

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

AN ADDRESS

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Delinquency and crime present a problem of tremendous national importance.

The widespread increase in crime noted during 1945 continued into 1946.

A 13 percent rise was recorded during the first six-months period according to the reports of 1997 cities representing over 88 percent of the nation's urban population.

Each category of crime increased, with the largest rise in murder and robbery, which jumped 28.5 percent and 31.8 percent, respectively.

The highest crime rates, generally speaking, are in the large cities for the more serious offenses, although smaller cities showed the sharpest increases in more categories than the larger communities, during the first six months of this year.

Compilation of figures by the FBI for the first nine months of 1946 show that age 21 again predominated in the frequency of both male and female arrests.

Among boys alone, the most pronounced increases, these figures for the last nine months show, were 21.5 percent in the 18 to 20 year old age group, and 69.7 percent in the 21 to 24 year old age group, over the same period in 1945.

Of some 500,000 fingerprint arrest records reviewed, the group of boys and girls under 21 years of age, accounted for 17 percent of the total.

The arrests of these young people represented 51.1 percent of all auto thefts; 42 percent of the burglaries; 25.8 percent of the rapes; and 28.4 percent of the robberies.

(OVER)

The only cheerful note in these compilations is the fact that female arrests for the first nine months of this year, compared with the first nine months of 1945, decreased 22.2 percent.

The decreases were sharpest in the age groups under 25 years.

However, the over-all juvenile crime picture, as you can see, continues a grave problem for us all.

These figures are mute evidence of the extent of this national calamity -- juvenile delinquency.

No single factor can be segregated affecting the amount of crime in a given community.

The population of the city, the composition of the population, the economic status and activities of the population, climate, educational, recreational and religious facilities, the number of police per unit of population, standards governing appointments to the police force, the policies of prosecuting officials and the courts, the attitude of the public toward law enforcement problems, the efficiency of local law enforcement agencies all enter into the criminality of a given community.

The amount of crime committed is not chargeable solely to the police but is, rather, a charge against the entire community.

The most important undertaking in the field of human endeavor is the organization of the forces of society against the forces of juvenile delinquency.

Society cannot exist except under law and order.

National progress is jeopardized when the stability of home life is daily threatened by the depredations of youthful offenders.

The problem challenges the courage and vision of every wise, patriotic citizen.

During the past year substantial achievement has been noted.

Substantial advances have been made in achieving greater interest and better understanding of this problem which so vitally affects the welfare of our nation.

The responsibility of every individual for the well-being of his neighbor never ceases.

No serious-minded person of experience insists that the responsibility of the community can be eliminated by passing this great task to the national government.

There must be complete cooperation and collaboration between the federal government and state, county and municipal governments, as well as private welfare organizations and public-spirited citizens.

There must be unity in the mobilization and development of community resources.

The primary responsibility for community needs rests in the individual community.

If the efforts of the community are insufficient, they must be supplemented to the full extent of the power of the government.

The greatest present need in meeting this problem rests in continued and consciously serious cooperation between all sub-divisions of the government.

Public protection against the juvenile delinquent demands prompt, intelligent and constructive treatment of the offender in all cases in all jurisdictions throughout the land.

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The laws of this nation are not self-enforcing. Just enforcement of the laws against crime is a necessary condition precedent to the elimination of crime.

The agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Justice Department, the agents of the investigating units of the Treasury Department, the Postal Inspectors and their co-workers in other branches of the government have made enviable records in their endeavors to stamp out criminality.

The efforts of these investigators have been ably supplemented by the states attorneys and their assistants and by the cities and towns, acting through their prosecuting officers.

The lawyer, committed to and acting in accordance with the high standard of his profession, is an important bulwark against increased crime.

The complete removal of political influences in the treatment of those guilty of offenses against the state is a must in crime prevention.

The elimination of politics within the police departments of every city and town in our country would add greatly to the ability of responsible public officials in their fight against crime.

Improvement of penal and correctional systems in all branches is the objective of all interested in the administration of justice.

Every aid to rehabilitation must be made available to offenders against society.

The cost of such aids, irrespective of amount, is insignificant when the ends sought to be achieved are considered.

Standards governing probation and parole officers must be maintained at the highest level.

A broad program of social betterment resulting in decrease of idleness and increase of recreational facilities for the youth of our country

can obtain the most far-reaching results.

Playgrounds, athletic fields, municipal swimming pools, gymnasiums and libraries all are designed to benefit youth and prevent crime.

The high incidence of crime, as evidenced by the statistics set forth in the semi-annual bulletin, 1946, of Uniform Crime Reports for the United States and its Possessions, issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, presents the question "Do the roots of delinquency and crime lie in adolescence?"

The answer is "no".

