

Frank Jacob

**Ernst Papanek and Jewish Refugee Children**

# **Genocide and Mass Violence in the Age of Extremes**



Edited by Frank Jacob

## **Volume 4**

Frank Jacob

# **Ernst Papanek and Jewish Refugee Children**



Genocide and Displacement

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I wonder why I deal with it so many years later – the children have all been dead for so long, and actually I should have come to terms with it a long time ago. But that is precisely what is impossible for me: I do not want to come to terms with it, I have to – yes, I am obliged – to continue to remember them. Every gesture, every prank, every nickname, every letter, every photo: all the snippets that flutter into my memory like moths around the light. Some get grounding and take root in my writings – they may grow and bloom elsewhere.

Hanna Papanek



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Last but not least, this book is dedicated to my wife and daughter, who always support my work in all their capacity and with all their love.



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## **Part I: The Man and the Context**



# 1 Introduction

According to his wife Helene, Ernst Papanek (1900–1973) felt pressure to save the world: “He had an exaggerated sense of social justice.”<sup>1</sup> The Austrian socialist and pedagogue would have a positive impact on many children during his life, and he intended not only to save them from any harm but to present them with a chance for a better future. Well-known African American author Claude Brown (1937–2002), who met the Austrian educator at the Wiltwyck School for Boys, later said about the latter: “Ernst was the kind of person who woke up every morning wondering how to serve humanity today. And he mostly found something because the world was always in dire straits.”<sup>2</sup> Gustav (later Gus) Papanek and his wife Hanna (born Kaiser) similarly emphasized the role their father-in-law had played in their lives and in those of many others when they tried to reflect upon his years of work: “It was extraordinary how eagerly Ernst Papanek combined his profession as a teacher and his vocation as a democratic socialist: For him, education and politics flowed seamlessly into one another. He saw his educational work with young people in socialist organizations as an extension of his political conviction that it is possible to transform the world through enlightenment and democracy.”<sup>3</sup>

When one considers the many things Papanek achieved during his life and the many lives he positively influenced, it is surprising how little has been written about this Jewish socialist and “passionate educator.”<sup>4</sup> The archival collections, containing his letters and works, are located in the New York Public Library and the International Institute of Social History – not an unusual situation, considering that Papanek’s life was particularly impacted by his European exile from 1934 and his forced move to the United States in 1940.<sup>5</sup> Interest in his life and work was nevertheless rather marginal for a long time, although a number of studies have

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1 Helene Papanek, Autobiographical Fragment, New York, 1979, Ernst Papanek Papers, International Institute of Social History (henceforth EPP, IISH), E-29, cited in Lilly Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder! Ernst Papanek: Revolutionär, Reformpädagoge und Retter jüdischer Kinder* (Wien: Molden, 2021), 24.

2 Cited in *ibid.*

3 Hanna and Gustav Papanek, “Vorwort,” in *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit*, eds. Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 7.

4 Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 3.

5 The texts presented in part II of this book are taken from Ernst Papanek Papers, New York Public Library, Manuscript and Archives Division (henceforth EPP, NYPL).

begun to look more closely at Papanek and his achievements since the early 2000s.<sup>6</sup> Some of his writings have also been published in German, and Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek, and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi, who edited the collection, hoped that access to some of his works would reopen the discussion and acknowledge Papanek's pedagogical views and progressive ideas in particular,<sup>7</sup> especially since, as Austrian historian Wolfgang Neugebauer confirms, "Ernst Papanek was one of the most prominent figures in the social democratic youth and education movement of the [Austrian] First Republic."<sup>8</sup> As an important figure within the Austrian Social Democratic Party, before and during its exile, Papanek was responsible for its youth organizations, even when the latter turned into the illegal Revolutionary Socialist Youth (Revolutionäre Sozialistischen Jugend, RSJ).<sup>9</sup>

In the summer of 1938, while on his way to New York, Papanek decided to stay in France, where he acted as director of several children's homes for the Children's Aid Society (Œuvre de secours aux enfants, OSE).<sup>10</sup> Papanek was "an

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**6** Inge Hansen-Schaberg, "Die Wiener Schulreform und ihre pädagogische Umsetzung durch Ernst Papanek in den OSE-Kinderheimen in Frankreich," *Mitteilungen & Materialien* 53 (2000): 88–99; Klaudia Caroline Göbetzberger, "Dr. Ernst Papanek: Widerstand im Dritten Reich. Leben, Werk und Exil eines österreichischen Sozialdemokraten" (PhD Thesis, University of Vienna, 2005); Helga Krohn, "Erziehung durch Vertrauen und Verantwortung: Ernst Papanek (1900–1973)," in *Jüdische Wohlfahrt im Spiegel von Biographien*, ed. Sabine Hering (Frankfurt am Main: Fachhochschulverlag, 2006), 351–359; Inge Hansen-Schaberg, "'Sie waren unentbehrlich': Ernst Papanek und die Rettung traumatisierter Kinder," *Bildung und Erziehung* 62, no. 1 (2009): 105–122; Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi, eds. *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit* (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015); Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*.

**7** Inge Hansen-Schaberg, "Lebensgeschichtliche Hintergründe zur pädagogisch-politischen Arbeit Ernst Papaneks und Anmerkungen zu seinem Werk," in *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit*, eds. Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 29.

**8** Wolfgang Neugebauer, "Ernst Papanek: Sozialistischer Pädagoge und Politiker," *Der Sozialdemokratische Kämpfer* 3 (2015): 10.

**9** Inge Hansen-Schaberg, "Zwischenstationen – zur politischen und pädagogischen Arbeit Ernst Papaneks als Vorstufen des Exils," *Vorstufen des Exils / Early Stages of Exile*, ed. Reinhard Andress (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 95–106.

**10** Hanna Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen: Geschichte und Geschichten zu Ernst Papanek," in *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit*, eds. Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 179–180. On the history of the OSE, see Sabine Zeitoun, *Histoire de l'OSE: De la Russie tsariste à l'Occupation en France, 1912–1944* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2012). On the organization's children's homes, see Katy

optimist in every way”<sup>11</sup> and simply wanted to help those children who were displaced due to the rise of National Socialism and the genocidal policies they would soon begin to apply once they had positioned themselves in power in Germany, and later Austria as well as almost all the rest of Europe. The “charismatic Austrian” had quite an “adventurous life,” but regardless of his constant commitment to a better future for society’s weakest, soon after his death, he would solely rank as a “forgotten icon of Austrian pedagogy.”<sup>12</sup> Like the many children who suffered from forced displacement and did not survive the Holocaust, Papanek was simply forgotten, while he had remembered especially those whom he could not save from death.<sup>13</sup> This experience even destroyed his optimism, which for so long had characterized his way of living, teaching, and politically engaging for a humanist ideal: a peaceful and secure life, especially for the youngest members of society.

The children he could save from the National Socialist regime and from almost inevitable death in one of the destruction camps of the Holocaust resembled the greatest victory of humanity for Papanek, who in 1965 looked back on the times of war and displacement and wrote to “his” children: “Despite National Socialism and the cruel dictatorship, we never gave up believing in humanity. You were and you are the proof of this belief.”<sup>14</sup> Indeed, “[w]ithout Ernst, only a very few of us would have emotionally survived,” remembered Ernst Valfer, whom Lilly Maier, one of the world’s leading experts on Papanek, had interviewed for her book on the Austrian pedagogue and the children he had rescued.<sup>15</sup>

Papanek himself left a book in which he attempted to describe his life and his experiences with displaced children,<sup>16</sup> whose parents had sent them away so that they would escape from violence and death. Like his pedagogical publications, even though some of them were actually in German, his biographical work was relatively unsuccessful in the German-speaking world. At the same time, *Out of the Fire* (1975), which was only published after Papanek’s death

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Hazan with Serge Klarsfeld, *Le sauvetage des enfants juifs pendant l’Occupation, dans les maisons de l’OSE, 1938–1945* (Paris: Paris Somogy Ed. d’Art, 2008).

