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Written Thoughts, WAPA 3: Aims and Policy

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WRITTEN THOUGHTS

WAPA 3

AIMS AND POLICY

BY

Dr. LUTHER H. GULICK

1. Army or Hospital?
2. Patriotism and the Camp Fire Girls.
3. Team Work in Social Life.



CAMP FIRE GIRLS

PRICE TEN CENTS

Camp Fire is an Army, not a Hospital.

By Dr. LUTHER H. GULICK.

The following statement of the Purpose and Policy of the Camp Fire Girls was adopted by the Board of Directors on February 11, 1915. It is a reaffirmation, in other words, of our fundamental belief in the family and the mother-daughter relation, which was stated at the initial meeting held at Teachers College, New York, in 1911, at the National Education Association in 1912 (Wapa No. 1), in each successive edition of the Manual, and in the Articles of Incorporation 1914:

An army is recruited and trained to "give service" to the nation. It is recruited from the best men available because such men are necessary. It is not recruited on the basis of doing good to the soldier, but on the basis of having the kind of soldiers and army who can do what needs to be done.

Military training is good for the health, but an army cannot be built out of invalids, selected because they need the outdoor life and exercise of a soldier.

A hospital is run to help the sick and injured. Those who are to go into its wards are selected because they need its services—medical, surgical or both.

Camp Fire Girls correspond to the army rather than to the hospital. The purpose of Camp Fire is to find the ablest girls and women and to give them a training in team work that will enable and incline them effectively to give woman's service to the community. Girls and Guardians do become improved by Camp Fire work just as the soldier is benefited by the army drill, but self-improvement is no more the object for the girls than it is for the soldier.

“To make the spirit of the home dominate the entire community”—this is the object. To attain this object we must secure the enlistment and services of the future leaders among women. We need to organize those who have loving parents who will cooperate and so perpetuate the “spiritual traditions of the home.” We cannot hope for success except through helping mothers and daughters to keep together.

With those who see in Camp Fire an instrument to help the poor and needy, we deeply sympathize and we shall help all that we can, but we must let nothing interfere with our primary purpose, which is to develop ideals, to train leaders, to create custom and fashion, habit and want. The bulk of our membership must be recruited from those who can be effective in these matters. As Camp Fire girls grow up into women, they will have the training, experience and affection to help organize and carry on all of the social relations of the community, including the care of those who primarily need help.

There are many institutions of the hospital type, devoted to the unfortunate, and few—if any—are working on this task to which we have devoted ourselves—that of building up an army of splendid women, trained in team work, devoted to the spiritual ideals of the home, and united in giving service to the community.

Patriotism and the Camp Fire Girls.

Presidential Address 1914.

Is there any particular service which girls and women as such can render to our Country at this time? I do not refer to those general services which are rendered by all who love and believe in their country, but

- (1) Are there any respects in which girls and women have shown superiority to the rest of us?
- (2) If so, is this matter in which they are superior something which is particularly needed by our country?
- (3) And if so, what steps should be taken to make this service effective?

It is my hope to indicate the answers to these three questions. _____

(1) About the word woman, certain ideals cluster which indicate the consensus of the world's accumulated experience as to woman's superiority, e. g., When one says Woman and stops to think, there come to mind such ideas as Home, Mother, Child, take care of, Love, Sympathy and Appreciation. Let me use the word *affections* to roughly summarize this field of woman's superiority as indicated by this association of ideas. This does not mean that every woman excells every man in this field. It does mean that in general women have more insight, appreciation and ability in this set of social relations than have men. This spirit we characterise as the Spirit of the Home. We think that the Spirit of the Home is based upon confidence, sympathy, affection and appreciation.

The first question may then be answered, yes. Woman has, in addition to those qualities which belong to her in common with humanity, general superiority in the field of *applied personal affection*.

(2) Is this "applied personal affection" something that is particularly needed by and in our country?

More and more human work, relationships and life are carried on in the community outside of the home—and in the main we have given but little thought to the effect of these activities outside of the home upon the worker. Our great factories, stores, railways and telephone systems are wonderful in their material product but they need to be re-thought through that they may be made to contribute also to the life of the worker. The girls in our stores and factories must not merely be protected from evil and exploitation by wise legislation vigorously enforced, but somehow the power of sympathy, appreciation, affection and wholesomeness must be brought to their lives in large measure. This cannot be in any degree accomplished by mere concentration upon the home. For these purposes the community is the unit, not the home.

