

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN

Retiring message of President Melvin D. Heckt, presented to the 1965 Annual Convention, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, on Saturday, June 12, 1965.

"PAST PROGRESS AND FUTURE GOALS"

Last year, I was quite proud of the title of my convention address... "The Inches We Have Travelled and the Miles To Go " . . . This year I have rationalized my complete lack of originality by saying, "I am mentally and physically exhausted from our legislative effort", and "I am concerned about my most lovely, most pregnant and most clumsy bride who is expecting number 6, a son, any day now. I thought of "Lift Off", "Blast Off", "Take Off", "Our 10 Years with Walsh" and even "Heckt's Swan Song " . . . Jerry said, " Mel , you really don't have the appearance of a swan, you don't act like a swan, and you can't sing like a swan, so don't you believe such a title would seem somewhat inappropriate?"

Seriously, it is of the utmost importance for each of us to thoroughly understand the past history and progress of our state and local Associations, and more important, the past progress made on behalf of the retarded, if we are to correctly assess the present and realistically plan and secure future progress for the retarded.

Before 1950 there were only a few brave, dedicated parent and expert warriors standing very much alone in their battle for the retarded. Most parents would not admit they had a retarded child. Most professions were not interested or involved. Most experts, parents and legislators believed that the retarded could not be helped and therefore why not institutionalize, feed, clothe and forget them?

We then witnessed the birth of our associations for the retarded. NARC was born in 1950... the Minnesota ARC was born in 1951 and incorporated in 1955, and of most importance, we witnessed the strengthening of the few old and birth of many new local associations throughout our state. It is almost an unbelievable story. It is literally amazing what was accomplished organizationally and legislatively by so few but so extremely able and dedicated parents and experts.

Let us now review together the progress made during the past 10 years.

MINNESOTA ARC AND OUR LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

During the year 1955-56 we had 741 members. This year we had 4,448 dues-paying members and an increase of 1,192 members during the past 2 years. Actually, we have substantially more members because of our family-membership record-keeping procedures.

During the year 1955-56, we had 16 local associations. This year we have 65 local associations and an increase of 9 during the past 2 years, with only 11 of our 87 Minnesota counties not being served by local associations.

During the year 1955-56, the Minnesota ARC had gross income of \$7,258.28. This year, the Minnesota ARC had a gross income of \$204,842 (which included \$32,318 camp income) and an increase during the past 2 years of \$66,390.00. For the first time, we last year raised funds in all 87 counties and covered 1825 of our state's 2700 governmental units.

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During the year 1955-56, the Minnesota ARC had no employees. We have all seen a marriage which we thought to be nearly perfect and then have seen this marriage dissolved. We have also seen the marriage which, although not perfect, is as near to perfect as one can observe. This latter type of marriage is what we as an Association have had with Jerry and Harriet Walsh. Jerry came with the Minneapolis Association in 1955 and in 1957 he came with the Minnesota ARC from MARC. We now have an executive director who is not only reputed to be, but is in fact, the most experienced, successful, personal and capable State Association executive in our country today. I am certain that we are all most happy to join in the celebration of Jerry's 10th anniversary of service to the mentally retarded. This year, we also have an assistant executive director, 2 2/3 field representatives, office manager, part-time program analyst and part-time bookkeeper, and 2 camp caretakers, or a total of sixteen employees and an increase of 7 during the past 2 years. Our State Association staff is not only the largest but most competent in the country. This past year our staff worked well beyond the call of duty. How they have retained their health and sanity, I will never know. In fact, our dear friend, Walsh, has been confined to his bed with pneumonia all week.