11 Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 180.

12 Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 12–13.

13 Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 177.

14 Cited in Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 13.

15 *Ibid.*, 110.

16 Ernst Papanek with Edward Linn, *Out of the Fire* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1975). The book was published by Europaverlag in German in 1981 under the title *Die Kinder von Montmorency*. The original manuscript parts, including various typescripts of versions dating back to 1946, can be found in EPP, IISH, A-1 and A-5.

and mostly finalized by ghostwriter Edward Linn, a sports journalist, was hardly close to the Austrian pedagogue's intentions for his book.<sup>17</sup> The result was a work "worth reading, but rather fiction book"<sup>18</sup> that would attract a general American audience. When the German work was cut further when a translation was published in 1980 and again in 1983, the pedagogical aspects in particular seemed to be less and less interesting. As Inge Hansen-Schaberg, another Papanek expert, argues, "[t]he entire scientific work of Ernst Papanek is characterized by a specific approach: It is a theoretical processing of the experiences gained in educational and therapeutic practice."<sup>19</sup> However, "[a]s a youth leader, educator, therapist and educational scientist, he achieved extraordinary results,"<sup>20</sup> but his achievements faded away on both sides on the Atlantic, and his pedagogical work as well as his commitment to saving children are hardly remembered today. This is most unfortunate, as Papanek was a progressive pedagogue of the 20th century, who well understood what children who had become victims of violence and displacement needed and whose works remain valuable today, especially for those who intend to help children and youth whose lives have been destroyed by genocide and war. Papanek's experience with forcefully displaced Jewish children between 1939 and 1940 is important knowledge that can also be used today when approaching situations that, with regard to their severity and negative impact for children and youth, have hardly changed in the last seven decades.

The present book, which contains some of Papanek's English texts from the Manuscript and Archives Division of the New York Public Library, intends to increase interest in this important progressive pedagogue again. The provided material will not only be interesting for scholars who study genocide and displacement and its impact on children, especially Jewish children during the Holocaust, but also for educators and those who currently work with children and youth who have suffered from similar loss and displacement. After a short reflection on the interrelationship of war and displacement with regard to the lives of children and youth, the present book offers a short introduction to the life and work of Ernst Papanek. The second part then provides some texts that

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**17** For the problems related to this source, see Hansen-Schaberg, "Lebensgeschichtliche Hintergründe," 24–26; Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 250–252.

**18** Hansen-Schaberg, "Lebensgeschichtliche Hintergründe," 25.

**19** *Ibid.*, 13. For a discussion of his scientific works, see *ibid.*, 22–24. For some of his texts that have been published in an edited form in German, see Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi, eds. *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit* (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 41–171.

**20** Neugebauer, "Ernst Papanek," 10.

are understood to be essential for an understanding of Papanek, his work, and the fate of the children he worked with on both sides of the Atlantic. Some of these texts could have been written in our time, as the problems described – in particular those that children face in times of war and destruction – have never really changed.

## 2 War and Displacement: Children as Victims of Mass Violence and Armed Conflict

“In history,” as German historian Karl Heinz Metz remarked, “there is always violence – and always the pursuit of peace.”<sup>21</sup> The latter has never been reached in a universal or ideal form, however, since war seems to be the common determinant of human interrelationships, as collective violence against other fellow humans was and still is the center of or base for many aspects of our lives. According to Metz,

[f]rom violence all religion and all politics emerge: religion as an attempt to provide a symbolic answer to the question of why people cannot get rid of violence, politics as an attempt to come to terms with violence in practice through a rule that can tame it. And yet violence never disappears, neither in the state, which is unable to secure internal peace without threats and violence, and which uses violence externally, like war, often excessively, nor in religion, which also becomes violent against heretics and pagans as soon as it prepares to order society according to its values.<sup>22</sup>

The German historian also emphasizes that, considering its position with regard to social norms, violence is nothing moral or immoral per se, but societies tend to organize violence to use it for specific purposes, e.g. the creation of control, power, and dominance. War as such is probably the most violent form of collective human action, as it is “collective action of the living, the purpose of which is to make the living dead. It is the most intense form of such action among people, because it is under the sign of death, which can only be averted by standing together unconditionally. Military violence is socially exercised, socially legitimized violence.”<sup>23</sup> Our use of violence and cruelty is often justified – by a religious, political, or moral cause – while the use of violence against us is considered criminal and unjust.<sup>24</sup> Since world history is first and foremost the history of war,<sup>25</sup> these moral evaluations of violence and war are not uncommon, and people often demand legitimization for killing each other. The destructive impact of war and collective violence in its different contexts, however, does not end with the peace treaties, which only seem to

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<sup>21</sup> Karl Heinz Metz, *Geschichte der Gewalt: Krieg – Revolution – Terror* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2010), 7.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

<sup>24</sup> John Keegan, *Die Kultur des Krieges* (Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 1995), 30.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 545.

interrupt a history of destruction, because the long-term impact of wars goes far beyond the actual violent conflicts themselves.

Human displacement, on a global scale, is a byproduct of any war.<sup>26</sup> The Arab Spring(s) in general and the Syrian Civil War in particular have made quite an impact, especially in Europe.<sup>27</sup> Michael G. Wessells, Professor of Clinical Population and Family Health at Columbia University, sums up the consequences as follows: “The resulting flood of refugees into Europe and other developed areas has created a humanitarian crisis, sparked political conflict, and enabled the rise of right-wing politicians who stand on platforms of fear and xenophobia, including in North America and the European Union.”<sup>28</sup> And although the people who were forced to leave their homes might have escaped from violence, “[t]here is an obvious humanitarian need for physical necessities, education and health care; however, the disruptions of displacement and migration, and the demands of adaptation to new environments that these entail, also require public health approaches encompassing a wide range of needs.”<sup>29</sup> Particularly affected are children, who not only suffer from the actual experiences of loss, forced migration, and violence but whose war-related trauma has the potential to damage their physical and psychological well-being for the rest of their lives.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the war-torn space they escaped from, the new and different context of their lives “may present new risks for children, both physically and emotionally.”<sup>31</sup>

Australian medical historian John Pearn summed up the war-related experiences of children and the long-term impacts quite well when he wrote that

Children are killed in war by the direct effects of blast, bomb and missile and are injured by burns, gas and rubber bullets. Large numbers die from exposure, disease and starvation. War is one type of catastrophic disaster that ranks, from the perspective of the child, with other disasters, such as earthquake, famine, cyclone and epidemic pestilence. All

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**26** Michael G. Wessells, “Children and Armed Conflict: Introduction and Overview,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 22, no. 3 (2016): 198.

**27** Cenap Çakmak and Ali Onur Özcelik, eds. *The World Community and the Arab Spring* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Joel Peters, ed. *The European Union and the Arab Spring: Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in the Middle East* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012).

