gratified at the high character of the men appointed: Commissioner Homer Zink, former Judge Albert H. Holland, and former Speaker of the Assembly, Joseph L. Brescher. They are working harmoniously with our Department and we are cooperating with them so that they can discharge satisfactorily the difficult task imposed upon them.

III. INTEGRATION OF WELFARE ACTIVITIES:

There has been pressure from Washington (where, by the way, integration of welfare activities is anything but an accomplished fact) and, to some extent, from some of the private social agencies in and around Newark "to integrate" the three types of categorical public assistance carried on by this Department.

We have been quietly but steadily proceeding along this line for a number of years. All of our three categorical activities are carried on under a definite over-all welfare policy established by you as the Board of Control. There are some who contend that the same group of workers can satisfactorily deal with the aged, the immature and neglected children, and the blind. We do not necessarily hold to that belief. There are others who fret over the fact that municipal aid, or transient relief, now administered through the cities under the direction of the Department of Conservation and Economic Development, should be coordinated with the categorical relief handled by this Department. This does not unnecessarily disturb us either.

It might be that such a transfer would result in diminished administrative costs. But there are strong political reasons why our local relief should be left to the immediate locality.

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Not only do we have common policies actuating our welfare activities but we are all subject to Civil Service; we are all afforded the professional and skilled service which a large Department like ours, with many professional people located in our institutions can give. And also we have the protection which comes from a departmental setup such as ours.

In addition to that, in recent years, we have (a) provided for a budget manual setting up uniform standards of budgetmaking for each of our three categorical assistances; (b) we have provided a uniform method for taking appeals, "fair hearings" as they are called; (c) we have done much to keep our three main services: to the aged, the blind and the children, in touch with each other and advised of developments in each of the agencies; (d) printed notices have been prepared for the information of the public, in order that what little confusion may exist as to where an applicant might go for any particular kind of relief can be eliminated.

IV. BANE-MAY REPORT FILED WITH THE GOVERNOR:

In order that we might have independent and intelligent judgment as to the need for further integration in our extramural welfare activities, this Department advised His Excellency, Governor Driscoll, that outside experts should be

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invited to study our activities. As a result, Mr. Frank Bane, Executive Director of the Council of State Governments, and Mr. Geoffrey May, former Assistant Director of the Budget in Washington visited us in January and made a brief but thorough investigation of categorical and general assistance in the State.

Their report has not been published but we have been advised that they have given thorough approval to this Department and the way in which we have been administering these services. They suggest that further savings could be made by the coordination of public assistance now handled under the Department of Conservation and Economic Development by turning the State-wide supervision over to this Department.

They also feel, so we are informed, that the county should be the local disbursing unit and that further progress could be made within this Department if an effort were made to work out a central disbursing office. As the Board knows, plans to do this have been in contemplation and legislation has been drawn for over a year. The matter involves political considerations. We could not easily decentralize child welfare work into the counties until some of the questions involving the relationships among municipalities, counties and the State are resolved.

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At the present time we are applying the simple yet worthwhile test as to whether the children, the aged and the blind are receiving adequate care at a cost which compares favorably with other States. We believe this to be true and that, by and large, the comparison of national statistics will prove it. We do not say that if we were to start upon a new plan for State welfare services we could not make some improvements, particularly along the line suggested in the Bane-May report. We do say that having in mind customs, traditions and habits that have grown up in New Jersey dating back well in advance of the inauguration of Social Security legislation, New Jersey should be proud of the record of its categorical assistances.

V. A UNIFORM BUDGET MANUAL HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED:

In the pursuance of methods of integrating our welfare activities as referred to in Section III, the most important one was the development and establishment of a budget manual. This has been hailed not only in this State but in many other States as one of the most practical accomplishments towards simplification of assistance activities that has been achieved. We do not attempt to provide an absolutely uniform standard of making up a fair allowance for welfare recipients but we do aim that common standards be developed and uniform methods followed.

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Doctor Potter and her staff, particularly Mrs. Martha Benson, have performed a real service in completing this project during the year just past.

VI. SURVEY AND INSPECTION OF LOCAL LOCKUPS:

During the year the Inspection Division has visited every city and town lockup in the State. This is the first time in a score of years that this has been done. It is intended, under the statutes, that this Department should inspect such places but we never have had the time or the opportunity to do so.

The tactful methods employed by Mr. F. Spencer Smith and Mr. Joseph C. Irons has resulted in great improvement in a number of places and the development of friendly and cooperative relationships between our Department and the local police authorities who have these town and city jails and lockups under their supervision.