EDUCATION

I do not have the figures for the year 1955-56, but I do know that in 1952-53 there were 147 educable and 6 trainable classes in the entire state of Minnesota. In the year 1956-57, there were 191 educable classes with 3300 pupils and 21 trainable classes with 200 pupils enrolled, with a cost to our state government of \$1,215,563. During the 1963-64 school year, we had 523 educable classes serving 6803 pupils and 61 trainable classes serving 483 pupils, at a cost of \$2,828,249. During 1964-65, we had 581 educable and 70 trainable classes. Although we don't have the 1964-65 cost or pupil population figures, we do know that during the past 10 years the educable and trainable classes and enrollments have trippedled. This progress is due largely to three factors: 1) the original planning and spade work done by the cooperative effort of some dedicated experts and parents who worked through MARC, the Minnesota ARC, and the Minnesota Council on Special Education; 2) the 1955 session provided an Interim Commission to study the need; the 1957 Session passed the mandatory educable and permissive trainable class law; the 1959 Session increased transportation aids from \$165 to \$225 and appropriated \$80,000 to the University of Minnesota and \$33,000 to the Mankato and Moorhead teachers colleges for scholarships for special education teachers; and, 3) the hard work of parents, local associations and the Minnesota ARC in informing the public and encouraging local school boards to provide such classes.

DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS

In the area of Day Activity Centers, the progress has been equally amazing. In 1955, there were only four such centers. In 1961, the pioneering year, during which our legislature first adopted day activity center legislation and appropriated \$36,000 in State aids, there were nine such centers. The 1963 Session increased the appropriation to \$155,000 and the 1965 Session increased the appropriation to \$425,000. As of the date of our February, 1965, Minnesota ARC survey, there were 23 centers receiving state aids, having an enrollment of 323 and a waiting list of 121, and 13 additional centers receiving no state aids, 8 of whom reported an enrollment of 138 and a waiting list of 29. Thus, there were 36 centers, 31 of which enrolled 461 retarded children. This program is certainly a shining star in the total program for our retarded.

SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

Minnesota is lagging way behind many neighboring and other states in the development of sheltered workshops and vocational training programs for the retarded. In 1955, there were 8 which served

the retarded. In 1965, there are 19 which serve the retarded. We need, however, many more than the 2 exclusively for and the 17 in which the retarded participate. There are two highlights in this area; Opportunity Workshop, Minneapolis, which has almost 100 enrolled in its vocational training and sheltered workshop programs, is certainly one of the best, if not the best, such centers in the nation. Secondly, we were successful in persuading the 1965 Session to pass pioneering legislation and an appropriation of \$15, 000 in state aids. The appropriation is small but the adoption of the legislation is vital and holds forth much promise for the future development of such services in Minnesota.

INSTITUTIONS

Although our Minnesota State Institutions for the Retarded are still confronted with gross and inhumane understaffing which, as of today, still permits only bare survival care for most of our institutionalized retarded, and, although we still find gross and inhumane overcrowding and a complete lack of privacy and dehumanizing practices for most of our over 6, 000 retarded, believe it or not, there has been progress in certain areas.

A. First, let us look at our wonderful institutionalized children and adults. Since 1955, our institutions' population has increased from 4872 to approximately 6200 in 1965, or an increase of 1330, or 27%. In 1955, the waiting list was 958; it increased to a maximum of 1425 in 1958 and is now over 750.

Unfortunately, we must remember the following facts about our institutionalized retarded:

- a) 51 % or over 3000 receive medications daily.
- b) 34 % or over 2000 are physically handicapped.
- c) 24 % or approximately 1500 are not now toilet trained.
- d) 16 % or approximately 1000 are not now feeding themselves.
- e) 10 % or approximately 600 are not now ambulatory.
- f) 8% or approximately 500 are now bedridden.

Since 1957, the mildly retarded have decreased from 1550 to 677; the moderately retarded have decreased from 2375 to 1670; the profoundly and severely retarded from 1100 to 3401; and although there has been an approximately 1400 increase in population, had there not been the increase in special education classes and day activity centers, the institutional population would have increased to a projected 7596.