**28** Wessells, “Children and Armed Conflict,” 198.

**29** Rachel Calam, “Public Health Implications and Risks for Children and Families Resettled after Exposure to Armed Conflict and Displacement,” *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health* 45, no. 3 (2017): 209. For a more detailed discussion see the contributions in Lucia de Haene and Cécile Rousseau, eds. *Working with Refugee Families: Trauma and Exile in Family Relationships* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

**30** Calam, “Public Health Implications,” 210.

**31** *Ibid.*

who have cared for war-enmeshed children, in a professional clinical sense, know how resilient children are. Infants and very young children have the highest mortality, but the ability to forage makes older children sometimes more resilient than adults, for such is the nature of the young of any species.<sup>32</sup>

In short, children often experience war differently, but with regard to its destructive results, they are less likely to survive when they have to face its destruction and different impacts that interrupt their peacetime existence. At the same time, their lives can be destroyed even if they survive: “A proportion of those who survive with life and limb intact inevitably carry the scars of war, of natural disaster, or of refugee existence into their lives and sometimes to the next generation. The few studies of children in the aftermath of war and other catastrophic disasters have documented fear-conditioned responses to the experience of early violence.”<sup>33</sup>

Since wars were never clearly separated from civilians’ lives, it is hardly surprising that children have been drawn into the conflicts for centuries, although the intensity of wars and the violence related to them might have impacted young girls and boys even more in the last two centuries.<sup>34</sup> The children were, however, not only the victims of war, they were also part of those events in many ways, ranging from participants to survivors or even veterans, if they were forced to fight,<sup>35</sup> be it because they were drawn into the war by ideology or simply due to the necessity to survive somehow.<sup>36</sup> Regardless of their specific experiences or roles, children probably struggle to actually understand what is happening around them, and for us, as American historian James Marten remarked, “[c]ataloguing the perils of being a child in this war-torn world hardly explains the meaning of conflict in their lives or the meanings they take from

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<sup>32</sup> John Pearn, “Children and War,” *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health* 39 (2003): 167.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 168. These fear-conditioned responses “include regressive or aggressive behaviour, another long-term legacy of early exposure to the violence of armed conflict. Most adults have had the experience of an unaccustomed food-smell or plant-odour giving one an instant flashback to one’s youth. Normally these are pleasurable instant recollections – survivors in the human rhinencephalon of the highly developed ‘smell-memories’ of lower animals. Children who have survived war also experience these – but the triggers are the smell of burning, of bloody wounds and of high explosives.” *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> James Marten, “Introduction,” in *Children and War: A Historical Anthology*, ed. James Marten (New York: NYU Press, 2002), 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ilene Cohn and Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *Child Soldiers: The Role of Children in Armed Conflict* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003).

<sup>36</sup> Marten, “Introduction,” 2–4. For a long-term analysis from the 17th to the 20th century, see the contributions in Dittmar Dahlmann, ed. *Kinder und Jugendliche in Krieg und Revolution: Vom Dreißigjährigen Krieg bis zu den Kindersoldaten Afrikas* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000).

war. At one level, it is presumptuous of adults, including scholars, to impose their own fears and assumptions on the children of war.”<sup>37</sup> How deep or intense the war experience of children is usually depends on the context, their proximity to the war zone, and the influence of national war propaganda, as children were often educated for violent conflicts in the future.<sup>38</sup> Considering the latter, it is true, as Marten further emphasized, that “[c]hildren are rarely left to interpret the causes and meanings and ramifications of wars completely on their own.”<sup>39</sup>

The level to which children get involved in actual wars can be quite different and usually depends on the respective context and the identity of the children and/or their parents.<sup>40</sup> The actual involvement in a war or armed conflict as well as its perception can be quite different, as scholar Mona Macksoud emphasized: “Some children bear arms and/or come under direct fire; some are kidnapped, tortured, brainwashed. As a result, some die or are physically handicapped for life; some children watch in horror as parents, brothers, sisters or friends fight, flee or die; other children see the conflicts only on the television screen.”<sup>41</sup> That children need special protection in times of war, especially to prevent them from suffering for their whole lives, seems to be quite obvious and hardly needs a debate from a moral point of view,<sup>42</sup> especially since children count for a large number of those who suffer from war itself and the forced migration it provokes.<sup>43</sup> The trauma related to such experiences can hardly be imagined without sharing such memories and, as Michael G. Wessells correctly remarks in this regard,

the full impact of war on children becomes apparent when one considers the enormity of the psychological harm caused to children, the shattering and toxification (rendering them sites of high, unrelieved levels of stress) of their social environments, the lack of access to basic necessities and security, and the loss of important sources of social support for their well-being. Without addressing these issues, large numbers of children

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**37** Marten, “Introduction,” 4.

**38** For a case study, see Sabine Frühstück, *Playing War: Children and the Paradoxes of Modern Militarism in Japan* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017).

**39** Marten, “Introduction,” 7.

**40** Mona Macksoud, “Children in War,” *World Health* 47, no. 2 (1994): 21.

**41** Ibid. See also Mona Macksoud, J. Lawrence Aber and Ilene Cohn, “Assessing the Impact of War on Children,” in *Minefields in Their Hearts: The Mental Health of Children in War and Communal Violence*, eds. Roberta J. Apfel and Bennett Simon (New Haven, CT/London: Yale University Press, 1996), 218–230.

**42** Mona Macksoud, *Helping Children Cope with the Stresses of War: A Manual for Parents and Teachers* (New York: UNICEF, 2000) provides an insight into trauma-related problems that need special treatment.

**43** Wessells, “Children and Armed Conflict,” 198.

will be forced to endure preventable suffering, children may be drawn into ongoing cycles of violence, and societies may compromise the development of one of their most precious resources – their children.<sup>44</sup>

War, without any doubt, has an impact on the body and the mind of a child who grows up with and survives a war experience, and studies showed this decades ago.<sup>45</sup> Although the negative consequences of a child's war experience could have been documented for those who survived the Second World War or the Yugoslavian Civil War, to name just two European examples here, American psychologist Emmy E. Werner argued in 2012 that "we have only limited data on the long-term consequences of differential timing of exposure to war. The evidence that exists suggests that younger children may exhibit more acute symptoms of distress in response to separation from their caregivers; older children may be more traumatized because of their higher exposure to violence and their greater awareness of the negative consequences of armed conflict."<sup>46</sup> Existing studies have pointed to "a range of mental sequelae" that children who have had to live through war show afterward, including "elevated symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety disorders," and the former of the three "is characterized by the presence of three distinct, but co-occurring symptom clusters: reexperiencing symptoms describe spontaneous intrusions of traumatic memory in the form of images or nightmares; avoidance symptoms involve restricting thoughts and distancing oneself from reminders of the traumatic event; and hyperarousal symptoms include insomnia, irritability, impaired concentration, hypervigilance, and increased startle responses."<sup>47</sup> Many of these symptoms are associated with a trauma directly or indirectly related to the use of violence in the context of war, which is why it seems to be necessary to spend a moment on the theoretical contextualization of violence here before moving on to the specific context of the Second World War and Jewish children.

Sociologically, although the classic works in the field by Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Georg Simmel, and Max Weber leave the term quite contourless,<sup>48</sup> violence is considered to be a "constitutive problem of social order."<sup>49</sup> Violence

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44 Ibid.

45 Norman Garnezy, "Stressors of Childhood," in *Stress, Coping and Development in Children*, eds. Norman Garnezy and Michael Rutter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 43–84.

46 Emmy E. Werner, "Children and War: Risk, Resilience, and Recovery," *Development and Psychopathology* 24 (2012): 553.

47 Ibid.

48 Trutz von Trotha, "Zur Soziologie der Gewalt," in *Soziologie der Gewalt*, Special issue of *Kölnner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 37 (1997): 10–12.

49 Ibid., 10.

per se, i.e. the act of causing a “physical injury and especially killing other people,”<sup>50</sup> is usually not only a physical action but one that creates power that is demonstrated by the act of injuring or killing other people.<sup>51</sup> And here is one of the essential issues when children become victims of violence – they hardly understand this functionality and will probably only consider it a punishment, often for reasons unknown. While perpetrators and bystanders alike often blur the responsibility for the appliance of violence, the victims, and especially children who find themselves in this position, might develop a guilt complex due to which they identify themselves as responsible for the “punishment” they receive.

