

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AMONG NEGROES IN HOUSTON TEXAS

BY

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To

The Memory of

My mother and my father-

Mrs. Pearl Carothers Hilliard and Mr. A. G. Hilliard, both  
of whom have passed into the great beyond but their lives  
remain before me as a source of inspiration to carry on.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Scope. The juvenile court records of Negro boys committed to the State Training School at Gatesville, Texas from January 1, 1933 through August 1935 are used as the basis for this study. There are seventy two cases involved. In addition, a general survey of environmental conditions was made and an investigation regarding certain juvenile court policies and practices.

The following information was secured from the juvenile court records:<sup>1</sup>

1. Number of case
2. Name and address
3. Live with
4. Nature of complaint which caused commitment
5. Number in family,                      number of rooms in house
6. Family income
7. Home conditions
8. School record
9. Physical and mental condition
- 10 . Age when court record began,                      age when sentenced
11. Court record
12. Remarks

The court records contained the major portion of the above information but were not complete in all cases.

The survey of environmental conditions covered;

1. Facilities for recreation
2. Neighborhood businesses

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix A

3. Commercialized amusement
4. Schools ( provisions for retarded children etc.)
5. Neighborhoods appearing most frequently ( pictures were taken of some of the more common types of homes appearing in records)

The investigation regarding juvenile court policies and practices covered:

1. Provisions for the delinquent who is a "border line" case, that is, not of the type to be placed in the reformatory at Gatesville, Texas and should not be returned immediately to his home.

2. Probation work.

Method of Procedure. Because of the small number of cases involved a combination of group and individual case analysis will be used to interpret the data.

In addition to isolating certain conditions that may be operating in the Negro group, and not in the case of the whites, we shall give attention to factors that may be common to all. In a problem so complex we cannot assign any particular factor or factors as being definitely responsible for delinquency. We can only point out forces which are quite important in bringing about delinquency.

The Problem of Juvenile Delinquency. As never before, national events have focused attention on crime conditions. Quite a bit of public sentiment has been aroused as to the seriousness of the present day situation. Much more is needed. The majority of our people now realize that the security of life and property and the peace of society should no longer be jeopardized by a more less apathetic public attitude toward crime. The rise of the various criminal gangs within the last few years presented the picture in a manner that was much more effective than students of social problems have been able to do in near a half century. The effective campaign against

these gangs by our Federal and State Governments was a consequence of the people's rising resentment to this problem. Formerly it seemed sufficient for society to punish it's law violators, but we have come to realize that this is like, "locking the barn door after the horse is stolen."

An article in the Chicago Daily Tribune, October 17, 1935 pertaining to the problem follows:

#### IMMENSE COST OF CRIME

It is 7,700 Millions a Year  
Declares G. E. Johnson

New York, Oct. 16 - Seventy-seven hundred million dollars!! That staggering figure was the estimated annual cost of crime in the nation given today by George E. Q. Johnson, former federal prosecutor in Chicago, who put Al Capone behind the bars. He spoke at the fifth annual Forum on Current Problems in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

Despite the fact that the Dillingers, the Touhy mob, and other gangs have been eliminated, Johnson said, crime continues to spawn like creeping things and costs the nation directly and indirectly as much as the huge federal budget for 1936, the figure given above.

A recent survey of about half the population of the United States, embracing roughly 57,500,000 persons, showed that during the first half of the year there were 377,969 felonies committed. If the same rate keeps up, he added, felonies during the year will total 1,511,876.

Describing the problem as "more important than the depression, Johnson suggested two methods of crime prevention - the public attitude and juvenile delinquency.

Few people realize the individual burden of this crime cost because it is not direct levy, but never the less it is passed on to each of us in the form of increased rent or taxes and added cost of merchandise of all kind.

Agencies of the Federal Government have repeatedly called public attention to the startling fact that youths of the tender age of nine to nineteen have assumed leadership in the field of crime and something fundamental must be done, not only to protect the youth of the nation from crime, but the nation from it's youth.

Another article on this point taken from the Chicago Daily Tribune,  
December 6, 1935:

**CALLS YOUTHFUL CRIMINAL MAJOR PROBLEM  
IN UNITED STATES**

**Chicago Judge Addresses Sheriff's Convention**

Milwaukee, Wis., Dec. 5 - One of the major crime problems in the United States today is the heavy increase of youthful criminals, Edgar A. Jonas, Chicago Municipal Court Judge in Chicago, declared tonight at the annual banquet of the Wisconsin Sheriff's Association, held at the Plankinton Hotel.

"The seriousness of this situation is realized," he said "when it is learned that almost 50 per cent of the country's jail population consists of youths under 24 years of age."

It is quite clear that there is a problem. Much research is needed and in view of findings - treatment should be given.

Nature of the Problem. According to a letter from Mr. R. C. Roebuck, Chief Probation Officer, Houston, Texas: " - - - The Harris County Juvenile Court committed thirty-five white boys to our Harris County Training Schools for boys in 1935. This court committed three white boys to the State Training School at Gatesville, Texas. It committed twenty-four colored boys to the State Training School at Gatesville, Texas." <sup>2</sup> Information from the juvenile court office shows that a similar ratio has existed in past years.

A study of the population composition and the commitment rate reveals:

TABLE I. - POPULATION COMPOSITION AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY COMMITMENT RATE BY RACE \*

Race	General Population	Per Cent	Number boys Juvenile court age	Per Cent	Commitments for 1935	Per Cent
Negro	63,337	21.7	7,123	22.2	24	38.7
White	229,015	78.5	24,969	77.8	38	61.3
Total	292,352	100.0	32,092	100.0	62	100.0

\* Figures on school population secured from Census Department of the Houston Independent School District, Houston, Texas. The figures on the general population were taken from the United States Census for 1930.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix B

The question arises: How may we account for the fact that a group of people composing 22.2 per cent of the population in the juvenile age group constitute 38.7 per cent of the delinquents committed to the correctional institutions? To carry the problem further, let us compare the number of juveniles, by race, held in jail during 1935.<sup>3</sup>

TABLE II. - A COMPARISON OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS, BY RACE, HELD IN JAIL PENDING HEARING DURING 1935 \*

Race	No. boys juvenile court age	Per Cent	No. boys held in jail 1935	Per Cent
Negro	7,123	22.2	163	44.6
White	24,969	77.8	205	55.4

\* The data on number held in jail was secured from the juvenile court office at Houston, Texas.

We are now faced with the question: How we may account for the fact that a group composing 22.2 per cent of the population in the juvenile age group constitute 44.6 per cent of those held in jail pending hearing?

The writer will attempt to throw some light on the general question and in view of the findings offer some recommendations.

The Negro Juvenile Delinquent. We have concluded that juvenile delinquency is a problem. It is more so a problem when the Negro delinquent is considered. Reckless and Smith writes: "The consensus of available studies shows that Negroes supply a proportion of all delinquent children greater than the proportion of Negroes in the total population. Thus for 1928, 16 per cent of all delinquent children was Negro, although only 5 per cent of the population served by the courts reporting was Negro. This indicates that Negroes appeared more than three times as often among delinquents as was to be expected. - - - These studies are in accord with the data for the adult criminal population. Several years ago Sutherland pointed out that Negro criminals in the United States were 2.4 to 5.6 times as numerous as was

<sup>3</sup> Delinquents are held in jail when the offense for which they are charged is such that it is not advisable to allow them return home and await hearing, which may be the next day or after a week end.

to be expected on the basis of actual proportion of Negroes in the population."<sup>4</sup>

At one time there was a tendency to explain this on the basis that the Negro had an "inherent proneness to criminality." Believers in this doctrine still exist. Some have explained this difference by saying that the law is "harder on" the Negro than on other groups. Others have dismissed it with the statement that it all goes back to the economic status of the race. In most cases these explanations are attempted for any and all sections of the country. Too long have we accepted these blanket explanations. Social problems cannot be so easily dismissed. Would it not be better to devote more time, to actually study the causes? What may prove to be some of the factors in one section, or even in divisions of a section, may not all hold in another part, however as more studies are made a better interpretation can be given to the "unfavorable position of the Negro" theory.

With this in mind the writer will attack the problem set forth for Houston, Texas.

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<sup>4</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 36-37.

## CHAPTER II

## THE JUVENILE COURT DEPARTMENT

Boys Work. The Chief Probation Officer in Houston, Texas is Mr. R. C. Roebuck. He is assisted by four men. Mr. Roebuck and one assistant are concerned with the office duties connected with the male delinquents. One of the remaining three men works in the office and answers calls when needed. The other two men are primarily concerned with outside work such as bringing in delinquents ( in most cases, in answer to calls) and making investigations. One of these is a combination highway patrol man and juvenile officer.

According to Miss Belden the minimum standards for a juvenile court are:

1. Separate hearings for children.
2. Regular probation service.
3. Special court and probation records, both legal and social.

The court at Houston, Texas has number one and three but only by accommodation of language can we say that it has number two, which is one of the most important phases of modern methods of handling the delinquent child. We can easily understand why this is true when we consider the limited force. One full time man for outside work, one combination office man and outside worker, and one combination patrolman and outside worker constitute the staff for the probation work. They cannot possibly do the proper type of probation work with a school population of 69,677, 32,092 of which are boys of juvenile court age. These men are called in on the cases of habitual truants. They do not have opportunity to do follow-up work which would take in supervisory work on the cases, keeping up with the child, assisting him, advising his parents and other very similar duties.

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<sup>1</sup> Belvin, Evelina, "Courts in the United States Hearing Children's Cases," Children's Bureau Publication 65, p. 65.

In attempting to meet this problem in the best manner the department requires the delinquents placed on probation to report back to the office at regular intervals. Frequent references are made on case records to indicate that the boy broke his promise to report on previous occasions.

Reckless and Smith has this to say with reference to probation; "The main item in the socialized functioning of the juvenile courts is the probation service. In the highly developed courts probation officers carry the bulk of the program. They make investigations of the child's background before his case is heard, enabling the judge to adjudicate the case on the social rather than the purely legal data. - - - Not more than fifty cases should be under the supervision of one probation officer at any time. - - - Reporting by a child to a probation officer at regular intervals should not be required only if it seems clearly to be for the good of the probationer, and should never be made a substitute for more constructive methods of case work. Except in rare cases, home visits at least once every two weeks are essential to effective supervision."<sup>2</sup>

Facilities for Detention. White boys are detained in jail and at the Harris County Training School for boys. Negro boys are detained in jail.

As was explained in Chapter I delinquents are held in jail when the offense for which they are charged is such that it is not advisable to allow them return home and await hearing, which may be the next day or after a week end.

White boys are carried to the Harris County Training School when they must be detained for a period covering more than two or three days.