B. Staffing. Prior to the 1965 Session, Faribault, with 2727 patients, had 766 employees of which 439 were patient care workers; Cambridge and Lake Owasso, with 1880 patients, had 608 employees of which 330 were patient care workers and Brainerd, with 1201 patients had 330 employees of which 177 were patient care workers. Thus, we had a total of 1704 employees of which 946 were patient care workers. Based upon the Minnesota ARC's September, 1964, survey and an analysis of the standards set by the American Association on Mental Deficiency, we know that these three institutions should have 2373 or an increase of 1434 patient care workers, and in order to meet such reasonable standards for all employees, an increase of 2400 to 2500 total patient care and non-patient care employees.

Since 1955 and prior to the 1965 Session, Faribault received only 124 new positions, Cambridge 340, Brainerd 330, and Owatonna 8, for a total of 802 new positions; however, of this total, 651 were granted solely for the creation of Brainerd and the substantial expansion of Cambridge.

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During the past 6 years or 3 Sessions, we have had only a net gain of 365 positions at our 4 institutions.

Although I am certain that we are all disappointed that the 1965 Session did not provide the 833 new positions as requested by the Minnesota Department of Welfare and our Association, but rather provided 421 new positions (200 for Faribault, 90 for Cambridge, 131 for Brainerd and none for Owatonna); nevertheless, this number does represent a larger figure than ever before granted in the history of our state. Further, Faribault with 200 new positions has received 76 more staff than the total of 124 granted by the past 5 Sessions over the past 10 years. Likewise, although we have a long way to go to reach Kansas' 1: 1.8 ratio, it is interesting to note that as of October 8, 1962, the date of Governor Andersen's Advisory Committee report, Faribault, Cambridge, and Brainerd had a ratio of 1: 4.1 and if my mathematics are correct, by the end of the next two years, Faribault will have a ratio of 1: 2.82, Cambridge 1: 2.69, and Brainerd, 1: 2.83. We will thus have succeeded in breaking the 1: 3 plus barrier.

In other words, I believe that we have made a significant breakthrough and, if we continue, in fact double our effort, we should be able to solve our past perennial inhumane staffing problem by 1970. It will take, however, more not less work on behalf of all of us.

C. Buildings. Since 1955, Brainerd has been built and maintained with no overcrowding; it has a Hospital and Administration Building, a Service building, a School and Rehabilitation and Therapy building, and 11 dormitories providing housing for 1322 patients and was built at a cost of over 14 1/2 million dollars.

Since 1955, Cambridge has added dormitories for 500 patients. Since 1955, Faribault has added or has appropriations for an Administration building, a laundry building, at long last, a food service and handling building, a School, Auditorium and Handicraft building and 5 dormitories for 575 patients.

Since 1955, there have been total appropriations for buildings in the amount of \$34,134,993.

These accomplishments have not been attained without intelligent, continuous and effective work by our Staff, our Officers and Directors, and by many individuals and local Associations; special tribute should be paid, however, to the unceasing effort of John Holahan who for many years almost single handedly performed this monumental task.

D. Operating Budgets, for our institutions have increased from \$10,233,924 in 1955 to \$27,254,752 in 1965.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PAST TWO YEARS

In addition to the accomplishments and highlights previously reported, I should like to visit the following of which we can all be proud: (I am certain that I have omitted some noteworthy accomplishments).

1. Joint sponsorship with Governor Rolvaag and the Minnesota Association for Mental Health of a series of bus tours to each institutions for the mentally ill and retarded and to certain other community facilities, resulting in not only an increased interest by our Governor and

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and Legislature, but by the public at large.