Considering the character of violence on the micro and macro level, as presented by German sociologist Peter Imbusch, there are plenty of cases in which children could suffer from it on both levels (Table 1).<sup>52</sup>

**Table 1:** Violence on the Micro and Macro Levels.

	<b>Micro Level</b>	<b>Macro Level</b>
Phenomenology	Isolated act of violence, punctual event, threat against or injury of an individual, e.g. robbery, rape, or vandalism	Collective organizational context, e.g. war, genocide, and other forms of mass destruction
Type of Violence	Individual, usually direct violence, physical or psychological, rather intentional	Collective or state violence, direct and structural, politically motivated, rather functional
Perpetrator	Individual or small group	Collective larger group or state organizations, armies, paramilitary groups
Victim	Single person, individuum without specific identity	Designated group, selected according to specific markers/ identity aspects (imagined or real)

Another German sociologist, namely Wolfgang Sofsky, remarked that violence as an event destroys time in the sense that human beings’ vulnerability forces them to increase the intensity and speed of violence.<sup>53</sup> At the same time, children are in

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>52</sup> Peter Imbusch, *Moderne und Gewalt: Zivilisationstheoretische Perspektiven auf das 20. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2005), 31–35.

<sup>53</sup> Wolfgang Sofsky, “Gewaltzeit,” *Soziologie der Gewalt*, Special issue of *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 37 (1997): 102–103.

a way forced to grow up, to be adults in times of conflict, when they are even forced to participate in its destruction, whether as victim or perpetrator. Sofsky added that “[a]lthough every form of violence has a constitutive time that determines its basic structure, the violence itself takes place in time, [and] the situations change and with them their time modes as well.”<sup>54</sup> This, especially for children, might mean that their identities rely on the internal dynamics of war, which can force them into different roles in different chronological contexts. The victim of forced migration might end up in a foreign army or in a resistance group and turn his own fate from that of someone being persecuted to a defender of moral values. Depending on the ideological grip of a regime, children might become perpetrators in the name of an ideology and thereby victims of the latter at the same time.<sup>55</sup> Their experience of violence is furthermore characterized by the places they are encountered. Acts of violence are always possible, although they are possible in different ways, which leaves quite a number of possibilities to characterize them. As harsh as the reality might be, there has also never been a fully non-violent society,<sup>56</sup> although we judge the level of advancement a society has reached by the security of its weakest, who are, first and foremost, children.

We can hardly deny that violence is an essential part of every society, even if some states managed to create an actual monopoly of violence, i.e. by restricting or prohibiting violence by non-state-sanctioned actors, a condition the state authority bases its organizational claim on.<sup>57</sup> It is thereby also evident that violence must be considered a “normative, moral, and ethical”<sup>58</sup> category for the union of people in modern societies. And it is the normative compass of these societies that define if violence and its use are considered just or cruel, as German scholar Michaela Christ emphasized: “Changing values and norms, but also changes in body images, have an impact on what is understood collectively and individually as violence. This becomes particularly evident when one regards violence as a form of social practice, i.e. examining in terms of specific practices how actors’ specific knowledge of their

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>55</sup> Raul Hilberg has analyzed the different roles, i.e. perpetrator, victim, and bystander, for the history of the Holocaust. Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933–1945* (New York: Aaron Asher Books, 1992).

<sup>56</sup> Michaela Christ, “Gewaltforschung: Ein Überblick,” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 67, 4 (2017): 9–10.

<sup>57</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, “Alte und neue Gewalt,” *Journal für Konflikt- und Gewaltforschung* 2 (2000): 28–42.

<sup>58</sup> Christ, “Gewaltforschung,” 11.

world is translated into practice and how this knowledge is created.”<sup>59</sup> Johan Galtung went even further when he claimed that structural social inequalities could act as triggers for the genesis of physical violence<sup>60</sup> but was criticized for his concept, which was considered as too vague and too imprecise. As we will see later in the case of the Jewish and non-Jewish children of socialist politicians and activists who were rescued by Ernst Papanek and his supporters, the social identity of the former, in that they were born into the working class and the anti-fascist movement, played a role in their suffering from violence, but this was just one of the categories that established their victimology. The use of force against Jews in Germany or the occupied territories in later years was acceptable for the perpetrators, as it was part of a symbolic form of violence<sup>61</sup> that had been preached and experienced in Nazi Germany since the days of the Weimar Republic.<sup>62</sup>

While violence was reduced in the Western hemisphere after 1945 and during the Cold War, where the state enforced its grip on the monopoly of violence to contain unwanted outbreaks and violent acts by its people,<sup>63</sup> the superpower conflict hardly remained “cold” in other parts of the world,<sup>64</sup> where children in particular were victims of 20th-century great power politics again.<sup>65</sup> That the

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59 Ibid., 12.

60 Johan Galtung, “Gewalt, Frieden und Friedensforschung,” in *Kritische Friedensforschung*, ed. Dieter Senghaas (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), 55–104. On its critical perception, see Christ, “Gewaltforschung,” 14. See also Michael Rieckenberg, “Auf dem Holzweg? Über Johan Galtungs Begriff der ‘strukturellen Gewalt,’” *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 5 (2008): 172–177.

61 Stephan Moebius and Angelika Wetterer, “Symbolische Gewalt,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 4 (2011): 1–10.

62 Frank Jacob, “The Semiotic Construction of Judeo-Bolshevism in Germany, 1918–1933,” in *War and Semiotics: Signs, Communication Systems, and the Preparation, Legitimization, and Commemoration of Collective Mass Violence*, ed. Frank Jacob (London: Routledge, 2020), 106–127. For a specific case study emphasizing the antisemitic continuities from the revolution in 1918/19 to the National Socialist regime, see Frank Jacob, “Der Kampf um das Erbe der Revolution: Die Darstellung Kurt Eisners in den Printmedien der Weimarer Republik,” *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 29 (2020): 325–346.

63 Stefan Kühl, “Gewaltmassen: Zum Zusammenhang von Gruppen, Menschenmassen und Gewalt,” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 67, no. 4 (2017): 22.

64 Immanuel Wallerstein, “What Cold War in Asia? An Interpretative Essay,” in *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, eds. Hong Liu, Michael Szonyi and Yangweng Zhen (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010), 15–24. See also Frank Jacob, ed. *Peripheries of the Cold War* (Würzburg: K&N, 2015).

65 Ann Marie Kordas, *The Politics of Childhood in Cold War America* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013); Margaret Peacock, *Innocent Weapons: The Soviet and American Politics of Childhood in the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

great powers also intended to keep or extend their standing in the international order consequently and almost naturally led to new conflicts in all parts of the world.<sup>66</sup> It is obvious that these conflicts caused pain and suffering for countless children, and the many traumata created in the 20th century continue to haunt those who survived the cruelties of war. But one has to confront the issue and include the children's perspective on their own traumata if support should be provided in a meaningful way.<sup>67</sup> It is important to really understand the children's situation in and after armed conflicts and wars, as the 21st century is no more peaceful than the 19th and 20th centuries. German sociologist Birgitta Nedelmann proposed a typology for a sociology of violence,<sup>68</sup> which is based on five points, namely 1) the determination of a conceptual frame of reference, including actors, significance, situation in which action takes place, forms of violence, consequences; 2) the conceptual limitation to consider bodily harm; 3) the analysis of reciprocal processes of meaning; 4) the application of a plurality of methods; and 5) the development of a theory of the constitution of social subjectivity. If this is used for the study of children and the forms of violence they are confronted with in wars and armed conflicts, a better understanding of their experiences and traumata might be possible.

Next to the methodological approach, as the German and American scholars Mischa Honeck and James Marten emphasized, “[w]riting a history of war and childhood in the first half of the twentieth century thus means coming to grips with a fundamental paradox: How was it possible for modern societies to imagine childhood as a space of sheltered existence while at the same time accepting the need to mobilize children for war?”<sup>69</sup> They argue that children's encounters with war and violence are not modern at all, since young girls and boys have been drawn into conflicts since human beings have existed, however “the scope of their engagement soared with the scale of the global conflicts that dominated the first half of the twentieth century. The period from 1914 to 1945 . . . witnessed dramatic and mutually reinforcing transformations in the histories of war and childhood. Both were shaped by converging forces, including

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**66** Jost Dülffer, *Im Zeichen der Gewalt: Frieden und Krieg im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Cologne/Vienna: Böhlau, 2003), 53.