The county school is mainly for the purpose of institutionalizing the delinquent who is a "border line" case, that is, not of the type to be

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<sup>2</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 244-246.

placed in the state reformatory at Gatesville, Texas ( age, previous record etc. considered) and should not be returned immediately to his home. Mr. R. C. Roebuck states the purpose of the Harris County School as follows:

"The purpose of the Harris County School for boys at Clear Lake, this county, is to give the training and development to those boys that they should have to develop into good citizens. The program is divided 50 - 50 between work on the farm and about the home, and work in the school room. A strict program routine is adhered to. Regular medical inspections under the supervision of our County Physician, and the facilities of our County Library, and the inspiration and encouragement of business men's clubs, and the various churches of the cities with their programs on Sundays all go to make the school what we feel is an excellent Home and School for these boys."<sup>3</sup>

Needless to say, these outside influences that are to be found at the county home ( which are not to be found at the state school at Gatesville, Texas) are quite important in giving the young offender the kind of training that will enable him to better adjust himself to society.

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<sup>3</sup> See appendix B, second paragraph.

CHAPTER III  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE COURT RECORDS

Delinquent behavior occurs in a social situation always, a social situation that is the field of operation of persons who are influenced by their past social experiences, by their biological make-up, and by the immediate situation itself. At one time the delinquent child was looked upon as a sort of isolated specimen, somewhat affected by his environment but a separately functioning biological organism. The child is still seen as the key to any approach to the study of delinquency but he is chiefly the product or expression of the action and reaction between himself and his total environment.

To quote Dr. Kimball Young: "As the individual grows up through participation with his fellows in various groups, as he is influenced on every hand by the culture of his time and place, he constructs within himself not only various drives and motives, but a whole set of images, memories, ideals, and purposes that get organized into a subjective sort of world. And in the process of adaptation to his fellows and the world outside, it often happens that what society and culture demand differs from what he wishes or wants."<sup>1</sup> To understand these wishes and wants of the child it is necessary to know something about his personal-social as well as his social-cultural conditioning. In short, it is necessary to deal with a wider conception of what constitutes the child himself, a realization that among all his other characteristics is that of attaining some solution of the inevitable clash between those hungers and drives that are essentially individual and those that are a part of his success as a socialized being in the midst of the hungers and drives of others.

As is pointed out in the report of the White House Conference on

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<sup>1</sup> Young, Kimball, Mimeograph Material Soc. 197, Ch. II, pp. 64-65.

Child Health and Protection; " Children have needs; these vary in number and intensity in each individual. It is, however, possible to enumerate needs that are common to all children, and so fundamental that may be termed basic: (1) the need for security, and (2) the need for development.

"As a foundation for a satisfying life, every child needs to be wanted, loved, and understood. He needs to feel that he is accepted and belongs because of his own individual place and values in relation to the rest of the group. As he grows and develops he will have an ever widening sphere of affection which starts with the mother, father, and other members of the family, and later extends to those outside the family group. To the individual child this is security.

"Along with the satisfaction of these security needs there is also the need to grow, a desire for the satisfaction of new experiences. Curiosity and imagination require self expression, achievement, attainment of a role that seems in some way consonant with the total drama about the child. This involves a reaching out for a desirable part in his world. - - -

"The child develops, growing, for example, through being recognized as a unit or separate individual from the very beginning of life. Development is attained also through self confidence in all that is needed in growing toward a well integrated personality. This self confidence is based on the child's feeling, from very early life, security in the stability of the family, and in due time, in the larger social sphere where he enters. Another factor in development is a feeling of adequacy, that is, growing up with the minimum consciousness of inferiority, or with adequate compensations for irremediable conditions that cause feelings of inferiority. There must be adequate opportunity for mental experiences and stimulation."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Report of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, Part IV, Committee on Socially Handicapped-Delinquency, pp. 25-26.

To get the mental experiences and stimulation suggested the child needs toys, books, play, conversation, an ever widening sphere of activity in keeping with what is normal for the child's age and including education suited to his individual capacity.

We shall analyze the court records of the cases in order to determine, as near as possible, to what extent the average delinquent found satisfaction of the need for security and development or as Miss Mary B. Sayles states, the need for security, the need for a chance to grow, the need for ideals or goals, and the need for companionship.<sup>3</sup> To do this we should know something about the delinquent himself, his background, and about his outside world in the sense of outside the home. The latter division will be taken up in Chapter IV. The first two will be considered in this chapter.

Any approach to the study of delinquency in children leads one directly to the family out of which the child has come, in which his personality has shaped itself and unfolded, and from which his reaction to other social institutions and to law and order is largely determined. Other social institutions may modify, may exaggerate or may help to establish certain satisfactions or thwartings in the child's life, but the material which that institution finds to work with and the child's reaction to it is an outgrowth of the patterns, ideals, and relationships set up in the child's family life.

Home Conditions. Seventy five per cent of the cases were from broken homes.<sup>4</sup> This, of course, means that only one fourth of the cases had the advantage of living in a home with both parents. Table III shows the home conditions as classified.

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<sup>3</sup> Sayles, Mary B., The Problem Child At Home, pp.2-5.

<sup>4</sup> "Broken homes" is used to cover cases where, for any reason, whether death or separation, that the child's biological parents are not together.

TABLE III. - HOME CONDITIONS OF THE DELINQUENTS

Condition	Number	Per Cent
Parents living together	18	25.0
Parents living and not together	24	33.3
One parent dead	19	26.4
Both parents dead	6	8.3
Parents living but child stays with someone else	5	7.0
	72	100.0

In seven of the cases there were step-parents. In order to give an impression of some of the types of homes the writer will outline remarks given as to home condition. They follow: "mother has lived with three or more men," "living with aunt, morals of home low," "live with mother, home used to fill dates," "mistreatment on part of mother and common law father caused boy to stay on the streets," "home conditions bad, illegitimate child," "lives with aunt who has common law husband," "whereabouts of father unknown" (in eight cases), "father dead, common law father beats boy," "mother indifferent," "mother separated from second husband," "parents dead, lives with aunt from whom he stole \$2.50 - uncle made complaint," and finally "mother states that father no good."

How does the information given in Table III compare with that of the general Negro population of Houston, Texas? Table IV gives an idea.

TABLE IV. - MARITAL STATUS OF NEGROES IN HOUSTON, TEXAS, ABOVE 15 YEARS OF AGE\*

	Number	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow & Wdr.	Unknown
Male	23,339	6,301	14,376	917	1,703	42
Female	25,997	4,627	14,974	1,637	4,729	30
Total	49,336	10,928	29,350	2,554	6,432	72
Per Cent	1.00	22.1	59.5	5.1	13.0	.3

\* Taken from the United States Census

In finding the per cent of broken homes in the general population, for comparison with the per cent in the delinquent group, we add the widows, the widowers, and the divorced and find what per cent this number is of the

total population above 15 years of age. This is found to be 18.1 per cent. The married group is 59.5 per cent of the total population. In the general population broken homes are less than one third that of homes not broken whereas in our delinquent group broken homes are three times the number of those not broken. So we see that the broken home is not the rule in the general population but is in the delinquent group.

Reckless and Smith states: "The study by Miss Breckenridge and Miss Abbott, covering the period 1899-1909 and presenting home data on more than 13,000 cases, found 34 per cent of the total from broken homes, as compared to 32 per cent for the 1928 study. - - - The figures range even higher when actual commitments are considered. Only 43.9 per cent of the institutional commitments for the first six months of 1923 were from broken homes. - - - Control studies, which compared broken homes among delinquents with those for non-delinquents, showed two ( Burt and Shideler ) times as large a proportion of broken homes among delinquents as among non-delinquents. This evidence seems to be over <sup>5</sup>whelming."

Dr. D. S. Sneed, writing at a much earlier period (1907) states: "The Wisconsin Industrial School for Boys shows that of 333 boys committed, 205 or 61 per cent had both parents living while 125 or 38 per cent were from broken homes. Of 191 boys committed to the Lyman Boys School in Massachusetts in 1904-1905, 121 had parents while 88 were from the broken home type. - - - In 77 cases the father was intemperate, in 4 cases both parents were intemperate.

"These semi-statistical presentations could be multiplied from the various reports, but the above examples are sufficient to show that, in a large number of cases, the parental condition of those committed is such that

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<sup>5</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, p. 118

it is futile to look to the home for further help, either under moral or legal pressure."<sup>6</sup>

A somewhat different conclusion was reached by Shaw and McKay. Quoting them: "A comparison of the rate of broken homes between a group of 1,675 juvenile court delinquent boys and a control group of the same age and nationality constituency revealed that, while the incidence of broken homes in the delinquent group was 42.5, the incidence in the control group was 36.1. Similiarly a study of one area on the near west side in Chicago revealed that the incidence of broken homes was higher in the school population than in the delinquent group, and that the incidence of broken homes was not a reliable index of the amount of delinquency in that group. - - -"

"This should not be interpreted to mean that the family is not an important factor in behavior problems, but that the broken home, as such, is not a significant measure of the importance of family life in the cases of delinquent boys appearing in the Cook County juvenile court.

"Although the formal break in the family may not in itself be an important determining factor, it is probable that the conflicts, tensions, and attitudes which precipitate the disorganization may contribute materially to the development of the delinquency and the personality problems of the child. The actual divorce or separation of the parents may not be so important a factor in the life of the child as the emotional conflicts which have resulted in the family disorganization."<sup>7</sup>

We agree that broken homes, as such, will not explain delinquency but may enter in when accompanied by certain factors that will be discussed later.

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<sup>6</sup> Snedden, David S., American Juvenile Reform Schools, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup> Shaw, Secial Factors in Juvenile Delinquency, Report on The Causes of Crime, 283-285

There can be little doubt that the child whose home ties are loosed, even in part, goes through a crisis that easily leaves the way open for unsatisfactory social relationships and habits. One boy's mother died December 23, 1930 and his record began December 26, 1930. His record follows:

1. Wandering around picking up junk 12-26-30.
2. Stealing bags 1- 6-31.
3. Theft of junk 7-20-31.
4. Theft of junk from West End Junk Co. 5- 4-34.

In each of the first three cases he was warned and released.

Family unity and integrity are quite necessary in giving a child an even start in life. The presence and mode of living of both parents are to the child the deepest and most certain symbols of these essentials. It is absolutely essential to give due consideration to this and to take notice of cases of broken homes, especially those that through some forces led to the separation of parents. Behavior is caught, not taught. On this point Miss Mary B. Sayles states: "Love for the child on the part of both his parents is a first condition of his security; but no less vital is harmony between parents. The home broken by discord or death, whose children are torn between the claims of rival parents or separated from both and scattered among relatives or strangers, is universally recognized as a chief source of juvenile delinquency and unhappiness. No less disruptive to the child's inner life, is open contention between parents who continue to live together; while differences and disharmonies which the parents think they are successfully concealing are often sensed even by children too young to be able to formulate their anxieties in words, with most upsetting results."<sup>8</sup>

We have seen that 33 per cent of the cases in this study were from

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<sup>8</sup> Sayles, Mary B., The Problem Child At Home, p. 5.

the home broken by separation and in 15 per cent of the cases the child was living with someone other than the parents. In 19 per cent of the cases either the mother or the father was dead. Needless to say, this produced a strain on the child. We have also given attention to the morals of some of the homes. Of course, as we shall see later, other influences were operating besides broken homes. The broken home alone cannot explain the problem.