2. By reason of the effort of the late President Kennedy and Congress, legislation was passed permitting the formation of the Minnesota Mental Retardation Planning Council which is now in the process of developing plans for comprehensive state and community action to combat mental retardation.
3. The Jaycees in addition to the Mrs. Jaycees have undertaken mental retardation as a National Project.
4. In 1964, the Minnesota ARC contributed \$9,272 to NARC for medical research and was second in the nation and gave three times the amount of our region's closest competitor, Michigan.
5. Establishment of close liaison with the Minnesota Medical Association which has agreed to have one of its representatives serve each local Association.
6. For the first time, the Minnesota ARC sponsored a state-wide state organization bus tour to our institutions.
7. For the first time, the Minnesota ARC originated and encouraged our local associations to conduct bus tours to our institutions and community services, resulting in 43 local association bus tours attended by approximately 600 citizens of our state.
8. For the first time, the Minnesota ARC sponsored a Legislative Day luncheon at the State Capitol which was attended by 98 legislators and 105 members and citizens from throughout the state.
9. Establishment of 8 regional conferences attended by over 400 people and representing 55 of our then 62 chapters.
10. Preparation, publication and distribution of Minnesota ARC's September, 1964, "Staffing at Our State Institutions Survey", our February, '65, "Day Activity Center Survey", and 4000 copies of "A Major Minnesota Problem".
11. Sam Newlund's most able and effective articles in the Minneapolis Tribune and a marked increase in the news stories and articles in our major and other community newspapers.
12. A marked expansion in the effectiveness and effort of our Minnesota ARC Governmental Affairs Committee, chaired by our most talented and industrious Molly Woehrlin of Northfield, which secured 58 local governmental affairs chairmen, and produced a flood of materials for and WATS line telephone communication with, our Associations, and resulted in a multitude of mail, telegrams, and personal contacts with our legislators.
13. Planning, coordinating, and execution of 10 Regional Governmental Affairs Meetings, 6 of which were attended by Governor Rolvaag in an effort to educate the public to the needs of the retarded. Meetings were held at Caledonia, Thief River Falls, Little Falls, Slayton, Montevideo, Owatonna, Minneapolis, Anoka, Virginia, and Mankato
14. Legislative highlights included: 421 new institution employees, one 125 bed dormitory at Fari-bault, an increase from \$155,000 to \$425,000 for Day Activity Centers and enabling legislation permitting counties and other political subdivisions to match state aids for the operation thereof,

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a new mandatory PKU hospital testing law, new sheltered workshop legislation and an increase in state aids from 2/3 of teachers salaries up to a maximum of \$4,000 from \$3,600.

15. Minnesota ARC's purchase of a new state-wide camp for the retarded for the total purchase price of \$147,500 and \$102,263.67 of which has been paid or pledged by our membership, local Association contributions, and the Minnesota ARC.
16. Sheltering Arms Training Institute and Minnesota ARC's Day Activity Center Institute, and Coffee Day in Southwestern Minnesota.
17. And last, but certainly not least, the selection of Minnesota ARC's own poster boy, Dickie Bach, as NARC's 1965 Poster Boy.

Although not a highlight, we lost the services of a most dedicated, capable and personable person, Merlen Kurth, whom, as you know, is now executive director of the Wisconsin Association; two loyal and dedicated field men in Earl Tarnowski of Duluth and Clarence Bischoff; and a very talented and devoted director of public information in JoAnne Ray. They are all deserving of our heartfelt thanks and best wishes for the future.

FUTURE GOALS

I am certain that none of us here present have developed a swelled head or self-satisfied attitude with respect to the progress made, so I should like to relate my personal opinion as to some realistic goals for the balance of this decade. Let us not forget that by 1970 we will have a man on the moon and certainly if there is the will, there is the way.

EDUCATION. By 1970, I believe we should be providing classes for most of the 12,000 to 16,000 children not now being served in addition to the over 7,000 now served; we should have additional consultants employed by our State Department of Education, mandatory laws for both the trainable and educable, an expanded teacher training program at the University of Minnesota and all our teachers colleges to supply the teacher demand, and a substantially expanded vocational and work oriented school program for our educable children. Of course, it can be done; two of our dear friends from Dodge County, which has a population of approximately 15,000, promoted 2 classes for the trainable and 2 for the educable. My face is red. Is yours?

DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS. By 1970, I believe 3 times as many or nearly 1500 retarded children should be enrolled in Day Activity Centers, and, that the cost of operation of most but not all of our centers should be financed by a combination of State Aids and County or other local Governmental aids, and that parent fees should not then be required any more than parents are now required to pay fees to public schools for the cost of their children's education.