**67** Wessells, “Children and Armed Conflict,” 199.

**68** Birgitta Nedelmann, “Gewaltsoziologie am Scheideweg: Die Auseinandersetzung in der gegenwärtigen und Wege der künftigen Gewaltforschung,” in *Soziologie der Gewalt*, Special issue of *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 37 (1997): 72–83.

**69** Mischa Honeck and James Marten, “More than Victims: Framing the History of Modern Childhood and War,” in *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars*, eds. Mischa Honeck, and James Marten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 3.

nationalism, imperialism, capitalism, social Darwinism, and the global competition for resources and influence.”<sup>70</sup> Of course, one has to be careful not to generalize, as “[t]he engagement of children and youth with war differed according to geography, technology, class, age, race, gender, and the nature of the state in which they lived,”<sup>71</sup> but considering this, it can be said without any doubt that the globalizing phenomenon of the economic penetration of unknown regions of the world has intensified the danger of children and youth being confronted with violence. In addition, the technological advances of humanity with regard to the intention to kill has increased the threat to their lives, as in the 20th century, it was said that “[m]any children are killed by bombs and bullets, others are mutilated by landmines, and many more die as a result of the destruction of health centres, water supplies and the tearing apart of families and communities, with untold psychological effects for generations.”<sup>72</sup>

Even if children survive all that, there is still much to learn about the psychological stress they are suffering from, as their healthy “psycho-social development”<sup>73</sup> often becomes impossible, and even if children, like the ones Papanek was able to save from the horrors of Europe during the Second World War, continue to live and have their own careers, they will always be haunted, more or less obviously, by their experiences with violence. While the present book focuses on Ernst Papanek and his work with Jewish refugee children, this only presents one specific case in the terrible history of violence against children and youth during the Second World War.<sup>74</sup>

Their experiences were very diverse, but Berry Mayall and Virginia Morrow argued that “[a]s regards children’s experiences during the war, the principal memory in the public mind nowadays is of evacuation.”<sup>75</sup> Early on, studies discussed

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>72</sup> Lynn Barnett, “Children and War,” *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 15, no. 4 (1999): 316.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 317.

<sup>74</sup> See, among other works, Swetlana Alexijewitsch, *Die letzten Zeugen: Kinder im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, transl. by Ganna-Maria Braungardt (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016); Margarete Dörr, “*Der Krieg hat uns geprägt*”: *Wie Kinder den Zweiten Weltkrieg erlebten*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007); Dieter Nelles, Armin Nolzen and Heinz Sünker, “‘Kinder des Widerstands’ und Politik nach 1945: Die Kinder kommunistischer Widerstandskämpfer gegen das NS-Regime und deren Verhältnis zur Politik nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg,” *Bios: Zeitschrift für Biographieforschung, Oral History und Lebensverlaufsanalysen* 21, no. 2 (2008): 205–222.

<sup>75</sup> Berry Mayall and Virginia Morrow, *You Can Help Your Country: English Children’s Work during the Second World War* (London: UCL Press, 2020), 72. On the *Kindertransporte* to France and Great Britain, see Claudia Curio, *Verfolgung, Flucht, Rettung die Kindertransporte 1938/39 nach Großbritannien* (Berlin: Metropol, 2006); Gerda Hofreiter, *Allein in die Fremde: Kindertransporte von*

evacuation as one of “children’s central and traumatic experiences during the war.”<sup>76</sup> The experiences of Jewish children were far more diverse because, “just as their parents, [they] were victims of discrimination, ghettoization, deportation, and mass murder.”<sup>77</sup> These experiences must not be considered “a subset of the adult population,” although the “children’s experiences are often cast across the arc of the adult narrative.”<sup>78</sup> It is therefore important to take a closer look at children’s war experiences in detail, even if their stories are often reported by adults, as is the case with Papanek as well, as the Austrian pedagogue often wrote about “his” children and what they had to live through. In fact, as American Holocaust scholar Patricia Heberer Rice correctly remarked, “children and juveniles confronted and contended with the Nazis’ persecutory policies in markedly different ways. Their experiences were profoundly different from those of their adult contemporaries.”<sup>79</sup> However, these tended to be narrated by adults – whether parents or caretakers like Papanek – until some of the children had grown up and presented their own memories. In addition, the sources we have from children and youth related to the history of the Holocaust are mostly written by a specific age group that cannot always be considered as fully representative.<sup>80</sup> It is therefore not always easy to fully engage with the younger victims of the Holocaust, but numerous works have provided important insights into their history.<sup>81</sup>

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*Osterreich nach Frankreich, Grossbritannien und in die USA 1939–1941* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2010); Angelika Rieber and Till Liebertz-Groß, eds. *Rettet wenigstens die Kinder: Kindertransporte aus Frankfurt am Main – Lebenswege von geretteten Kindern* (Frankfurt am Main: Fachhochschulverlag, 2018).

**76** Mayall and Morrow, *You Can Help Your Country*, 72. For exemplary studies, see Richard Padley and Margaret Cole, eds. *Evacuation Survey: A Report to the Fabian Society* (London: Routledge, 1940); Susan Isaacs et al., eds. *The Cambridge Evacuation Survey: A Wartime Study in Social Welfare and Education* (London: Methuen, 1941).

**77** Patricia Heberer Rice, “In Their Own Words: Children in the World of the Holocaust,” in *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars*, eds. Mischa Honeck, and James Marten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 230.

**78** *Ibid.*

**79** *Ibid.*, 230–231.

**80** *Ibid.*, 232.

**81** Edgar Bamberger and Annegret Ehmann, eds. *Kinder und Jugendliche als Opfer des Holocaust: Dokumentation einer internationalen Tagung in der Gedenkstätte Haus der Wannseekonferenz, 12. bis 14. Dezember 1994* (Heidelberg: Dokumentationszentrum Deutscher Sinti und Roma in Zusammenarbeit mit der Gedenkstätte Haus der Wannseekonferenz, 1995); Patricia Heberer, *Children during the Holocaust* (Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press, 2015); Feliks Tych et al. *Kinder über den Holocaust, frühe Zeugnisse 1944–1948: Interviewprotokolle der Zentralen Jüdischen Historischen Kommission in Polen* (Berlin: Metropol, 2009).

Considering the sociological typology of violence that was discussed before, Jewish children possessed a special victimology because the National Socialist regime “especially targeted the children, who represented the future and the potential of Judaism. The Nazis considered the children special threats because unlike the middle-aged and the elderly, Jewish children had many years ahead of them in which to produce more offspring and renew the ethnic group, thus hindering the Nazi ‘Final Solution.’”<sup>82</sup> Elie Wiesel (1928–2016) remarked with regard to this that Jewish history “continues with Jewish children being massacred by Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar and Titus, Haman and Hitler – all our enemies saw our children as the primary target.”<sup>83</sup> During the Holocaust, the Nazis consequently, as Eric J. Sterling worded it, “by destroying Jewish children, . . . attempted to break a spiritual bond between Jews and God while devastating the parents psychologically.”<sup>84</sup> And the “free world” also did its part, or more accurately did not do its part to save as many children and adults as possible. Regardless of the unwillingness to provide asylum for those who were persecuted by the National Socialist regime,<sup>85</sup> which would later be criticized by Papanek as well, 10,000 Jewish children were brought to England from Germany and Austria between November 1938 and September 1939.<sup>86</sup> Some were also brought to France,<sup>87</sup> where they would find shelter in children’s homes, some of which were led by Papanek in Montmorency, a suburb of Paris. Before, they had “watched in horror as their parents were beaten up in the streets, harassed, murdered, or sent off to die in concentration camps”<sup>88</sup> while being ostracized by Germans and Austrians who claimed that Jewish women, men, and children could no longer be considered a part of their nation and country. The Aryan nation National Socialism sought to create would have no place for its Jewish people and their German heritage and rather intended either to force them out or to destroy them once and for all.