Family Size and Home Size. The family size in the study ranged from two to ten persons with a modal concentration at 4. Twenty seven and five tenths per cent of the cases ranged from four to ten in number.

The size of the homes ranged from one to six rooms with a modal concentration at three and a mean of 3.5 rooms. Allowing one room for the kitchen and dining room combined we have four people living in two rooms (considering the mode in each case.) About all that we are in a position to conclude from this is that apparently the families are from a rather poor section and therefore must be in the lower group economically. This latter point we shall consider later.

The size of the family is by no means a simple factor, however, and may be related more closely to other facts than delinquency. Large families in most cases are poor families, families stimulating those children old enough to leave school and make their own way, in order to support others in the home. Poverty is a more important factor in most cases than family size.

Family Income. All earnings for the family, as a whole, are being counted as family income. It ranged from relief cases with no income to \$38.60 per week. The modal group was \$5.50 and the mean income was \$7.59. There were twelve cases entirely dependent on relief and several instances where families getting \$2.00 and \$3.00 incomes per week were being supplemented with relief.

In order to judge the adequacy of the income with the size of the family several budgets are given below that were worked out and recommended to the Harris County Board of Welfare and Employment by the Consulting Dietician of the Texas Relief Commission.

TABLE V. - WEEKLY FOOD BUDGET GUIDE\*

Adults	2	3	4	1	2	2	2	2
Children	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	4
Amount	\$2.57	\$3.79	\$4.76	\$2.51	\$3.76	\$5.12	\$6.43	\$7.60

\* This food budget is adequate only if the family buys wisely. - - Adults are individuals above 14 years of age. ( Notations with budget)

TABLE VI - WEEKLY CLOTHING GUIDE

Adults	2	3	4	1	2	2	2	2
Children	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	4
Amount	\$1.02	\$1.53	\$2.04	\$.93	\$1.44	\$1.86	\$2.28	\$2.70

TABLE VII - COMBINATION WEEKLY FOOD AND CLOTHING GUIDE

Adults	2	3	4	1	2	2	2	2
Children	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	4
Amount	\$3.59	\$4.32	\$6.80	\$3.44	\$5.80	\$6.98	\$9.71	\$10.30

We have given tables for food and clothing only. According to the court records rent averaged \$3.00 for each room ( per month). Our modal group rented a 3 room house or 3 rooms in an apartment, only two cases out of the seventy two owned their home. At this rate the rent would be \$2.10 per week. Referring to the food and clothing budget above, for two adults and two children we find the minimum amount to be \$6.98. It will be recalled that our average family was composed of four members. Add the rent to the \$6.98 and we have a total of \$9.08 needed to meet the minimum requirement for food, clothing and shelter. The average income was found to be \$7.39. This does not meet the minimum requirements for food, clothing, and shelter not to mention the household necessities and some comforts or recreation or even

an occasional medical bill. This is a condition of poverty without a doubt. According to Dr. J. L. Gillin: "Poverty is that condition of living in which a person either because of inadequate income or unwise expenditures, does not maintain a standard of living high enough to provide for the physical and mental efficiency of himself and to enable him and his natural dependents to function usefully according to the standards of the society of which he is a member."<sup>9</sup>

The families constituting the 16.6 per cent who are depending entirely on the relief authorities are in a much worse condition than the average family just discussed. The minimum food budget as recommended by the Consulting Dietician of the Texas Relief Commission has been given (Table IV.) The budget, minus milk which is arranged for by direct contact with the dairies, which is followed by the authorities is given here.

TABLE VIII - FOOD BUDGET FOLLOWED BY THE HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF WELFARE\*

Adults	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	2
Children	0	0	0	1	2	3	4	5
Amount	\$1.16	\$1.60	\$2.07	\$1.15	\$1.56	\$1.85	\$2.27	\$2.80

\* The milk which is not included ranges from one to three quarts per day. (Eight and nine cents per quart is the contract price) The families are expected to earn enough money in some manner to care for their rent.

It can easily be seen that with the minimum food requirement calling for \$5.12 per week for the average family (as represented in the study) and the actual amount given is \$1.56 plus milk that these people are evidently hungry continuously. Little wonder is there that these people's children are to be found loitering around restaurants, in these neighborhoods, eating remains of food left by customers. Dr. J. L. Gillin writes: "Experience has shown without the shadow of a doubt that when it is necessary to administer charity in a case, that the necessaries of life which are put into that family

<sup>9</sup> Gillin, J. L., Poverty and Dependency, p. 24.

must be adequate for decent self-respect and to help accomplish the purpose in view. Inadequate relief is a waste and demoralizes the family."<sup>10</sup>

Reckless and Smith states: "Poverty is a more important factor in most cases than family size and, if the search is directed toward motivating or "unconditional" causes, poverty seems to be more understandable than mere family size. Put in another way, poverty and large families are more important factors than large families without poverty. - - -"

"The economic situation of the home embodies a group of factors that seem to have definite relationships to delinquency. The general economic status of delinquents has received considerable attention. The definitions of "poor" and "poverty" vary somewhat, and the results vary also from 5 per cent of delinquents in "extreme" poverty, and 22 per cent in poverty, mentioned by Healy and Bronner in the Chicago-Boston study, to more than 75 per cent from "poor" homes, mentioned by Breckenridge and Abbott."<sup>11</sup>

These conditions are not fair to the children who are mere victims of circumstances and must live under them. Over-crowded housing, and improper food, the lack of sufficient money to allow for the necessary provisions for health lay the foundation for disease. This will certainly handicap the child just starting life. Conditions of this kind set up what is termed a "vicious circle." Dr. J. L. Gillin states: The causes of poverty and pauperism go farther back than the circumstances which surround the working adult population of the country. Many of these adults are what they are because of conditions which surround them in childhood. Some of these without the physical stamina to withstand the strain of industry are weak and unfitted by reason of heredity, as we have seen. Some of them with good heredity are incapable because of bad circumstances. Adverse circumstances - pre-natal,

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 559

<sup>11</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 122-23

natal and post-natal - explain in some measure their inability to fight the battle of life successfully. What are these conditions and what is the measure of their influence?

"Poverty sets up a train of circumstances which sap the vitality of the mother and developing child. In the next generation the child now developed into the adult is incapable of withstanding the strain of life. He is unable to make a living such as will insure his children a good physique and the vigor necessary to make a success of life."<sup>12</sup> Then the circle starts all over. Thus we see that even those children who do not become delinquent are handicapped because of these conditions of poverty.

Offenses for Which Committed. A table showing the offenses for which the boys were committed follows:

TABLE IX . - OFFENSE FOR WHICH COMMITTED

Offense	Number	Per cent
Larceny	37	51.4
Burglary	17	23.6
Sex Offense	1	1.4
Murder or Manslaughter	2	2.8
Assault	4	5.5
Incorrigibility	10	13.9
Hit and run driver	1	1.4
	72	100.0

Seventy-five per cent of these are offenses against property and are closely connected with the economic condition of the home. Larceny and burglary are separated mainly for the purpose of indicating the seriousness of the offense. In all of the burglary cases the charge was burglary and theft. In order more clearly to understand these charges, statements from some of the records will be given. They are: "wandering streets begging, - took money from mother and sister," "stole brass caps off fire plugs," "shop lifting,"

<sup>12</sup> Op. Cit., p. 81.

"stealing radiator caps - 19 in number," "theft of electric train," "theft of three guns," "stealing junk," "theft of bicycle", "stealing clothes and money," and "stole six kegs of nails and two cases of shot gun shells." Theft of bicycle appeared eleven times, and a number of cases read; "wandering streets - theft."

Several facts stand out in connection with the facts given. Because of the economic condition of the homes it is impossible for the child to satisfy the needs discussed earlier in this chapter. Coming from homes where they could not get enough to eat can furnish part of the explanation. Coming from homes where toys and equipment for amusement and recreation were absent can explain some of the stealing. Wandering around with nothing to do could have easily caused these ill fed, ill clothed lads to go on the crime career. Very important too was the ease with which they could sell their wares. Certainly a boy would not steal 19 radiator caps and another steal brass off fire plugs for the purpose of piling them up at home . Stealing junk at night and selling it back to the owner the next day was practiced. It would be rather foolish for a boy to steal six kegs of nails without having a market for them. A number of boys admitted selling to certain dealers. It seems then that some of the business men of the city have not developed civic pride enough to lend a small amount of assistance to parents and in turn to the community in rearing children.

The next type of offense in order was incorrigibility. This shows the result of family disorganization including family tensions, lack of order, inadequacy of parents, economic demoralization and loss of respect of child for parents. In any number of cases the guardian was called out of the home in an attempt to earn a livelihood. In most of the single parent cases the mother was the one with the children and the records showed most of them to

be out of the home washing for a small consideration. As we shall see later, a large number of these boys was not attending school and only in four cases were the boys working. The moral condition of some of the homes would not guarantee for parental control. These unfortunate home conditions are, to a large extent, responsible for the development of these delinquent tendencies in the child. In this type of home the child is left to his own devices, without guidance, proper care and interest. Sometimes, the parents are incompetent. They fail to realize that life today requires different treatment of the child from what was customary years ago. They fail to realize that a child must have closer supervision in the city than in the country. When the child is left alone to more or less "grow up", vagrant habits will develop and these habits lead to a gradual growing disrespect for law - in fact for discipline of any kind.

Age When Record Began. Due to the fact that the juvenile court department began keeping records of Negro delinquents as late as 1927 very little importance can be attached to the age at which the delinquent's record began. It is sufficient to state the findings and proceed to other phases of the subject because we are not certain that the ages given on the records are representative. Then too a rather large proportion of Negro delinquents (especially of an early age) are handled unofficially because of the absence of any place for detention or correction except the state reformatory.

The ages for delinquents at their first offense ranged from eight to sixteen with a mode of thirteen and a mean of thirteen.

Age When Committed. The age at commitment has more significance than the age when the record began because we do know it to be accurate.

The range was ten to sixteen years, with a mean of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  years and a mode of 16. We see in this the fact that there is a tendency for commitments to be made late, in the sense that 16 is the limit for juvenile offenders.