The individual in the period of adolescence is going through mental, moral and physical development.

He or she is under emotional disturbances due to immaturity which can readily produce delinquency.

Delinquency is but an expression of the emotional difficulties of which youth may or may not be conscious.

One principal cause of such emotional conflicts is found in improper home environment.

The absence of a parent from the home is not necessarily the cause of delinquent behaviorism.

A home wherein there is lack of affection between the parents results in an unhealthy attitude towards the children.

The child neglected, the physically or emotionally abused child, the child with an overdeveloped inferiority complex, is the child who most easily becomes delinquent.

The home is the basis of society, -- the home is the creator of moral behaviorism.

(OVER)

Grave responsibilities rest upon parents in the battle against delinquency.

The failure of the family to provide emotional stability for children makes for national insecurity.

The neighborhood environment is of importance in the attempt to stamp out delinquency.

Bad neighborhoods are the feeding ground of delinquents.

The "gang" develops in bad neighborhoods.

The gang may not be the cause of juvenile crime, but it is an important factor in the development of juvenile attitude and conduct.

It is to be remembered that the delinquent gang is composed of those who were delinquent before they joined the gang.

The gang has no place in a democracy.

The extermination of the gang is the primary responsibility of the community.

I would pause for a minute to comment upon the relationship between incipient insanity and juvenile delinquency.

Too often the juvenile is committed to mental institutions for purposes of observation.

The protection of society demands care against the harm caused by the mentally deficient.

This is equally true whether the potential harm-doer is adolescent or adult.

It is the task of the community to bring to bear on the major problems of youth all the wisdom and understanding gained from compilation of statistics and facts, institutions of common sense and professional skill.

Youth forms an integral part of our democracy.

Youth is dependent upon democracy and democracy is dependent upon it.

The health and education for the formation of mind and character must be provided in a manner harmonious with the training necessary for future democratic leadership.

Democracy is not only interested in sound leadership.

Democracy must prepare the youth of America for the discharge of the duties of citizenship.

There must be inculcated into the minds and hearts of the youth of America the desire for living in accordance with those ideals which have made America great.

Every community must be concerned about the children of the unemployed.

Every community must be concerned about the children who lack adequate shelter, food or clothing because of the inability of their parents to meet the present-day high cost of living.

Migratory families, with no settled place of residence or normal relationships, are community responsibility.

The children of minority groups subjected to discrimination and prejudice must be aided by the communities in which they live if we are to prevent racial and religious differences from accentuating the problem.

Children must have adequate medical service and attention and must be able to attend schools properly equipped for their needs.

This is community responsibility.

Children must be given every opportunity to obtain the inestimable benefits of religious influences.

Children must be given the right to live in a manner which will afford them throughout their lives security and happiness.

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The local community, your community, not Washington, is the focal point for the provision of every undertaking which will assure the promotion of the health, education and well-being of the youth of America.

America emerged from World War II with the greatest material power of any nation in the world.

Today, we are engaged in a struggle to awaken the peoples of the world to the necessity of higher cultural and spiritual, as well as material, standards of living if we are to obtain permanent peace.

America will not fail in the achievement of the ideals which made us victorious in war as long as our citizens and their children respect and obey the laws of the land.

Moral and spiritual decadence can destroy our nation.

The defeat of crime and corruption calls for the exercise of wisdom and restraint.

I have recently requested the sportswriters of America to assist me in the attack the Office of the Attorney General is making upon juvenile delinquency.

I have received unqualified support from this body of men who play such an important role in the formation of the character of the youth of America in the field of sports.

They are all in accord that the communities must provide healthy outlets for emotional tendencies.

Playgrounds, advantageously located in sufficient number, are a prime consideration.

Such playgrounds should be expansive and commodious.

Swimming pools, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, football fields, facilities for basketball -- all these and more should be made available for

the youthful residents of a given locality.

Club houses and social settlements should be established in communities.

This program should provide a choice of activities wherein youth of all temperaments would find an outlet for healthy American energies.

I believe it is safe to say that every veteran hoped for an America which would provide his children with these opportunities so necessary for good citizenship.

The responsibility is upon the community to see that these hopes and aspirations of the veterans are fulfilled.

There are other problems confronting every city and town in this nation.

Taxation and revenue, public utilities, post-war programs, pension and retirement plans, labor relations and housing -- all occupy position of importance in the deliberations of public officials.

All these problems can and will be solved but the basis of their solution, as in the problem of juvenile delinquency, rests upon cooperation and more cooperation between all subdivisions of the federal, state and city governments.

The federal government cannot encroach upon the state responsibility.

The federal government, however, is ready and willing at all times, in accordance with the law, to render such assistance as the individual state may deem necessary or desirable.