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**82** Eric J. Sterling, “Rescue and Trauma: Jewish Children and the Kindertransports during the Holocaust,” in *Children and War: A Historical Anthology*, ed. James Marten (New York: NYU Press, 2002), 63.

**83** Elie Wiesel, “Keynote Address, Plenary Session of the First International Conference of Children of Holocaust Survivors,” New York, May 28, 1984, cited in *ibid.*

**84** Sterling, “Rescue and Trauma,” 63.

**85** Eva Schöck-Quinteros, Matthias Loeber and Simon Rau, eds. *Keine Zuflucht, nirgends: Die Konferenz von Evian und die Fahrt der St. Louis (1938/39)* (Bremen: Institut für Geschichtswissenschaft, Universität Bremen, 2019).

**86** Sterling, “Rescue and Trauma,” 63–64.

**87** Hofreiter, *Allein in die Fremde*, 81–90.

**88** Sterling, “Rescue and Trauma,” 64.

When the latter asked for help, almost nobody responded to rescue them, and in one of the most shameful moments of silence in human history, the fate of millions was doomed by the unwillingness to stand up for the moral values that are supposed to be the basis for our modern societies. And even though 10,000 children were saved from death when they made it to England, while “many children attempted to preserve their Jewish and German heritage, some proved unable to do so because of their need to suppress the hardships they encountered in Germany and because of the favorable treatment they received from their English surrogate parents.”<sup>89</sup> Their identities could not be saved, and the children who eventually reached the United States, including the ones Papanek had taken care of for the OSE in France, would face similar issues when they were in a way forced to adapt to a new way of life with their American guest families, where their Jewish past and their experience of violence was supposed to simply disappear.<sup>90</sup> The Second World War had destroyed not only their homes and past but also their future, and of the 92,000 survivors who reached the United States, the children in particular needed psychiatric care.<sup>91</sup> Many of them who were “considered Jewish because of their ancestry lost rights as German citizens and were swept up in the Holocaust,”<sup>92</sup> and even if they survived the latter, it was impossible for them to mentally heal again after what had been seen, heard, and felt. Papanek realized early on that these children were special and needed special treatment and education, but his ideas were probably too progressive for his time, and the children from the OSE homes, like many others, ended up spread across a country that was supposed to be their new home after the war.

Of course, non-Jewish German children suffered from the war as well and shared some of the named experiences, especially after the Second World War, when destruction and loss were natural parts of their lives,<sup>93</sup> and after 1943, the Allied Powers “realized that displaced people would pose a formidable problem when the war ended.”<sup>94</sup> The United Nations Rehabilitation and Relief Administration and the International Refugee Organization were supposed to deal with these

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**89** Ibid., 65.

**90** On the American context of the history of Jewish refugee children, see Christine Hartig, “Grenzen ziehen durch professionelle Hilfe? Transnationale Flüchtlingsarbeit am Beispiel der Immigration unbegleiteter jüdischer Kinder in die USA 1934–1941,” *WerkstattGeschichte* 70 (2015): 7–23.

**91** Mary Engel, “Children and War,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 61, no. 3 (1984): 76.

**92** Ibid., 78.

**93** Michelle Mouton, “Missing, Lost, and Displaced Children in Postwar Germany: The Great Struggle to Provide for the War’s Youngest Victims,” *Central European History* 48, no. 1 (2015): 53–78.

**94** Mouton, “Missing, Lost, and Displaced Children in Postwar Germany,” 54.

issues, including providing care for children in the postwar world.<sup>95</sup> That the intention may have been good but that many issues particularly related to the lives of children and youth were not taken into sufficient consideration can also be shown with regard to the history of Ernst Papanek, who inspected European children's homes for the United Nations after the war as well.

In general, there is a lot to learn from Papanek's work, which the present book will present in part in relation to some of his texts from the 1930s and 1940s. They are of some actuality, especially when one considers that the world is facing similar problems today. Although the "[t]wo world wars plus the violence and hazards of the world since the 1970s have made empowerment of children an obvious challenge,"<sup>96</sup> they are still not protected in a sufficient way. Neither are their traumata addressed in a proper way, and too many children continue to be forgotten by the international community. In 2016, an estimated 65 million people – today there are more than 80 million – were forced to leave their homes, among them ca. 33 million children.<sup>97</sup> The 21st century is consequently not so very different from the previous one when one considers how wars and armed conflicts still affect children, especially since they remain targets in many conflicts and can hardly be categorized as bystanders.<sup>98</sup> Today, they are wounded in similar ways as in the wars of the last century as well, as Barry S. Levy and David Parker emphasized in 2000:

Children are used as civilian shields to protect military forces or as army pack animals. They are imprisoned. They are beaten, wounded, or raped. If fathered by enemy soldiers, they may be rejected by their own mothers. Children are forced to become soldiers, army slaves, or prostitutes under threat of violence or starvation. As soldiers, they are forced to kill people, even family members or friends. Those who survive war may be physically and psychologically maimed for the rest of their lives. As a result of war, children grow up

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**95** *Ibid.*, 55.

**96** Paula S. Fass, "A Historical Context for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 633 (2011): 26. Soon after the end of the Second World War, children were suffering again during the Korean War. "Children and War," *Social Service Review* 25, no. 1 (1951): 91–92. In the Western world, the traumata of many Asian children, who were victims of the Second World War and the related atrocities were often not fully recognized. For an exemplary study, see Margaret D. Stetz, "Reframing the 'Comfort Women' Issue: New Representations of an Old War Crime," in *Genocide and Mass Violence in Asia: An Introductory Reader*, ed. Frank Jacob (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 61–77.

**97** Dragica Mikavica and Chrissie Monaghan, "The Children and Armed Conflict Agenda and Forced Displacement," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 11, no. 3 (2016): 126.

**98** Graça Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* (New York, NY: United Nations, 1996), 2.

without families or homes, without communities or homelands, without a sense of their own or others' humanity.<sup>99</sup>

Children and youth will continue to suffer from growing up in war and from the related consequences<sup>100</sup> as long as the world community does not find proper ways to protect them, first and foremost by avoiding wars in general. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in a speech to the UN's Security Council, emphasized that "[t]he question of children and armed conflict is an integral part of the United Nations' core responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, for the advancement of human rights and for sustainable human development."<sup>101</sup> However, nothing much has changed in the last two decades, because it is still the case that "[a]rmed conflicts affect the development of children from before birth into young adulthood in a myriad of ways, the effects accumulating in interminable civil wars as children grow, and diverting them from normal life pathways in the culture and societies in which they live."<sup>102</sup>

Until children can really be protected from war and its consequences, as Kendra E. Dupuy and Krijn Peters highlighted in *War and Children*, they will

bear the brunt of the impact of armed conflict. War destroys the social and economic infrastructure and foundations of society needed for children to grow up into healthy and productive adults. The effects of war on young people are multiple and wide-ranging: they can be separated from their families and communities, they may become unable to access schooling and health services, and they suffer from trauma as the result of witnessing or sometimes participating in atrocities. The increased levels of poverty that are caused by war often entail that young people may be forced to assume new roles, such as income earners or household heads. This in turn has further consequences since children who need to work or take care of siblings lack the money or time to go to school.<sup>103</sup>

The lives and the future of our children are destroyed by wars, a truth Ernst Papanek already understood. He tried to take care of those who had suffered the most, in a time where hope was the only thing that remained. We can therefore learn a lot from Papanek and his work, as well as his writings. That it is important to consider them as valuable contributions to educational and

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**99** Barry S. Levy and David Parker, "Children and War," *Public Health Reports* 115, no. 4 (2000): 320.