From 17 years on the delinquent is no longer considered a juvenile. The modal concentration at 16 suggests that commitment was perhaps a final resort to save the delinquent before reaching the classification of adult offender. This is quite likely due to the absence of a detention home or county school for Negroes. This conclusion will be further substantiated when we give attention to the number of offenses before commitment.

Number of Offenses. The number of offenses before commitment ranged from one to seven. The mean number of offenses was 2.65. This figure is subject to the defects mentioned under "Age When Record Began," - that the records were first kept in 1927 thereby making it possible for some offenses to have passed unnoticed and that a rather large number of the cases of Negro delinquents are handled unofficially especially when the delinquent is quite young. Fifty per cent of the cases had a record of three or more offenses.

The Juvenile Court Department is handicapped to no small degree by the failure of the county to provide some type of home or training school for the Negro delinquent. In a number of cases the child was returned to a home that could not possibly lend assistance to the juvenile department in correcting the delinquent. The case cited in Appendix E will illustrate this. Willie was evidently from a defective stock judging from the records of his brothers and sisters ( 5 in number) all of whom are delinquent. The child began his career while living with an aged and blind grandmother. Immediately he should have been placed in another environment but there existed only one other for the child - Gatesville State Reformatory with it's mass treatment. The juvenile court department chose to try the home further. Finally on the fifth count the boy was committed. He was later paroled to a sister who was corrupt. As might be expected, he was committed again for theft within a very short time.

Cases plainly show that the officers were not "hard on" the Negro delinquents, a charge often made, but was too lenient in the sense of allowing them to be released on the second and third offenses when it was clear that the home situation offered no promise for correcting the child's delinquencies. The officers were confronted with the old problem of choosing between the home and its very questionable environment and the State Reformatory with its mass treatment. There is no limit to the amount of material that has been written regarding the effect of this mass method of correction for the delinquent, even with an adequate and capable staff. Dr. J. L. Gillin writes: "Reformation en masse is impossible in the case of the juvenile delinquent.

"The treatment involves not only individualization with the play of a wise and strong personality upon the juvenile, but also the formation of ideals and conduct habits by the impress of group ideals, stimulus and inhibition."<sup>13</sup>

Mental and Physical Condition. For some reason the schools of Houston do not keep a record of mental condition ( I. Q. ) of the Negro boy and girl. As a result the juvenile department entered on a portion of their records the condition as it appeared by mere inspection. Thirty-nine of the cases had records of this kind. The following table will give the result of their classification:

TABLE X. - MENTAL CLASSIFICATION

Classification	Number	Per cent
Poor	5	12.8
Fair	8	20.5
Good	25	66.7
	39	100.0

This reveals that one-third of these cases are classified as poor or fair. This is only a guess and can mean very little to us. An examination of  
13 Gillin, J. L., Criminology and Penology, p. 616

some of the histories gives one the impression that a goodly number of the boys are mentally deficient. One boy (classified as poor) was fifteen years of age and could not spell his name. Later we shall see that a large per cent of the delinquents had quit school and only four of them had jobs. This failure to adjust to school suggests mental deficiency as a partial explanation. Like the juvenile department, we are handicapped by the failure of the school system to keep records of the mental condition of the children.

Frequent references were made to boys who had gonorrhoea or itch or bad tonsils. The juvenile court had no means of taking care of the child's health; they could only recommend to the parents to have certain things done. Of course when committed to Gatesville Reformatory they received treatment.

School Record. The court records were not complete in all cases. The school record appeared on 53 of the cases, the results found in these follows

TABLE XI - SCHOOL RECORD

Record	Number	Pct.
Poor	16	30.2
Fair	7	13.2
Good	1	1.9
Not attending	29	54.7
	53	100.0

Some of the statements pertaining to the school record appearing on the cases are: "would not attend," "attended ten per cent of time," "age 15, grade second," "absent from school most of the time," "has been going several years but cannot spell name," "out for year, poor grades when attended," "attends poorly, grades poor," "attends less than 50 per cent of time," "quit school several months before commitment," and "retarded in school, hard to write own name." As we see from the table 54.7 per cent of the cases where school records are known are not attending.

Dr. E. P. Cubberley states: "Because irregular attendance is such

an important cause of retardation and ultimate elimination from school, because the irregular pupil becomes such a drag on the class on account of what he has missed, and because truancy and tardiness are bad habits and tend to undermine the discipline and morale of a school, it is important that the principal give careful attention to the matter of attendance."<sup>14</sup>

Dr. J. L. Gillin states this in regards to the importance of school attendance as a crime preventative: "If then it appears that the uneducated, no matter what the reason, are more likely to commit crime than the educated, we ought to give attention to school attendance. Children drop out of school in great numbers. Before the world's war from 50 to 75 per cent of the pupils left school before finishing the eighth grade, while 50 per cent of those who finished the eighth grade or reached the age when they are no longer subject to the compulsory attendance laws, never entered high school."<sup>15</sup>

A general discussion of the schools will be made in Chapter IV after which an attempt will be made to explain the reason for such large number of these boys dropping out of school.

Associates. Because the officers only had occasion to contact the boys when they were called in on charges, there were no records of the type of associates other than when they (the associates) too were implicated in the delinquent act. This was the case in nine of the burglary charges and four of the theft charges. In two cases the records stated that the particular boys were a "bad influence" on smaller children at school.

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14 Cubberley, E. P., The Principal And His School, p. 247

15 Op. Cit. pp. 222-223.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE ENVIRONMENT OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

The Distribution of the Negro Population. Houston, Texas is divided into wards, numbering one through six. The majority of Negroes live in third, fourth, and fifth wards. Some are clustered in the second ward, and a very few in the other wards. The latter case is largely those living in servant quarters. Practically all of our cases came from third, fourth, and fifth wards. The addresses appearing most frequently were in close range to the business district of the respective wards.

The General Description of the Delinquent Areas. The juvenile court department at Houston has a large city map where records of calls (for delinquents) are kept by means of sticking pins in the blocks. The addresses of boys committed coincide very closely with the concentrations on the map. These districts<sup>1</sup> are very crowded and, as might be expected from the small number of rooms, represent the "submerged tenth".

The following quotation is taken from Shaw and McKay and pertains to formal characteristics of delinquent areas: "Students of social problems have repeatedly pointed out that there are marked differences between areas within the city. The business center, the foreign districts, the slum, the industrial centers, and many other districts have been differentiated. Of these, the slum has probably received the most attention. This term has been used in a general way to designate areas where such conditions as physical deterioration, bad housing, over-crowding, poverty, and crime are prevalent. Attempts have been made to explain these conditions in terms of the local situation. Upon further analysis, however, it appears that all of these conditions of the local situation are products of the more general

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix C

process of expansion and segregation within the city. - - - The areas produced by this process are natural areas in the sense that they are not planned; they are typical in the sense that they tend to exhibit, from city to city, the same physical, social, and cultural characteristics."<sup>2</sup>

This seems to hold true in these areas. As the city has expanded the more able people have gradually moved back from these business districts leaving the less able there to rent dilapidated houses. A number of restaurants, barber shops, two moving picture houses of the less desirable sort, and other places of amusement are to be found in these parts. Several of the cases stated that the boys were found hanging around houses where they had no business. Some of these statements follow: "sweating dice game," "used by men hoodlums," "hanging around questionable houses," "hanging around houses of ill-fame," "arrested for gaming or sweating dice game," "found shooting craps," "wandering streets, drunk, disturbing peace," "hanging around railroad yards," and "plays pool at a dive with men, mother consents."

Regarding these community influences Dr. J. L. Gillin writes: "The influence in the community has a great deal to do with the development of conduct. Young children especially, and adolescents also, are subject to the attitudes and opinions of the community. How often when a delinquent is brought to court the story is told of how he had a good family, came from good stock, and yet had gone astray because of the untoward influences in the community in the midst of which he lives! Sometimes the influences of the community are positively demoralizing. Consider the difficulty that the well-intentioned parents have in stemming the influence upon their children of evil influences in the congested district of a great city. The influence

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<sup>2</sup> Shaw, Social Factors in Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 60-61.

of the home is neutralized by the tide of immorality that flows out of saloons, dance halls, vicious resorts, and the uncontrolled life of the gangs in the alleys, back yards, railroad tracks, and docks which characterize that part of a city. Even when the home is of the best, it has great difficulty in fighting against such influences.<sup>3</sup>

The situation described by Dr. Gillin is precisely the case in any number of cases. All families that are forced to live in poor surroundings are not, by any means, of the demoralizing sort. In one fourth of our cases the family was compact. The community influences were, quite likely, stronger than parental influences. On the other hand, what could one expect of a child from a demoralizing home and a poor community environment? Where does he have the opportunity to practice right? Where must he turn to get his life pattern?

Quoting Mr. J. B. Nash, Associate Professor of Physical Education, School of Education, New York University: " - - - (in the city) the increase of opportunity for unwholesome activities has been steady. These unwholesome activities belong to adult life and into them the child does not fit. Under these unwholesome activities I refer to the busy streets; the fire around the block; the fight on the corner; the police making an arrest in a nearby apartment; the stealing of a ride on the truck; the tormenting of the fruit vendor on the corner; the railroad yard; the dock, and many other things. Unguided and undirected under these opportunities, the child sets unwholesome standards which we have called delinquency."<sup>4</sup> Were we to substitute "the tormenting of the junk dealer" for "the tormenting of the fruit vendor" we would have an exact picture of the surroundings of most of the cases in this study.

<sup>3</sup> Gillin, J. L., Social Pathology, p. 568

<sup>4</sup> Nash, J. B., Organization and Administration of Playgrounds, p. 8.

The Playground Facilities. The city of Houston is badly in need of recreational facilities for both Negroes and Whites. The following article appeared in the Houston Post Dispatch July 31, 1935;

#### HOUSTON RANKS SIXTH IN FUNDS FOR RECREATION

##### City Spends Less Than Any of Other Major Texas Cities

Houston now is spending less per capita for recreational purposes than any of the other five major Texas cities, it was announced Tuesday by the Houston recreation commission following a survey made of the state.

Houston property owners will be given an opportunity on August 24 to vote the issuance of \$325,000 in recreation bonds. If the bonds are approved, the P W A is expected to make an outright grant of approximately \$265,910 to the city, thus enabling the city to spend a total of \$590,910 in improving its public recreation facilities.

The survey showed that the city of Houston this year is spending only \$35,956 for recreational purposes - an expenditure of 12 cents per capita. During the same period Dallas is spending \$73,298, or 28 cents per capita; Austin \$74,603, or \$1.40 per capita; Fort Worth, \$60,980, or 37 cents per capita; El Paso, \$15,225, or 13 cents per capita, and Waco, \$8,654, or 14 cents per capita.