The survey disclosed, as could have been expected, a large number of localities which fall below standards. A brief manual setting out such standards has been prepared and the local authorities have expressed their gratitude for such cooperation.

VII. HOSPITAL INSPECTIONS COMPLETED:

During the past year every non-profit general

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hospital has been visited by our inspection force, and, with few exceptions, licenses, either absolute or provisional, have been issued. In a few cases, largely due to fear of and protection against fire, the Licensing Board, which is set up under this Department, has felt it necessary to give only a temporary permit, pending the adoption of certain recommendations made by this Department.

Through the tact and skill of our Inspection Division, cordial relations have been maintained with our hospitals and they have individually and collectively expressed gratification over the working out of our hospital inspection plan.

VIII. SEX OFFENDER LEGISLATION:

In New Jersey, as in surrounding States, considerable attention was given to the baffling problem of the sex offender and what to do with him. At the request of the Governor, I, as Commissioner of our Department, appointed an informal committee, which, in an incredibly short space of time and with a great demonstration of public spirit, agreed upon two pieces of legislation, one of which has been adopted by the Legislature.

It provides that any person found guilty of a sex crime should have a psychiatric examination and if determined to be a sex deviate should be sent to such institution as the

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Commissioner should prescribe, there to be held without parole or release until certified to be cured of his abnormal and dangerous habits.

IX. SEX STUDY COMMISSION APPOINTED:

The other piece of legislation recommended by this temporary committee was the establishment of an official investigating commission by the Legislature. This legislation was likewise adopted by the House and Senate and the sum of \$10,000.00 set aside for its use. The President of the Senate has appointed Judge Anthony J. Cafiero of Cape May; the Speaker of the Assembly has appointed Mr. Elden Mills of Morristown; the Governor has appointed Dr. James B. Spradley, former head of the Trenton State Hospital, Dr. F. Lovell Bixby of this Department, Mr. Walter G. Winne, Prosecutor of the Pleas for Bergen County, Mr. Sampson G. Smith, Superintendent of Schools in Somerville, and Mr. Joseph P. Murphy, Chief Probation Officer for Essex County.

X. INTERSTATE SEX COMMITTEE:

At the suggestion of the Commissioner, the Governor has written to Governors in seven adjoining States and plans are being made for an interstate conference on this same subject, with the thought that certain activities might be undertaken jointly with the other States that would not be possible in a single State.

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XI. LEGISLATION TO FACILITATE JUDGMENTS
AGAINST DESERTING FATHERS:

With the cooperation of the Committee on Interstate Cooperation legislation was passed at this session providing for a simpler method of enforcing judgments against fathers who have deserted wives or minor children. This will have a direct effect to reduce the cost of dependency in this State and is one of the methods referred to above being undertaken by us in the line of dependency prevention.

XII. PROCEEDINGS WITH REFERENCE TO ILLEGITIMATE
CHILDREN AND SUITS AGAINST PUTATIVE FATHERS:

Another piece of legislation, along the same lines, provides concurrent authority in this Department to proceed against the putative father of an illegitimate child in order to relieve the State of the costs of support. This same legislation eliminates the words "bastard" and "bastardy" from the statutes and substitutes the more modern nomenclature of illegitimacy and illegitimate child.

XIII. BOND ISSUE LEGISLATION SUCCESSFULLY
PASSED THE LEGISLATURE:

Influenced no doubt by the unfortunate mistake in judgment made last year of lumping together bond issue legislation for schools and for our institutions, the Legislature this year promptly passed the bill numbered Assembly No. 1, which the Governor signed as Chapter 3, authorizing the submission to the voters at the next State

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election of a bond issue of twenty-five million dollars for welfare institutions and hospitals alone.

Already, splendid support for this referendum is being developed in the newspapers of the State and many influential State-wide organizations have endorsed it. Several have done so, such as the N. J. Medical Association and the N. J. Bar Association, who were reluctant to do so in its former form.

Both political parties have included planks expressing approval of the referendum. A committee on strategy has been appointed in the Department and every effort will be made, within the limited financial resources, to see that the voters are thoroughly advised on this project.

XIV. DIAGNOSTIC CENTER NEARING COMPLETION:

During the year we were fortunate to secure the services of Dr. Ralph Brancale as head of the Diagnostic Center. He has been busy selecting the staff and arranging for the purchase of equipment and furniture and he is already proving his value as a trained clinical and forensic psychiatrist who has both feet on the ground. This Department is extremely fortunate to secure him.

XV. GROUP THERAPY PROGRAM ESTABLISHED IN OUR INSTITUTIONS:

One of the most promising and novel developments

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in our penal-correctional work has been the stimulation of group therapy or activity as it is called.