The thing which our country needs more than it needs anything else is that the Spirit which has made life in the home wholesome and character creating, shall take hold of the factory and farm, the store and railroad, the office and street, the movie and dance hall and make them wholesome and character creating.

(3) Are there definite steps that can be taken to bring these things about, or are these aims merely vague, large, distant ends which we shall partly reach in some gradual way as the world goes along?

Here we are upon new ground. The Bridge Engineer can present plans by which a bridge can be built. Can the Social

Engineer state definite steps by which the affections may be developed in such a way as to pervade and dominate the community? The Camp Fire Girls is one such plan. Its primary purpose is to help bring this service to the community. Too often we think of it as an organization to do good to girls. It is true that the greatest of benefits come to those who serve others—still we cannot think of the mother giving herself to her children for the sake of the reflex benefits which will inevitably come to her own character. *Those Camp Fires whose primary aim is self benefit can never reach any of the higher results at which we aim.*

Camp Fire Girls exist primarily to serve the community—all of it—boys and girls, men and women, by means of that “applied personal affection” which is their field of chief superiority.

There have recently been held two “Guardian Weeks”—one at Ames, Iowa, the other at Thetford, Vt. The following is taken from the introduction to a report adopted at the Ames Conference prepared by a special committee, of which Miss Sadie Holiday was Chairman. It well expresses the conviction of both conferences:

“Inasmuch as women have ever taken the initiative in planning social life, we believe a larger responsibility is before women, groups of women, to utilize their social power and insight:

“By definite leadership see to it that all community social life for young people shall become more interesting, wholesome and varied in leisure-time activities.

“We believe that Camp Fire Guardians and Camp Fire Girls as leaders in a community may help to bring this about.”

Article II., Sections one and eight of our Constitution read as follows:

"Purpose

"Section 1. The purpose of this corporation shall be to perpetuate the spiritual ideals of the home under the new conditions of a Social community, through the organization of girls and women into units divided by age, into Camp Fires, and a Junior Organization.

"Section 8. The organization shall definitely undertake to improve the social life in the community of each of its constituent groups through the promotion of such community social activities as pageants, celebrations, social centers, organized vacations, and tramping, amateur drama and music."

By what steps do the Camp Fire Girls propose to help toward this result?

1. By organization. We realize that the day when each family can secure good water supply for itself has passed and that this is to be done by us all together. The same is true of social life whether carried on through schools, streets, libraries, movies, etc.

It is as necessary for us to organize,—make large plans and policies, administer strongly and consider finance as it is for an army to do so.

2. Having organized an army, we need a plan of campaign. The first step to bring about our social aims is to get people acquainted with each other under conditions that make for friendship; hence we propose to furnish wholesome things for young people to do together. Dancing as a well nigh exclusive social diet we regard as hopelessly inadequate. We undertake to help provide a rich social life—not merely for Camp Fire Girls, but Camp Fire Girls propose to make the

social life of their friends in and out of the home more rich, wholesome and happy—conducting hikes, giving parties, teaching boys how to cook, dance and sew, camping out, knowing nature, skating, swimming, sliding. These are the means through which personal friendships are established.

We believe that wholesome relations need to be fostered between boys and girls and that thus they need to do things together. We do not believe that fineness of living is to be accomplished by separation.

As women are the natural leaders of social life, so it is the place of girls and of women to take the leadership in the community as they have in the home in these affairs. The Camp Fire Girls should secure the co-operation of fathers and brothers as well as of mothers and sisters. In matters of organization, business and finance, the larger experience of men should be and is being drawn upon.

This is the Patriotism of the Camp Fire Girls:—To serve their country and their times by consecrating to it the most precious quality of womanhood; to bring about more sympathy and love in the world; to make daily living more wholesome and happy and large; to convert temptation toward evil, into opportunity for righteousness.

It is true that we glorify our flag; that we sing all the verses of *My Country 'tis of Thee*, that we unite in the celebration of all national holidays, but our main honors under patriotism are for community service.

Camp Fire Girls undertake in so far as they are able to act as Hostesses for their communities. The word Hostess

brings to mind not so much one who is correct in matters of social usage as a woman who understands, who has insight, sympathy and tact. She often enables people to do what they never knew they had it in them to do. She reveals people even more to themselves than she helps them reveal themselves to others. She draws out each one's abilities by her power of intelligent appreciation. To her the arts of entertaining are those which bring people together, which reveal people to each other, which develop the social nature. To amuse is not her object, but to so treat her guests that the best in each is developed and fed by the best in everyone else. This is social genius. Camp Fire Girls aim to discover, develop and use social genius just as previous generations have discovered and used scientific genius.