The need for increased expenditures for recreational purposes seems to be fully realized by leaders of the city but they have not succeeded in convincing a sufficient number of the voters of the fact. Extracts from some of the editorials and articles that appeared in behalf of the bond for funds to improve recreational facilities follow.

The Houston Post Dispatch carried this article on the editorial page August 9, 1935:

#### CRIMINAL CROP FOR 1945

A nine-year plan! A planned economy of humanity is possible! The recreation commission is planning an economy of humanity with their plans to take care of youth's needs for wholesome recreation.

Houston citizens have an opportunity to help with the plan. Melvin J. Purvis, retiring department of justice man, believes "if something were done now for the 12 and 14-year-old boy, the 1945 crop of criminals would be a great deal shorter."

The bonds asked for by the department of recreation will enable Houston, woefully behind in its recreational program, to provide adequate facilities for the vent of the mental and physical imagination of the young boy and the young girl.

Here is an opportunity for the city of Houston to push ahead in the field of planned humanity. Here is an opportunity to accomplish something remedial rather than something palliative. Here is a way to wedge a stop-gap in the need for the palliative work ever increasing and burdening the country.

Forty-five per cent of the money used for these additional recreational facilities will be a direct grant from the Federal Government which will supervise the construction of all facilities.

Here is an opportunity to begin correlating the remedial and palliative work of our community.

Vote "for" the recreational bonds.

Another editorial appeared in this same paper August 21, 1935:

#### A RECREATIONAL INVENTORY

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Every so often the business man takes inventory of his stock. He knows where his shortage is and what his needs are. He discovers the items and the merchandise that have been most effective with his buyers. Before he re-stocks, he takes into consideration the needs and the activities of his customers.

If Houston were to take a recreational inventory, the shortage of playground facilities, swimming pools, adequate safeguards for the playgrounds, baseball diamonds, tennis courts would become apparent at once. - - -

The whole social scheme is woven around healthy and normal outlets for young people. Adequate recreational facilities will prove a stop-gap between society and delinquency. To the increased population of Houston has been added increased hours of leisure. These hours of leisure can be made either an asset or a liability. The choice is made Saturday as to whether you wish the leisure hours to be written on the asset or the liability side of Houston's ledger.

The Post believes that Houston should place the order Saturday for increased and adequate recreational facilities by voting for the recreational bonds.

Let Houston testify on Saturday that social justice for youth is a major objective.

On August 24, 1935 the Sports Editor of this paper wrote as follows:

#### HOUSTON LAGS FAR BEHIND OTHER CITIES IN RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR YOUTH

Since I have been writing sports in Houston for eight years, I am in a position

to know Houston lags far behind other cities in recreational facilities.

There is NO surer deterrent to crime than properly supervised playgrounds and other sport equipment.

From these articles one sees that there is an awareness on the part of some, of the need for additional recreational facilities. All of the daily papers were behind the recreational bonds but to no avail. The public, seemingly, has not been convinced that it is the communities' concern how people amuse themselves. It is apparent from the articles and from the amount of money asked for in the form of bonds and grants (\$590,910) that Houston, is not caring for the recreational needs of its citizens. This study leads us to give attention to the provisions, within this limited program, for Negroes and those made for whites. The table which follows gives an idea of these provisions.

TABLE XII - PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS FOR NEGROES AND FOR WHITES\*

	School population	Pct.	Playgrounds	Pct.	Parks
Whites	53,147	75.4	11	91.6	8
Negroes	17,280	24.6	1	8.4	0
Total	70,427	100.0	12	100.0	8

\* Data on school population secured from Census Department of Houston School District, that on parks and playgrounds from the Recreation Commission, Houston, Texas.

The one playground for Negroes is approximately an acre in size. The eleven playgrounds for whites range from an acre to two acres. All of the parks are larger than the average playground.

According to a letter received from the recreation department Houston, Texas February 10, 1936 regarding recreational activities for whites the following obtain:

" 1. We employ 6 full time supervisors, 2 part time playground directors through fall and winter - during spring and summer we employ a director on each playground. The summer of '35 we operated 11 playgrounds.

2. We have 19 parks and playgrounds. Through the winter we supervise 9 playgrounds, 5 community centers in school buildings, 4 on park

property. - - - At present we have three graduates of the National Recreational Association on our staff.

Our W P A project calls for about 60 workers to assist with our playground and community center program.

We are training 80 youths on the N. Y. A. project to be junior leaders on our spring playgrounds.

Playground Supervisor."

A letter of October 15, 1935 from the same source give the following information regarding facilities for Negroes:

" - - - Emancipation Playground<sup>5</sup> is operated the year round. Through the summer we have a woman director assisted by four Federal relief workers, we employ one man as a Regional Director of all colored work. He is employed the year round on a part time basis.

- - - This summer we operated two playgrounds. The directors being assisted by fifteen Federal relief workers."

This playground (Emancipation) is very poorly equipped. The recreational department realized this and had included in their bond program \$57,000 for facilities at this park. The measure was defeated, however, and the Negroes will be lacking in equipment until some future date when the citizens of Houston will answer the plea of the Recreation Commission and vote money to care for its youth's recreational needs.

On August 17, 1935 The Houston Defender, one of the leading Negro papers of the city, had an editorial pertaining to the recreational bonds. Portions of this editorial follow:

NEGROES AND RECREATIONAL BONDS

Of all the bond issues submitted to the electorate of Houston Saturday, August 24, the proposal calling for \$325,000 for recreational purposes, should be studied very carefully by Negro voters. - - - Tentative plans call for expenditures ranging from \$57,000 to \$60,000 in making possible recreational facilities at the existing Negro park (Emancipation) including \$30,000 for a swimming pool, \$5,000 for renovating the pavilion, and fair sized items for other improvements.

- - - The Defender, last week, urged support of the city school and county bond issues, although this paper realizes that Negroes will not gain much as a racial unit out of their approval; but Negroes are part and parcel of Houston and what helps Houston, helps them; and what hampers or retards Houston, likewise hampers or retards them.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix D.

The last paragraph carries with it much food for thought. The editor realizes that "Negroes will not gain much as a racial unit" but urges them support the bonds. This is a commendable spirit and if such men keep up the fight with the Negro citizens and if the white papers continue to appeal to the civic pride of the citizens results will surely come. When we give consideration to the schools later in this chapter some of the philosophy behind this editor's closing paragraph will reveal itself further.

To refer to the information concerning facilities for the Negroes it is seen that although the playground is operated the year round directors are employed for the summer only. We would not be far wrong if we conclude that the one playground is operating only for the summer because during the other nine months there is no supervision. Unsupervised playgrounds are harmful and most especially in the cities.

According to the estimate of the National Playground Association of America,<sup>6</sup> one acre of play space is needed for every five hundred children. As was shown earlier the one acre of playground space for Negroes is for 17,280 potential users. Mr. J. B. Nash states: "In 1790 three per cent of the population of America lived in cities. In 1920 fifty-three per cent of the population lived in cities, with the indication that the growth in size of cities per decade would be between five and eight per cent.

"This, however, tells only part of the story, for a very large additional percentage of people who by the census are credited with living in the country have decidedly fallen under the influence of city conditions. - - - The growth of the city and the growth of the machine age per se is not to be attacked as a disadvantage. The prime disadvantage comes because of the cutting-down of the opportunities that develop stamina, power

<sup>6</sup> Dopp, E. I., Thesis Submitted for M. A. Degree, at University of Wisconsin, 1927, p. 32.

and vitality - recreational facilities."<sup>7</sup>

Reckless and Smith writes: "With the rapid development of overcrowding living conditions in urban centers the need for play space, play facilities, and wholesome recreation became apparent to civic leaders. - - - The growth of public recreation in terms both of the number of supervising leaders and of the expenditures is very impressive. - - - While all this development of public recreation has been going on, surveys have indicated the conditions of unsupervised play, the menace of street play, the dangers of commercialized recreation - movies, pool rooms, corner cigar stores, slot machines, etc."<sup>8</sup>

Dr. J. L. Gillin writes: "The lack of wholesome recreation in a great city is one of the most potent causes of juvenile delinquency. Un-directed use of leisure time is a peril to a child. Mr. Thurston found in his study in Cleveland that over 50 per cent of his delinquents spent their leisure time in disultory unguided pursuits. In my study of 160 wholesome citizens I found that only .07 per cent spent their leisure time in such pursuits. No community can afford to neglect playground facilities with proper guidance for its children."<sup>9</sup>

We have seen that a rather large portion of the cases in this study had quit school and that only four of the seventy two were working at the time of commitment. What was to be done with this spare time?

The School. We have seen, in an earlier chapter, that of the cases where the school records are known 54.7 per cent were not attending, 30.2 per cent had a record of poor, 13.2 per cent fair, and 1.9 per cent had a record considered good. In attempting to understand this condition it is necessary to know something about the school program for Negroes in Houston, Texas.

<sup>7</sup> Nash, J. B., The Organization and Administration of Playgrounds, p. 7

<sup>8</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 320-323.

<sup>9</sup> Gillin, J. L., Social Pathology, p. 567.

According to information from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, there are no records kept of the Intelligence Quotient of Negro students. They are kept in the case of the whites, and are used as the basis for adjusting the student and his school program.

Much discussion has gone on regarding the value of the Intelligence quotient tests given students. Dr. James L. Mursell states: "We must always remember that most of our intelligence tests depend very markedly on the ability to understand English.

"A good many races, notably Negroes, undoubtedly have much poorer school opportunities than native-born whites. It is hard to believe that this does not have a decided effect on every kind of intellectual achievement."<sup>10</sup>

Reckless and Smith writes: "The theory is that a person's intelligence is on the whole closely similar to his sample performance. - - - The problem of inheritance of intelligence need not complicate matters for the student of juvenile delinquency. His present interest is to consider the relationship of measured intelligence, a combined hereditary and environmental performance, to delinquency. - - -

"Ackerson not only found a decrease of conduct problems with an increase in age and intelligence but he also found that such "desirable" traits as attractive manner, neatness, clean habits, popularity, and leadership increased "markedly" with intelligence quotient level for children of all ages."<sup>11</sup>

In short, intelligence quotient ratings are not, by any means, an index to inherited intelligence (if we can conceive such) but may easily be a vocabulary test, however, for rating individuals more or less in a similar culture it may be quite valuable. To the schools of Houston they would serve

<sup>10</sup> Mursell, J. L., The Psychology of Secondary School Teaching, p. 318

<sup>11</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 99-100

as an index to denote those who, for some reason, do not measure up to the average in sample performance and thus may need special attention. The intelligence tests are more thorough than taking grades alone.