SHELTERED WORKSHOPS. By 1970, I believe we should reasonably expect to have in operation 10 to 15 such centers exclusively for the retarded.

INSTITUTIONS. By 1970, I believe some of our goals for our institutionalized retarded should be as follows:

1. Elimination of the 750 waiting list and the Gross and Inhumane Overcrowding and Under-staffing. This will probably be one of our most difficult goals to attain, but can, I am certain,

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be accomplished if we will double our effort and apply a more flexible approach to its solution. We must and shall give more attention and planning for the implementation of a combination of some or all of the following possibilities:

- a) Expansion of Brainerd from its present 1201 population to 1500.
 - b) Reduction of Cambridge's population from its present 1880 population to 1500.
 - c) Reduction of Faribault's 2727 population to 2500 or possibly even 2000.
 - d) Further transfer to Brainerd of patients from its receiving district who are now resident at Faribault and Cambridge.
 - e) Either take over completely one institution for the mentally ill located near the Twin Cities, or make use of most, if not all, of the institutions for the mentally ill by utilizing one or two dormitories at each with appropriate staff to serve the mentally retarded, especially those who have some type of emotional or mental illness.
 - f) Build new or utilize existing facilities for possibly 5 new small regionally located institutions.
 - 1) Lake Owasso - for 80 to 100 patients could be research oriented and ideally staffed to diagnose, screen, counsel and demonstrate in Minnesota how these children have been trained and taught to help themselves, in Kansas, for example.
 - 2) The University of Minnesota should have a research oriented small 300 to 500 bed institution for the identical reason that the University of Wisconsin has such a splendid institution.
 - 3) Rochester, with its tremendous medical and nursing climate, should have a 300 to 500 bed institution to serve the southeastern part of the state.
 - 4) Duluth or the Range should have a 300 to 500 bed institution.
 - 5) The southwestern part of the state should also have a small 200 to 500 bed institution to serve that part of the state.
 - g) Expansion of Nursing Home, Boarding Home and Foster Care for the retarded. Before the latter should be done, I believe it is important that our Association conduct a state-wide properly staffed study and survey of existing facilities and the laws pertaining thereto. Minnesota ARC is now preparing an application for a federal grant to study what has happened to the discharged patients from our institutions. Frankly, we have received many reports that patients are not now as happy or well cared for as they were in our institutions. We have also received reports that some are delighted with their newly acquired community based residence.
 - h) Continuation of construction of dormitories at Faribault to eliminate overcrowding and use of old obsolete firetrap buildings. However, in this connection, may I suggest that we build some lower cost, home like or at least nursing home like buildings which may not last 100 years but would provide privacy for our working patients and school children who might someday be trained for community living. I recommend that we encourage some of the leading architectural firms in our state to make such a study. I know that some of the best nursing homes cost \$5, 000 per bed as opposed to the \$8, 000 to \$10, 000 now being expended at our institutions.
 - i) More expansion and utilization of Federal Construction and Staff oriented research grants.
 - j) Expansion of private residential care facilities such as Hammer School, for example. More churches can and should become so involved. Would it not be wonderful, too, if the Shrine for example could be persuaded to build a hospital for the retarded in Minnesota?
2. By 1970, our institutionalized patients should not only have more privacy but also more pay for services performed and there should be increased training programs not only within our institutions but also in our communities in order that some of our mildly and moderately retarded young adults may have more employment opportunity within our institutions.

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3. By 1970, we should have regained our lost accreditation and there should be an effective independent medical policy committee to guarantee that modern medical, hospital, and nursing services, practices and procedures are equally applied to our institutions as to our community hospitals. If by 1970, we still have no doctor on duty on weekends, only one nurse for 700 patients, no independent, thorough examination as to the cause of death, or the attitude of "Is it not a blessing, or a tragedy ended, when Janny or Peter dies", or if we still have 126 young boys at Linden Cottage, most of whom are in wheel chairs, most of whom are not now toilet trained, most of whom are not now feeding themselves, and 30 % of whom are bedridden, just because we won't provide the staff; if we still give our dairy cows more staff and less overcrowding, then, may I suggest, we don't deserve to land a man on the moon by 1970.
4. Also, by 1970, we should expect that recreation, therapy and education will be provided all who can be benefitted and not just the few who receive it now.