The challenge which these times and these needs give to women is—Can you, will you take the leadership in doing for the community what you have done for the home through powers of applied personal affection?

This is the supreme task which calls for your lives and hearts all and utterly—To serve God—to serve our country.

Into this work is being thrown an army of picked girls under the guidance of our ablest young women. As they grow in power of team work, preserving the devotion and vision of youth, gaining wisdom by experience, who shall say that they will not do for the affections as brilliantly as the previous generation has done for the industries. Both of these had their origin in the home, but have grown beyond its confines.

Food and shelter and clothing are not life, nor is the securing of them the purpose of life. To make social relations that shall produce splendid personalities is the supreme end toward which we struggle.

Team Work in Social Life.

An Address to the Girls of America.

By Dr. LUTHER H. GULICK.

The world that you face is a different world from the world that we, the previous generations, have faced. You have a new and splendid possibility which did not exist when we were young. This new thing—this new world that is open to you—is the possibility of making friendship, comradeship, happiness and romance the common possession of all, just as we have made shoes, clothing, watches, chairs, knives, windows and food for all; that is, you can do for the Spirit of man what we have done for material things. We have made what were once the proud possession of the favored few available for all. You will make those human relations of beauty and power and happiness that were the priceless achievement of the favored few available to all and actually achieved by the many.

Let me show what I mean, by some simple and homely illustrations:

We used to get the water for our daily needs from the spring, the stream or the well,—each family securing the supply for itself. In this way a few got very good water all the time. The day in which water can be secured in this way has almost passed. We want water on tap, we want the best of water, we want it for everybody and all the time. Springs dry up, streams get polluted, wells get infected. So we now organize and search the country, sometimes for scores of miles for a clean, adequate supply. We protect this source from all pollution and—in the case of many cities—

pipe this water in great conduits and deliver it into each home so that everybody has the best water in unlimited supply all the time. This represents a new ideal and attainment for humankind.

This has involved definite organization, plans, team work, continuous administration and financial co-operation.

A similar condition is upon us in connection with social life; the day when we can control the social relations of our children by confining our attentions to the home has forever passed. Our children establish their human relations in the school, on the street, on the playground, in the church, at the "movies," on the beach, at parties, on hikes, etc., etc. They drink the water of social companionship from many sources. Hence we must organize the spirit of the home, develop and promote it till it dominates the community. We must go to work in just as definite and systematic a way as we do in getting and administering our water supply. It is foolish to attack this matter merely as individuals—or as individual homes. Were we being invaded from the South there would be no general call asking each man to get a gun, go to the front and to fight as he thought best. We would fight as a disciplined organized army, with a plan, a policy, a strategy. This is the kind of policy that must be adopted to develop and extend the social spirit of the home. This is to be done only by using social genius through organization, just as we did by using engineering genius in getting water for the City of New York.

Can you develop the geniuses who will thus parallel in the social world what our inventors have done in the world of steam and electricity? Can you then create social self-supporting institutions that shall take these social inventions

and so put the power of organization, publicity and finance behind them that they shall be as widespread as the telephone, the "movies" or the telegraph? In other words, can you produce conditions that will bring forth the social expert and can you create the organization to use his genius?

This is the task before your generation. It was our task to organize the great world of industry—to tame the forces of nature—steam—electricity—water power—harness them in great machines and drive them to do the material work of the world. This we have done fairly well—much remains to do but even now we begin to hear of the trouble caused by "over-production." We have taken the work of the world from the human backs and have placed it upon machines. Slavery even in its figurative sense is fast going—but—we have not made friendship, comradeship, social life, romance, the common lot of all even though it is as necessary as are food, shelter and clothing. This was not our job. It was our task to take the industries that had started in the home and out of them create a new world of industry. *Your task is to take the affections which similarly have had their center in the home and so develop them that they shall make a new world of comradeship, of friendship.*

The coming generation has the material basis for this glorious new opportunity. Can you do for the affections as brilliantly as we have done for the industries? If you can, then it will be true that what there has been of love and beauty in life will prove to be but the promise of the time when human life—all of it, every where, shall flower and fruit as it has done hitherto only in rare and isolated cases. To make this true is the supreme task and hope of human-kind.