Due to lack of funds there are no efforts made to give the retarded child special instruction. The nearest approach is when they run summer school for retarded children. These classes are overcrowded (as are those in the regular session) and there is merely an attempt to get the student to learn that which he failed to learn in the regular term. Seemingly it is assumed that the methods used and the courses of study offered, in the regular session, were the kind needed and all that was necessary was to drill the retarded child a second time and he would be ready to take his place along side those who completed the work in the regular term.

The crowded classrooms do not allow the teacher to do her best with the retarded child. Individual attention, to any degree, is practically impossible.

Dr. James L. Mursell states further: "The teaching contact is certainly of very great importance, even though it cannot increase the native endowment of the pupil, or make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Its importance is perfectly obvious from the fact that in every school system there will be found some highly intelligent pupils who are not learning nearly as much as they could and should. The classroom teacher may not be able to add to the pupils natural endowment, but he can assist him to use to the limit such capacity as he has. - - - The school often guides the pupil by the brutal and stupid method of accepting him as an entrant and then throwing him out when he fails to come up to the standard." <sup>12</sup> So we see that these crowded conditions are detrimental to the best students as well as to the retarded group. A number of the retarded children could master industrial

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<sup>12</sup> Op. Cit. pp. 21-22

courses if given an opportunity but this type of training is withheld until the high school years. Only one boy of the 72 reached high school. The problem child, for any number of possible reasons, begins his truant career in the earlier years.

On this point Reckless and Smith writes: "The persistent truant in the schools today is increasingly one who runs a gauntlet of investigation and discipline and who has not become adjusted. The effect on him in most cases has been to destroy much of the chance of correcting difficulties. Attitudes as well as habits have made him opposed to school authority, and this may have been transferred to a consistent dislike for all authority. This is especially true if the school authorities are identified in the child's experience with juvenile court or police authority."<sup>13</sup> Just how much the white juvenile or truant officers enter in this dislike for school and authority in general is rather hard to determine. Due to sad experiences with some of the inferior type of police officers in the south the Negro in general, has been made to look at a policeman not as a public officer to protect citizen's rights but as an enemy to the happiness of the citizen. To quote further from the same source: "Truancy in other words, may be - and often is - a combination of habit of suppression by authority, of a resulting defense action on the part of the child, and of relative enjoyment in the out-of-school environment."<sup>14</sup>

Truancy is significant, both from its direct effect on the child and its indirect effect on the entire social group related to the truant individual. The individual may be affected in several ways. The failure to go to school means that he will grow up ignorant, so far as education is concerned. The city offers an unsatisfactory environment for the child to spend

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<sup>13</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 160-161

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 161.

time unsupervised. Little wonder that these individuals ended in the juvenile court.

Reckless and Smith states this regarding causes of truancy; "Truancy, when defined as chronic non attendance at school of those who are required to attend, involve definite points of reference, any one of which may appear as a "causal factor". In most cases the lack of desire to attend school seems to be found in the child. Or it should be said is a relative lack of desire to go, since there may be some desire to go to school but more desire to go elsewhere.

"parental attitudes that accompany truancy in children are of several kinds; indifference, desire for attendance accompanied by the belief that the child will go voluntarily, opposition to attendance requirements or to school officials. - - -

"What is necessary to know is the conditions in the school that cause a relative attractiveness of some other form of behavior besides regular attendance. - - - Perhaps there is junk collecting or thievery in order to earn money for amusements or possessions. The city, and even the small town, offers so many activities of interest that no complete list can be presented here. - - - Concerning school itself, the problem becomes one of accounting for the truant child's lack of desire to go to school regularly. The teacher may be the cause of the problem; classmates may be a source of irritation; the school work may be irksome."<sup>15</sup>

The economic condition of the home naturally led to many forms of maladjustments due to the child's failure to secure satisfaction of many of his wishes and desires. Dr. J. L. Gillin has this to say pertaining to truancy: " - - - it has been discovered that children who

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<sup>15</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, p. 163.

do not get along well in school are likely to become truant and to wind up in the juvenile court. Evidently our schools are not yet perfectly adjusted to maintain the interest of all the children who come to them. Too often the schools are built to fit the average student and too little attention is being given to the variant child. More and more attention is being given to suiting the school system and the curriculum to the needs of the individual child. At the present time, however, too frequently the children drop out of school from lack of interest and go to work at the first opportunity, and as we have seen, working children are under special hazard. Consequently it must be said in all fairness that the school must shoulder the responsibility for making some delinquents. The teacher loaded with forty pupils, some of whom present special problems, cannot be charged fairly with this result. - - - Too many times the teachers are interested only in earning their salaries, although there are some glorious exceptions who follow children into their homes and into their community life in order to assist in the adjustment of the child to the circumstances of school and community."

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So we may conclude by stating that truancy may be due to any number of causes and that regardless of what cause or causes may be assigned it figures in delinquency to a great extent.

Home-School Relationship. The home-school relationship is rather poor in the school of Houston. There is very little visiting on the part of teachers and very few of the parents visit the school. This condition may cause less motion in the program of training the child. The teacher can do her best only when she is acquainted with the home life of the pupils that she is attempting to teach. The visiting teacher movement is gaining

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16 Gillin, J. L. Social Pathology, p. 568.

much favor for the good done in connecting the school and the home.

The importance of the proper home school relationship has been realized for quite some time but often it remains in the realm of those things hoped for. Mrs. Mary Harmon Weeks, in a report to the Commissioner of Education in 1912 stated: " - - - the teacher sometimes dwelling too much on system and curriculum, finds her sympathies refreshed by coming in-to contact with the home relations of the children. She realizes more vividly the conditions under which they must work at home, makes fairer allowances for shortcomings, and is often able to suggest changes that are helpful to her charges. Even untrained mothers can give common-sense advice, and the contact of such a mother with the trained mind of the teacher is of incalculable value to home."<sup>17</sup>

It is logical that home and school should cooperate to the fullest in establishing a similar environment in which the two will share in molding the child for a single end. Many of the parents in our study have in-different attitudes toward the school because there has been such a gulf between the home and the school. With the development of our complex civilization there should be every attempt to more and more understand the factors influencing the child's development. The school off to itself and the home off to itself will not contribute to the solution of the problem.

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<sup>17</sup> Education Report, 1912, Parent-Teacher Cooperative Associations, p. 362.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Part I - Factors Making For Juvenile Delinquency

The family, neighborhood, the school, and society in general, sets down standardized codes of action into which the individual must fit if he is to get along. When, for some reason, he runs afoul of these codes he presents a problem. Society has named the individual guilty of this a delinquent.

The Italian School, headed by Lombroso brought forward the theory of the criminal type which, although it was disproved, turned attention to a study of the nature of the criminal. This has proved to be most important. Another member of this school, Enrico Ferri, laid the foundation for our present day diagnosis of the delinquent. He showed the necessity of studying the natural genesis of crime, whether in the delinquent or in the surroundings in which he lives, in order to more appropriately apply different remedies to different causes.

As a result today we recognize delinquency as a very complex problem. Any single-factor causation is liable to be termed "particularizing" as W. I. Thomas puts it. Among the various conditions which are now regarded as possible causes when acting in certain interrelationships are, to cite only a part of the list, the following: family demoralization and lack of home training, a conflict of standards between parents and children, lack of moral training, bad neighborhood conditions, lack of wholesome recreational outlets, physical defects and maladjustments, inadequate educational opportunities, social mobility and poverty. Consequently any program for treatment of delinquency must first diagnose the case in light of the conditions just enumerated and others that may enter. In short, to treat the case the cause must be determined.

According to Alexander and Staub, representatives of the psychiatric School,<sup>1</sup> the majority of criminals or delinquents, are not different physically and grossly psychologically from the normal individual; the deviation from the normal is a matter of development, which depends more on the life history of the person than upon heredity; in other words, the greatest number of delinquents could under different circumstances have developed into normal individuals. They contend that the human being enters the world as a potential criminal, i.e., socially not adjusted. The degree to which, and the manner in which, he is adjusted depends on his family first and then the wider community. The future normal individual succeeds in partly repressing his genuine criminal instinctive drives, and thus cuts them out of motor expression and partly in transforming them into socially accepted striving; the future criminal more or less fails in carrying out this adjustment. The only difference between the criminal and the normal man is that the normal individual partially controls his criminal drives and finds outlets for them in socially harmless activities.

Disturbances during the earlier years of the child's life might influence the educability of the individual along the lines of social relationships. The exaggerated, unsocial, stubborn bluntness of some violators of the law corresponds to the unyielding persistence of infantile spite. The way in which the child overcomes conflicts arising from the home situation determines whether it will develop into a healthy or sick individual, or whether his general behavior will be that of a socially adjusted person or that of a delinquent.

With this in mind let us review the pertinent information given in Chapter I through IV.

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander and Staub, *The Criminal, the Judge, and the Public*, pp. 33-35.

The Home. In our analysis we found the average home to be; broken (75%), to have four persons in it, to have three rooms, to be receiving an income that reduces the members of the family to a status of poverty and we found that 16.6 per cent of our cases were depending, in full, on relief. We further found that this relief was inadequate. Three-fourths of the delinquents were committed for stealing.

Where these home conditions are overshadowed by dire poverty, the situation is so obvious in its possible relation to stealing, that it needs no discussion. The broken homes suggest that the parent was out struggling along and working out and forced by circumstances to be neglectful of the better interests of the children. In connection with poverty there are many reasons for the development of a trend toward dishonesty. The child from a poor home may suffer from any one of the following conditions, which seem to be the main ones correlated with stealing. There may be actual want of food, or need for kinds of food that are not obtainable. It was shown earlier that this could very easily be the case. Mention was made of children "hanging around" restaurants eating left-overs from plates. The desire for clothes may lead to stealing. There is likely to be very little to form healthy mental interests in the home surroundings, few toys, few books, few materials for occupations. The result of this is that other allurements are sought, or that city streets prove attractive, and the temptations of these lead to stealing for the satisfaction of desires. Any number of our cases read; "wandering streets, picked up." Poverty may prevent normal control and even discipline. This is especially true in these broken homes where one person is responsible for maintenance and guardianship.

Children from these homes do not get their fundamental needs satisfied and hence may go on a delinquent career as a means of compensating

for this emptiness. The poverty stricken people live in sections where cheap types of amusements and business establishments are plentiful. The fact that a number of these boys frequented these places was brought out in Chapter IV. These places had their effect on the boy.

We stated in Chapter IV that broken homes, as such, would not explain delinquency but may when accompanied by other circumstances. The condition of poverty is one of the accompanying circumstances. Another may be the strained relationships that existed, in the cases of divorce or separation, before the formal break was made. It stands to reason that even with young children, where there is nagging and brawling at home the reaction may be anti-social. The child then often seeks secret companionship and through unfortunate alliances may get to stealing. It is generally agreed that life on the streets in a city is a cause of stealing. We are not only interested in the fact that the child "wanders about" but also in the conditions that caused him to do this. These conditions just described are quite important in explaining this.