MISCELLANEOUS GOALS

1. The present Minnesota Mental Retardation Planning Council should become a permanent Council.
2. This month a special ad hoc committee should be appointed to concern itself with the present exploratory move in Minnesota, to consider integration, coordination, melding and general joining of the mentally retarded programs with the programs of the mentally ill.
3. There should be a substantial increase in the utilization of Minnesota's 20 mental health centers for diagnosing retarded children and counselling parents of same.
4. In Minnesota, there should be continuous research in the law and its administration and effect upon the retarded and their parents.

Professor Levy of the University of Minnesota is now making application on behalf of our Planning Council's Task Force on the Law, for a \$600 grant to hire law students for research; it is our goal that before long we will have a full time professor of law working part-time and supervising annually 6 law students in research and annually reported to a permanent committee comprised of judges, lawyers, probation officers, social workers and parents, in order that we may attack continuously the many legal problems confronting the retarded and their parents.

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If we are to achieve these goals, I believe it is vitally important that we as a state association and as local associations, do the following:

1. We must double our membership by 1970. I have made the statement, and I will repeat it, I have never seen a parent of a retarded child who should not belong to a local association, with the possible exception of the parent whose child is questionably or most mildly retarded.
2. Every county of our 87 must be included in a local association and each local association must be strengthened quality-wise and quantity-wise, bar none.

'Melvin D. Heckt, (continued)

3. Our State Association must expand its staff to provide 3 full time and not 2 2/3 field representatives, and of most importance, must employ 1 full time program and research analyst and two assistants plus auxiliary secretarial help if we are to attain our goals and provide continuous and ongoing research and fact finding in the areas of governmental affairs, community services such as day activity centers, sheltered workshops, employment, recreation and boarding home, nursing home and foster care homes and other such services, institutions, financing, work with United Funds and Federal grants of all types. Now is not the time to retrench but rather to increase your personal and financial support of your State Association.

CONCLUSION

I should like to give one more salute to Jerry and our staff, to that famed trio of Molly, Sally and Jane, also known as Woehrlin, Donnelly and Swallen, to your officers and board, to Governor Rolvaag who has done for Minnesota's retarded what the late President Kennedy did for the nation's retarded, and to Gary Flakne and his entire House Appropriations Subcommittee on Welfare and Corrections and to Richard Fitzsimons and his entire House Appropriations Committee, and to all of you for your outstanding job in learning, seeing and attempting to make, and in fact, making substantial progress for Minnesota's 100, 0 0 0 mentally retarded.

In conclusion, let me say that the length of this speech is, among other things, the price you have had to pay in having me as your President the past two years. I do want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the opportunity you have given me to serve, in a most limited way, our retarded during the past two years. They have been the most exciting, challenging, and at times frustrating and nerve wracking, and yet rewarding and enjoyable two years of my life. You have all given me so much more than I have been able to give you. I know you will give Ray Doyle your complete and total support. I know that he will give to our association an intelligent, able and industrious leadership never before so given, and yet I know Ray would share with me the sentiments of the beloved, late Winston Churchill when he said, "I am prepared to meet my Maker but the question is whether or not my Maker is prepared for the ordeal of meeting me." We must not, however, ever fail in our purpose nor falter in our determination to make progress or forget the words of Jesus Christ when He said, "Inasmuch as yet have done it unto one of the LEAST OF THESE, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." If we remember those words, if we remain united in purpose and action, if we continue in our determination to strengthen our local associations, our State Association and our National Association for Retarded Children, we will continue to take giant steps for all retarded children and adults.

Thank you.

Duplicated by the
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