Groups of men and boys in our reformatories have been brought together to discuss their own shortcomings and delinquencies under the skillful guidance of Lieut. Lloyd McCorkle and those that he has trained for this service. Many of us think this is one of the most promising methods of rehabilitating delinquents that has yet been devised, and it is receiving considerable notice throughout the correctional field in America.

XVI. GRADUATION OF PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS:

Three classes of psychiatric trainees have been graduated into service and they are proving their worth in filling the long-tolerated vacancies in our hospital ward service.

Here again this program has attracted attention and the National Mental Health Foundation and others have quoted with approval our effort to meet one of the most glaring defects in mental hospital administration in this manner.

XVII. THE WELFARE REPORTER:

The Welfare Reporter continues to meet public approval and demonstrate its worth as a means of interpreting

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our work to our State and persons outside of New Jersey.

The May issue, designed to stimulate interest in high school and college graduates in the employment opportunities in this Department, has been highly commended.

XVIII. PAROLES FROM MENTAL INSTITUTIONS:

Another piece of legislation has been adopted expanding the power of the institutions to place the more quiet insane, both seniles and others, in home care. This legislation is modeled after the New York statute and permits the institution to pay for the board of such persons up to an amount not exceeding the per capita cost of maintaining them in the institutions. While we do not expect revolutionary things from this legislation, it should help, to some extent, relieve congestion in our mental institutions and give some of our milder patients a chance to live in more normal surroundings.

XIX. BOONTON FIREMEN'S HOME:

Under the terms of the reorganization bill, the Boonton Firemen's Home has been placed within this Department but it does not have to submit its budget to us and its appointments are not subject to Civil Service, owing to the peculiar statutes under which it is operated.

Members of our staff have visited there and I have

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been there twice to make the acquaintance of the Board and the Superintendent. It is a well run institution and should not add greatly to our anxieties.

XX. PERSONNEL CHANGES:

During the year we were fortunate to secure as Deputy Commissioner in place of Dr. Henry A. Cotton, deceased, Dr. Edward J. Humphreys, formerly Mental Hygiene Commissioner for the State of Ohio, and a long-time resident of New Jersey. Other replacements were: Miss Helen Sheley at the State Home for Girls for Mrs. Kate Burr Johnson; Dr. Harold S. Magee, career man at the Trenton State Hospital for Dr. J. B. Spradley; Mr. Albert C. Wagner at Bordentown in place of Mr. R. William Lagay; Mr. James E. Cronin at Leesburg in place of Mr. George F. Goodman; Mr. Goodman promoted to Annandale in place of Mr. Sydney H. Souter, resigned.

XXI. FIREPROOFING AT MENTAL HOSPITALS:

With a limited amount of money at our command, and the necessarily awkward conditions which must prevail when we try to make building changes when institutions are already overcrowded, we have gone ahead for the third year at both Greystone Park and Trenton State Hospitals in replacing fire-trap conditions with fireproof living quarters.

CONCLUSION:

Since the determination of the Legislature a year and a half ago that the general structure and setup of this Department would remain the way it is, we have attempted to do all we can to implement the powers already given to us. But we have scrupulously refrained from asking for any new powers or activities.

At times suggestions are made as to new activities that this Department should assume. In almost every case we have studiously refrained from any such effort. We have turned over the specific care of the alcoholic and his problems to the Department of Health; we have declined to be brought into the actual work which must be done to solve the problem of the chronic sick; we have not encouraged those who felt that a separate institution for treatment of cancer should be placed in this Department. Likewise, we recently transferred to the Health Department the out-door clinics for tuberculosis case finding, formerly carried on under the Glen Gardner Sanatorium.

Notwithstanding this, we hear, occasionally, remarks that this Department is always trying to expand and become an "empire" in the welfare field. This feeling may have accounted for the failure of the Senate to pass three pieces of legislation suggested in the past year: (1) The bill to

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implement the Constitution and to bring the warden of the State Prison into the same category as the superintendents of our other institutions; (2) a bill to simplify the process of admitting feeble-minded children to our institutions by having it route through this Department rather than through individual institutions; and (3) a bill providing for the simplification of adoption and placement procedures for children and the development of services for children in the way of prevention of delinquency and dependency where no private agency is available.

It is the determination of the Commissioner and the staff, however, during the recess of the Legislature, to make every attempt to interpret to the small group of Senators, who have opposed this legislation, the purpose of it and the lack of any desire on the part of this Department to increase its responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Sanford Bates, Commissioner

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