We may say then that the poverty stricken, broken homes with their associated attributes may enter in the picture as being partially responsible for the delinquency.

The School. The school is responsible, in part, for this high rate of delinquency among Negroes. The majority of our delinquents had quit school, and only 1.9 per cent of those attending had a record considered good. The schools are over crowded and have no provisions for the retarded child other than summer school. There is little, or no, cooperation between the home and the school - at least no regular contacts between the two. Industrial education is withheld until high school and incidently only one of the boys being studied had reached high school. No records are kept of

the Negro children's Intelligence Quotients and therefore no attempt is made to adjust the problem child with the I. Q. as a basis.

Quoting from the Report of the Sub-Committee on Cooperation of Home and School: "The school, originally organized to teach the academic subjects, has been forced by the pressure of modern life to undertake the great majority of the activities formerly a part of home training. It has become an extension of the home and it is, therefore, logical that home and school should unite to assure a continuous system of education, as the child passes from the home to the Kindergarten through the grades." <sup>2</sup> This position has not been reached in the Negro Schools of Houston, Texas. Improvements are being made but there is a lag.

The more careful study of the maladjustments of childhood and of the early experiences of maladjusted adults justifies the belief that life in the classroom to which so many of the child's hours are devoted carries within itself potentialities not only for good, but for evil. Even in some of the best school systems this fact seems not to be understood. They are concerned primarily with "method", and relatively little interest is displayed in the question of how the teacher may affect both method and child. Much talk is heard regarding the necessity of centering attention on the child but very little of this is carried out. In the Negro schools the crowded conditions are the main factors working against any of the modern methods of teaching the child. The importance of discovering difficulties at an early age and working on them seems to be considered of little importance. As has been pointed out, the program is set up for the normal child and the deviate, or problem child, is given no consideration.

Recreational Facilities. There can be little doubt that the limited

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<sup>2</sup> White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, Sect. III, p. 5.

recreational facilities for Negroes in Houston is a contributing factor in juvenile delinquency. The lack of healthful amusements drives children, especially the poor, who have not the means to choose anything else, to the streets and to other places that are not desirable. These children quite likely resort to stealing partly to get money for amusements. With these cheap moving picture shows in the community it can readily be seen that these lads might yield to the temptation and resort to stealing brass caps, junk, shot gun shells, nails, etc., in order to secure money. This has been discussed at length and no further treatment is necessary.

The Juvenile Court Department. It has been shown that the juvenile court department is over-worked and is handicapped by not having proper facilities for detention, especially for the Negro delinquent. The limited force will not allow for real probation work and consequently the Negro delinquent is either returned to his environment much the same as when he came to court, or he is sent to the State Reformatory at Gatesville, Texas where he is exposed to a type of mass treatment that leaves him none the better. It is also apparent that the ease with which these delinquents are released on second and third offenses due to no type of school between the home and Gatesville Reformatory has something to do with the lad's continuation of his delinquent career. The rather late age at commitment suggests that it was resorted to as a final step before juvenile age limit (17) is reached. There were indications that a large portion of these boys were permitted to continue their career with a mere warning when it was plain that the home was not of a type to change his course.

The entire staff is quite competent and absolutely sincere but due to the two handicaps mentioned: over-work, and inadequate provisions for detention, they are not in position to do a first class job.

The ease with which these delinquents could dispose of junk to dealers had something to do with the delinquency. These dealers could do the community much good by refusing to buy junk from juveniles. Some round about means of disposing of it might be found but the more red tape the fewer number of delinquents that will resort to this as a means of getting spending money.

Factors Making For Greater Proportion of Negro Delinquents Over Whites. At the outset we stated that there were certain factors that may be present in the Negro group and not in the same degree in the white group that may figure in the explanation of why a group of people composing 22.2 per cent of the population in the juvenile age group constitute 38.7 per cent of the delinquents committed to the correctional institutions.

The writer selects three factors that may largely account for this difference. The fact that white children are adjusted to their school work after careful study which takes into account the Intelligence quotient as was shown in Chapter IV, is one of the factors. In addition to this the school is much better equipped to deal with retarded children.

The second factor is the great difference in the recreational facilities of the two groups. It is true that the facilities even for the whites are not by any means adequate yet they are much poorer for the Negroes.

The third factor that may be a cause of the higher rate of delinquency among Negroes than whites is the failure of the county to provide any type of institution for Negroes as the one provided for whites at Clear Lake and which was described in Chapter II. It is not contended that placing a boy in an institution will put an end to his delinquent career. Sometimes it does and other times it does not. When there is a choice between, placing a boy in a county home, which has the support of churches and various men's

clubs and which has provisions for schooling of the boy , or returning him unsupervised to an environment which has driven him to committ delinquent acts in the first place, and which shows no possibility of improving, the wise step to be to select the institution. When the Negro boy comes up there is no such choice. The choice is to return him to his home or send him to the State Reformatory at Gatesville, Texas. Usually he is returned home and he continues stealing, contaminating others with whom he associates.

There are other conditions that may contribute but facts are not at hand to substantiate a conclusion. It is generally acknowledged that the Negro is usually the last one hired and the first one fired and, in addition, received the lowest wages. We would therefore expect him to be living in greater poverty than the white man with the same degree of skill. Various clubs give boys special outings during the year among the whites. The Y. M. C. A. is the only Negro organization that attempts this type of program and it's work is rather limited.

## Part II - Recommendations

The Home. There is very little that we can offer to remedy certain conditions that were found to exist in regards to the homes of most of the cases in the study. Later in this chapter we will offer recommendations that may counteract the evil influences of some of the homes. It is rather difficult to offer remedies for broken homes the roots of which may be economic conditions. A normal home scarcely exist in the slums and in some of the tenement districts of the city. In these sections there is perhaps more vice and other immorality, less control of the individual by public opinion, and more opportunity, on account of close living together, for friction, both within and without the domestic circle. The poverty of these people undoubtedly cause a great deal of domestic misery and unhappiness which finally shows itself in desertion or in the divorce court. So, connected with the home are numerous factors that form a network that is rather complicated. The poor economic foundation seems to play a very important part.

The School. The school offers the greatest hope in the solution of the problem under consideration. Before going into the discussion it might be well to mention that the cases under consideration are those of boys who were committed to Gatesville Reformatory from January 1, 1933 through August 1935 and therefore are in a worse "all round" condition than most delinquents. A program that may not succeed in counteracting the influences of all the extremely poor homes may do much with the less serious cases.

The Intelligence Quotient should be taken, and kept, of all school children and it should be made a basis for attempting to adjust the problem child. These are the ones who lead in truancy and later become delinquent. Reckless and Smith states: "The large number of truants who are retarded

in school are evidence of the fact that inability to learn accompanies truancy. The problem of low mental ability has long been considered such a serious factor in school adjustment that "opportunity" classes are fixtures in every large school. Even in the special classes the child may find the returns from his efforts much too small to satisfy him when compared with satisfaction to be had from truancy. The delinquent boy is often one with mechanical ability rather than one possessed of an abstract intelligence. Such children should be directed into such school subjects that will utilize their abilities and will develop interests which can compete with interests in things outside of school. - - - Truancy is merely a rather predominant accompaniment of more serious offenses, and because of its early appearance it often makes the first evidence of many unadjustments that become serious. The prevention of it will not eliminate delinquency, nor will its speedy cure eliminate crime, but its correct interpretation as the evidence of the development of a smouldering anti-social nature may help reduce the incidence of delinquency and crime."<sup>3</sup>

It was stated earlier that industrial education is given in the high schools. Music, industrial education, art, etc., should be introduced in the earlier grades. As was stated in the previous paragraph the delinquent boy is often one with mechanical ability rather than one possessed of an abstract intelligence. Dr. J. L. Gillin states: "So far as the school is to blame for crime the trouble lies in the lack of adjustment of the school to the capacities and needs of the pupils. The school must not be blamed for its failure with the subnormal, except in so far as it attempts to force that child to learn the things and to keep a pace of which he is incapable. - - - The child of poor capacity, discovered by his failure

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<sup>3</sup> Reckless and Smith, Juvenile Delinquency, p. 163.

to keep up with his class, by the nagging often visited upon him by the teachers, by the sneers of his fellows, and by the loss of interest in some of the subject which he is forced to study, becomes a truant, rebels against authority, learns to find his interests satisfied elsewhere, and forms a habit of anti-social conduct."<sup>4</sup>

Home-School Relationship. Better home-school relationship will greatly improve the work of the school and will help the home environment.

The schools of Houston are improving fast but mostly in the direction of benefiting the normal child. We would suggest that more attention be given the child that does not measure up to average. To do this the visiting teacher movement would answer the need even if introduced on the small scale as, perhaps, the regular teachers spending a small amount of time contacting parents. The parents would be encouraged to visit the school in return and would be a bit more careful about the home appearance since they do not know when to expect "Willie's" teacher. Later the school officials would see the benefit in putting on full time visiting teachers.

If the school is to do it's part intelligently, it must know the material it has to help. It must also understand, as far as possible, all the influences at home, in the community, and at school which are being brought to bear on the child, so that it may direct them so as to contribute to the desired goals of learning.

Quoting from the Committee on Preventing Delinquency: "When a visiting teacher arouses a child's interest in his school work, gets his parents to take an intelligent interest in his progress and in the school's point of view, sees that his health is looked out for at home, sees that Johnnie's mother understands that late hours and a candy and a coffee diet

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<sup>4</sup> Gillin, J. L., Criminology and Penology, p. 224.

may have much to do with his inability in arithmetic, or that Susie can scarcely be expected to be keen about her school work when too much of her time at home goes to washing dishes or taking care of the baby - she is simply working out a normal adaptation between a child and his daily life; and the child, or the grown person, for that matter, who is properly adapted to his environment, seldom becomes delinquent.

"The visiting teacher, in short, occupies a strategic position where she is in touch with large numbers of children and where, with the assistance of the school staff, she can learn which boys and girls are likely to develop wayward habits. She comes in contact with these problems at an early period, before the habits of the children have become fixed, and thus she can be a very great force in the prevention of delinquency."<sup>5</sup> Personal contacts by the school with the home and its members through visits made by the teacher, or visiting teacher are beneficial and necessary.

Special community groups, such as parent teacher associations and various types of clubs can do much to bridge this gap between the home and school.

Recreational Facilities. The importance of recreation has been discussed at length and also the need for facilities has been shown. Suffice us to say therefore that additional recreational facilities are needed and supervision is absolutely necessary, not three months each year but twelve months. The articles presented in Chapter IV shows that there is a consciousness of the need for additional facilities and this consciousness will, in all probabilities, spread to enough of the people to carry the vote. In the mean time more organizations should include in their programs outings for the under privileged. This has been overlooked and there is much

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<sup>5</sup> Report of Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, Vol. 1-4, p. 11.

possibility in this method.