**100** Kendra E. Dupuy and Krijn Peters, *War and Children: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 19–53.

**101** Secretary-General Kofi Annan in a speech to the Security Council, 26 July 2000 cited in Chaditsa Poulatova, *Children and Armed Conflict* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2012), 1.

**102** Poulatova, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 1.

**103** Dupuy and Krijn Peters, *War and Children*, 49.

pedagogical strategies to deal with children and youth who have suffered from war should not need any further explanation. When they return home from war, wounded in every sense, it is hard to integrate themselves into their respective communities again.<sup>104</sup> Papanek realized that when the first children arrived in his OSE children's homes, and due to his progressive pedagogy, the Austrian socialist understood what those children really needed. The following chapter will therefore take a closer look at the man and his work before his texts are presented in the second part of this book.

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**104** Margaret Angucia, "Children and War in Africa: The Crisis Continues in Northern Uganda," *International Journal on World Peace* 26, no. 3 (2009): 1.

### 3 On Ernst Papanek

The present chapter intends to provide a short introduction to the life and work of Ernst Papanek.<sup>105</sup> He was born on 20 August 1900 to Johann and Rosa Papanek. With his two sisters Margarethe and Olga, Ernst and his family lived in Vienna's 6th district – Gumpendorfer Straße 122 – until 1911, before they moved to the 15th district. The family was Jewish, but not Orthodox, and religious rules and traditions were not really held in high regard. While Johann worked as a traveling salesman, Rosa was a tailor's assistant, and the family was making a living as part of the petty bourgeois community of Austria's capital. Regardless of his parents' disinterest in religious things, for a short time in his life, Ernst was very interested in all aspects of Jewishness and intended to become a rabbi in the future. However, like many other men and women of his generation, Papanek instead ended up being attracted by the ideas of socialism, as it presented a chance for true freedom and equality.<sup>106</sup> It was therefore not surprising that the young man, who had supported the Austrian Emperor and the First world War at first,<sup>107</sup> joined the Free Association of Socialist Middle School Students (*Freie Vereinigung sozialistischer Mittelschüler*)<sup>108</sup> and became an active protester during the January Strike of 1918.<sup>109</sup> Papanek was arrested for the first

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**105** Unless indicated otherwise, this chapter follows the existent and more extensive outlines of Ernst Papanek's life and work in Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, and Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen."

**106** This decision was taken by many young Jewish women and men in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. See Alain Brossat and Sylvia Klingberg, *Revolutionary Yiddishland: A History of Jewish Radicalism*, transl. by David Fernbach (London/New York: Verso, 2016) and Frank Jacob and Sebastian Kunze, eds. *Jewish Radicalisms. Historical Perspectives on a Phenomenon of Global Modernity* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019).

**107** Even critical Social Democrats in Germany, to name just one example, supported the war at first as they considered it to be a defensive one against Russia. For a detailed analysis of the development of anti-war criticism within the German Left, see Frank Jacob and Riccardo Altieri, eds. *Krieg und Frieden im Spiegel des Sozialismus 1914–1918* (Berlin: Metropol, 2018).

**108** This early socialist middle school organization did not exist for long, but the Association of Socialist Middle School Students (*Vereinigung sozialistischer Mittelschüler*) was established in 1923/24, followed, in 1925, by the Union of Socialist Middle School Students in Austria (*Bund Sozialistischer Mittelschüler Österreichs*). "Verband sozialistischer Mittelschüler (VSM)," *Weblexikon der Wiener Sozialdemokratie*. Accessed July 15, 2021. <http://www.dasrotewien.at/seite/verband-sozialistischer-mittelschueler-vsm>.

**109** The *Jännerstreik* was a transnational event, as many German cities reported massive strikes as well. Chaja Boebel and Lothar Wentzel, eds. *Streiken gegen den Krieg: Die Bedeutung der Massenstreiks in der Metallindustrie vom Januar 1918* (Hamburg: VSA, 2008); Borislav Chernev, *Twilight of Empire: The Brest-Litovsk Conference and the Remaking of East-Central Europe*,

time due to his participation in an anti-war rally and for a second time in October 1918 when he handed out flyers on US President Wilson's 14 Points.

Regarding his own protest, Papanek was inspired by Fritz Adler (1879–1960), who had killed Austrian Prime Minister Karl von Stürgkh (1859–1916) to use a trial as a way to protest against the war.<sup>110</sup> When Papanek and other students resisted being drafted for the army in 1918, they also hoped for a chance to stand trial and to publicly protest against the continuation of the First World War. However, the war ended before the young men could stage their criticism in a courtroom. Once the war had ended, Papanek began to work as a social worker and educator, although he had no official record of education for such a profession. However, together with around 400 senior high school students (*Gymnasiasten*) and university students, he organized a group called Playmates (*Spielkameraden*) that took care of war orphans and provided access to a soup kitchen for them and secured shelter in children's homes for them as well.<sup>111</sup> On 8 July 1919, Papanek then finished his formal school education when he received his high school diploma (*Matura*). He then decided to study medicine and enrolled at the University of Vienna, where he would attend lectures in the fields of medicine, pediatrics, and psychiatry. While Papanek was enrolled for 12 semesters, in reality he was rather busy with his work for the Playmates, and, as family members reported later, the young man was more interested in saving the world than in finishing his university degree.<sup>112</sup>

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1917–1918 (Toronto/London: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 107–152; Christian Koller, *Streikkultur: Performanzen und Diskurse des Arbeitskampfes im schweizerisch-österreichischen Vergleich (1860–1950)* (Vienna/Münster: LIT, 2009), 289–315. On Austria's history in the revolutionary period at the end of the First World War see Hans Hautmann, "Österreich in der revolutionären Epoche 1917–1919," in *Zeiten des Aufbruchs (1916–1921): Globale Proteste, Streiks und Revolutionen gegen den Ersten Weltkrieg und seine Auswirkungen*, eds. Marcel Bois and Frank Jacob (Berlin: Metropol, 2020), 324–351.

**110** John Zimmermann, "'Aber das Nichtstun gegen den Krieg ist auch eine Verantwortung für vergossenes Blut': Friedrich Adler und sein Attentat auf den österreichischen Ministerpräsidenten Stürgkh 1916," in *Krieg und Frieden im Spiegel des Sozialismus 1914–1918*, eds. Frank Jacob and Riccardo Altieri (Berlin: Metropol, 2018), 285–307.

**111** The situation during and after the war stimulated a professionalization with regard to the care for children and other people in need. Susanne Birgit Mittermeier, "Die Jugendfürsorgerin: Zur Professionalisierung der sozialen Kinder- und Jugendarbeit in der Wiener städtischen Fürsorge von den Anfängen bis zur Konstituierung des Berufsbildes Ende der 1920er Jahre," *L'Homme: Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft* 5, no. 2 (1994): 102–120. For a broader discussion, see Verena Pawlowsky and Harald Wendelin, *Die Wunden des Staates: Kriegsoffer und Sozialstaat in Österreich 1914–1938* (Vienna/Cologne: Böhlau, 2015).