The Juvenile Court Department. The juvenile court department, like the recreation department is suffering from lack of funds to set up a well rounded program. The department needs additional help in order to do real probation work. To solve the detention problem for Negroes who should not be sent to the State Reformatory and whose home conditions are not of the type to lend assistance in adjusting the child, a home very similar to one being successfully used in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is suggested. The following information regarding this home appears in a report to the Tulsa Juvenile Board:

"The Mohawk Juvenile Home is a character and citizenship building institution. The home is conducted very differently from the usual corrective institutions, in that the child is not entirely separated or segregated from his home or community. He is permitted to go home, if his conduct is satisfactory, on Sundays and holidays as well as attend the public schools, city churches, Y. M. C. A. and other community institutions. The environment in the Home helps the boy to readily alter his habits and his attitudes as well as provide him with better ideals."<sup>6</sup>

This is a very progressive method of treatment. It can easily work in Houston because one of the reasons for the absence of facilities in the county for detention of Negroes is the expense connected, and this system could be set up with much less expense than a large institution.

If it is impossible to get appropriations for any type of home then the last resort should be to insist that the parents, whose homes are not best for the children, send them to the rural or perhaps a smaller town where there are not so many inducements to lead a boy astray. This brings up the old problem of needing sufficient help to see that the families follow the instructions. If the probation officer fails to follow up, the instructions will mean very little.

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<sup>6</sup> The 1935 Report of The Chief Probation Officer of Tulsa, Oklahoma, p. 2.

Another portion of the Tulsa program would be adopted. Tulsa is one of the few cities in the south with a Negro Probation Officer. There are many advantages in having an officer of the same race. It tends to detach the juvenile work from the regular court work which has some rather unpleasant associations connected with it for the parents of the children if not for the children. The Negro officer could more easily get voluntary cooperation from the school. There are many possibilities in this angle of the question. It is also to the probation officer's advantage to be of the same group in order to worship at the same church or churches thereby touching the child and his parents in another part of their life.

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Part III - Conclusion

Most of the remedies suggested rest upon the city and county. Some portion of the program can be carried out by Negro organizations. They have overlooked an opportunity to do a great piece of work for the youth - the hope of the race. Juvenile delinquency when allowed to run its course leads to adult delinquency. The citizens of Houston are paying unnecessary amounts for protection against criminals and will continue to pour needless amounts of money into this bottomless pit until they are willing to spend more money on prevention in the way of cooperating with the juvenile court department, the school system and the recreation commission for expanding their respective programs enabling them to guide the youth into the channels that will make them honorable, law-abiding, and useful citizens.

APPENDIX A

Juvenile Delinquents

- 1. Schedule No. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Live with \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Nature of Complaint which caused arrest \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Number in family \_\_\_\_\_ Number rooms in house \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Family income \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Home condition \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. School record \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Physical and mental condition \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Age when court record began \_\_\_\_\_ Age when sentenced \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. Court record \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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- 12. Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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## APPENDIX B

## JUVENILE COURT HARRIS COUNTY

Houston, Texas

January 21, 1936.

Mr. R. W. Hilliard,  
549 Conklin Place,  
Madison, Wisconsin.

Dear Sir:

Replying to your request of January 14th I wish to give you the following information:

The Harris County Juvenile Court committed thirty-five white boys to our Harris County Training School for Boys in 1935. This court committed three white boys to the State Training School at Gatesville, Texas. It committed twenty-four colored boys to the State Training School at Gatesville.

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The purpose of the Harris County School for Boys at Clear Lake, this county, is to give the training and development to those boys that they should have to develop into good citizens. The program is divided 50-50 between work on the farm and about the home, and work in the school-room. A strict program and routine is adhered to. Regular medical inspections under the supervision of our County Physician, and the facilities of our County Library, and the inspiration and encouragement of business men's clubs, and the various churches of the cities with their programs on Sundays all go to make the School what we feel is an excellent Home and School for these boys.

Trusting that this information is what you desire, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

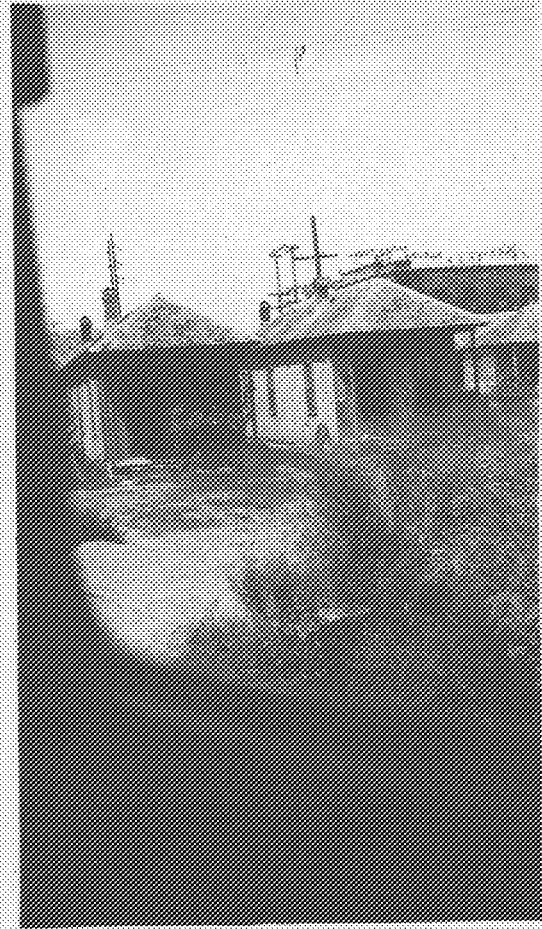
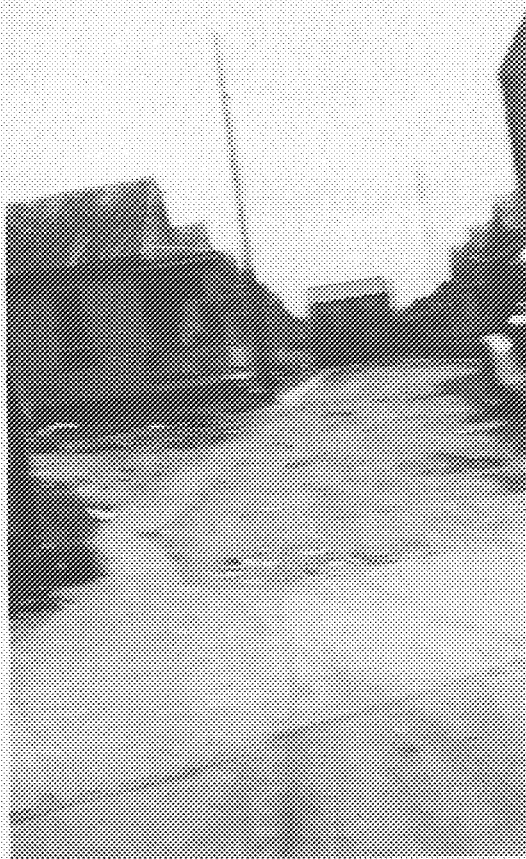
APPENDIX C

Some Of The More Common Types Of Homes Found In The Areas  
Where Most Of The Delinquents Came  
From



## APPENDIX C

Some Of The More Common Types Of Homes Found In The Areas  
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## APPENDIX D

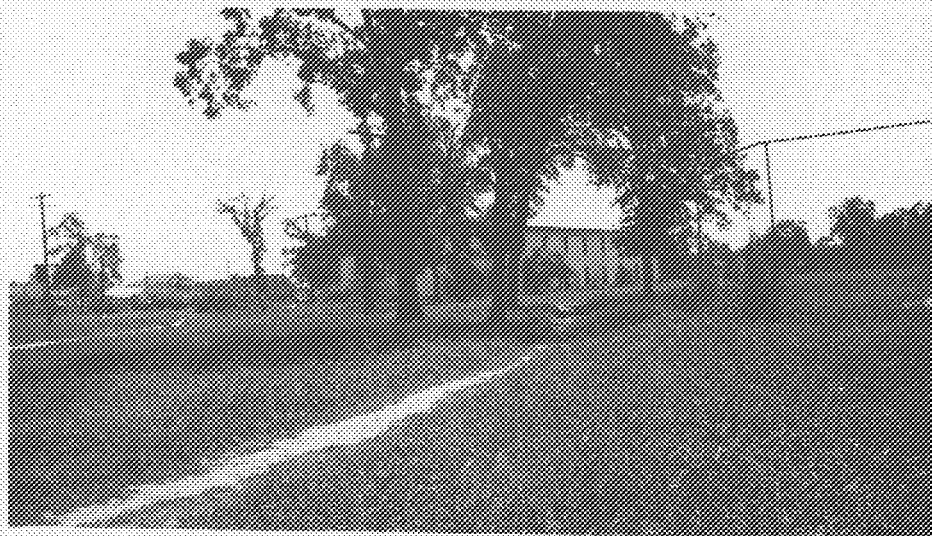
## A VIEW OF EMANCIPATION PLAYGROUND



(Note the absence of equipment)

## APPENDIX D

## A VIEW OF EMANCIPATION PLAYGROUND



(Note the absence of equipment)

## APPENDIX E

The Case Of Willie B. Jones

Willie B., age 15.

<u>Complaints:</u>	1. Forgery	7- 8 -29.
	2. Stole purse	7-28 -30.
	3. Prowling	8- 4 -30.
	4. Wont attend school	11- 7 -30.
	5. Theft and committed	6- 5 -31.
	Paroled to sister	7-22 -34.
	6. Arrested for theft	8-28 -34.

School Willie should attend Bruce Elementary School. He is in the fifth grade but has not attended school since his return from Gatesville Reformatory July 22, 1934.

Family Father and mother dead. Willie has two sisters and three brothers. Their records follow:

Frank, age 31 years. His sisters see him occasionally, however, they do not know his address. He has a long criminal record. The high points in this record are; he went to Gatesville Reformatory two times and later served seven years in the state penitentiary.

Louis, age 23. Louis has a long criminal record. He was committed and paroled three times as a juvenile offender. He recently got a five year sentence for burglary.

Bennie, age 20. He was brought into the juvenile court on a charge of truancy and begging in 1925. In 1927 he was tried for theft and was placed on probation. He was committed to Gatesville Reformatory again in 1930 for theft and was paroled in 1932. He has since served one year in the state penitentiary. He is now in jail with several charges of theft and burglary against him.

Both Sisters. Florence age 36 and Frankie age 26, both have been married but are now separated and have no means of support. The two have lived with several men since being divorced.

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Approved:

J. P. Sullivan

May 11, 1936