**112** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 24.

Due to this care work for and with children, however, Papanek soon got involved with other projects. Dr. Eugenie Schwarzwald (1872–1940),<sup>113</sup> a well-known Austrian pedagogue who established a vacation colony for Vienna’s war-torn youth, recruited many people who had been active in the Middle School Movement as teachers, among them the 19-year-old Papanek, who would soon oversee one of the colonies, namely the one at the Emperor’s villa (*Kaiservilla*) in Bad Ischl. In 1919/20, without a diploma or a finished degree, he then served as the leading director of Harthof am Semmering, one of the state education centers (*Landeserziehungsheim*) that Schwarzwald had established. A year later, Papanek was also active in supporting the Elderly Support movement (*Greisenhilfe*) that Schwarzwald had initiated in Vienna. Lilly Maier therefore emphasizes that “Papanek, with his humanitarian commitment to children and the elderly as well as his educational work, lived the social democratic ideals of Red Vienna.”<sup>114</sup> In a later interview, Papanek remarked that “[w]e have all been pushed towards education. The Austrian Socialist Party saw politics as an educational problem.”<sup>115</sup> The young Austrian pedagogue was consequently active in several organizations, like the Association of Socialist Students (*Verband der Sozialistischen Studenten*) and the Academic Legion (*Akademische Legion*), the fraternity of the Republican Protection Association (*Republikanischer Schutzbund*).<sup>116</sup> In 1919, Papanek had also joined the Social Democratic Workers’ Party (*Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei*, SDAP) and led holiday camps for, among others, the Red Falcons (*Roten Falken*),<sup>117</sup> the Austrian socialist youth association. Due to these activities, Papanek would come into close contact with leading Social Democrats and Austromarxists, e.g. Fritz Adler, Otto Bauer (1881–1938),<sup>118</sup> and Otto Felix Kanitz (1894–1940).<sup>119</sup>

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**113** On her life and work, see the recently published book Bettina Balàka, *Über Eugenie Schwarzwald* (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2020).

**114** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 27.

**115** Interview with Edward Linn, cited in *ibid.*, 28.

**116** On these organizations, see Wolfgang Speiser, *Die sozialistischen Studenten Wiens 1927–1938* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1986) and, with caution, Otto Naderer, *Der bewaffnete Aufstand: Der Republikanische Schutzbund der österreichischen Sozialdemokratie und die militärische Vorbereitung auf den Bürgerkrieg (1923–1934)* (Graz: Ares, 2004).

**117** Helmut Uitz, *Die österreichischen Kinderfreunde und roten Falken 1908–1938* (Vienna: Geyer, 1975).

**118** Richard Saage, *Otto Bauer: Ein Grenzgänger zwischen Reform und Revolution* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2021).

**119** Henriette Kotlan-Werner, *Otto Felix Kanitz und der Schönbrunner Kreis: Die Arbeitsgemeinschaft sozialistischer Erzieher 1923–1934* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1982). Kanitz had also

As Papanek became more and more politically active, he decided to end his enrollment for a medical degree in 1925 and instead moved to the Philosophical Faculty of the university, as he had decided to pursue a degree to officially become a teacher, given that he was already working in this profession. Due to this decision, he came into contact with Otto Glöckel (1874–1935), who had founded the Pedagogical Institute at the University of Vienna in 1923<sup>120</sup> and was an important figure in stimulating school reform in Austria.<sup>121</sup> Papanek would be tremendously influenced by Glöckel's thoughts, and his later PhD thesis was dedicated to the Austrian school reform.<sup>122</sup> Next to Glöckel, Papanek was also greatly influenced by Alfred Adler (1870–1937),<sup>123</sup> the Austrian psychotherapist and the well-known founder of a theoretical school of individual psychology.<sup>124</sup> Alongside his official course plan, the young pedagogue also participated in some of Sigmund Freud's (1856–1939) private lectures, but the latter's antagonism toward Adler<sup>125</sup> might have driven Papanek away. However, in contrast to his medicine course, he was a serious and hard-working student and finished his pedagogical education after only two years, on 1 July 1927. In his final thesis, "Individualistic and Collectivistic Education and School" (*Die individualistische und kollektivistische Erziehung und Schule*),<sup>126</sup> Papanek could use information and experiences he had been able to gather as a student while working in nurseries and kindergartens in

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written works on socialist education, e.g. Otto Felix Kanitz, *Kämpfer der Zukunft. Eine systematische Darstellung der sozialistischen Erziehungsgrundsätze* (Vienna: Jungbrunnen, 1929).

**120** Claudia Beyer knecht, "Psychoanalytische Pädagogik und Montessori-Pädagogik in der Wiener Zwischenkriegszeit: Das wechselseitige Zusammenspiel von Psychoanalytischer Pädagogik und Montessori-Pädagogik im Wien der Zwischenkriegszeit und deren Repräsentation in der Zeitschrift für Psychoanalytische Pädagogik" (Thesis (Diplomarbeit), University of Vienna, 2012), 29.

**121** Otto Glöckel, *Die österreichische Schulreform: Einige Feststellungen im Kampfe gegen die Schulverderber* (Vienna: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1923).

**122** Ernst Papanek, *The Austrian School Reform: Its Bases, Principles and Development* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978).

**123** Bernhard Handlbauer, *Die Entstehungsgeschichte der Individualpsychologie Alfred Adlers* (Vienna: Geyer, 1984); Jürg Rüedi, *Die Bedeutung Alfred Adlers für die Pädagogik: Eine historische Aufarbeitung der Individualpsychologie aus pädagogischer Perspektive* (Bern/Stuttgart: Paul Haupt, 1988); Alexander Kluy, *Alfred Adler: Die Vermessung der menschlichen Psyche* (Munich: DVA, 2019).

**124** Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi, "Pädagogische und therapeutische Grundlagen: Die Rezeption des individualpsychologischen Ansatzes Alfred Adlers durch Ernst Papanek," in *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit*, eds. Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 33–39.

**125** Martin S. Fiebert, "In and Out of Freud's Shadow: A Chronology of Adler's Relationship with Freud," *Individual Psychology* 53, no. 3 (1997): 241–269.

**126** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 31.

addition to as an advisor for Vienna's welfare office. Glöckel's reforms would also offer him the first opportunities to apply progressive ideas for the actual education of students: "Within the Vienna school reform, Papanek was responsible for the restructuring of the advanced training schools, i.e. the schools for apprentices. As a young teacher, he taught in these schools himself and also ran an experimental daycare center for hard-to-educate, criminally convicted and neglected working-class children: the Sandleiten group."<sup>127</sup>

Next to his first successful steps in the professional world, Papanek also had the chance to start a family. In the Middle School Movement, he had met Helene (Lene) Goldstern (1901–1985),<sup>128</sup> and although the two "were separated by worlds,"<sup>129</sup> they would eventually become a couple and marry on 25 June 1925. Born into a rich Jewish family, she had studied medicine since 1919 and successfully finished her degree. Her father, Dr. Samuel Goldstern, was a well-known physician and director of the Fango Sanatorium for Rheumatic Diseases (Lazarettgasse 20) and demanded that Lene finish her medical degree before marrying Ernst because he intended her to become his successor as director of the clinic. Later, Lene was supposed to play an important role in the Children's Aid Society (*Obszczestvo Sdravochraneniys Eryeyev*, later *Œuvre de secours aux enfants*, OSE) homes, where she acted as the institution's physician, but, as Hanna Papanek (born Hanna Kaiser, who later married Gustav Papanek), put it, she might have felt "overshadowed by Ernst's presence and could only make her stand in his absence."<sup>130</sup> Her son Gustav (Gus) Papanek would later state that Goldstern was not really fond of the idea that his daughter wanted to marry his father:

My grandfather Samuel was not at all enthusiastic about the idea that his daughter would marry this poor and radical boy who came from a very unimportant family. . . . In addition, Lene was considered the ugly sister in the family, and how could Ernst, who was popular with so many young women, want to marry her? Her father was convinced that Ernst only wanted to marry her because of her money. He told my mother that Ernst would never earn anything in his life, that he only ever cares about the party and political issues.<sup>131</sup>

Regardless of her father's resistance, Lene married Ernst, and their sons Gustav Fritz, named after Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) and Fritz Adler, and Georg Otto, named after Otto Bauer, were born on 12 July 1926 and 2 April 1931, respectively. After Gustav was born, the family moved to a Social Democratic housing scheme

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<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>128</sup> On her vita see *ibid.*, 37–39.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>130</sup> Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen," 215.

<sup>131</sup> Cited in Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 41–42.

at the Flötzersteig in Penzing, in the west of Vienna. Lene would commute for about an hour to her job at the clinic, while Papanek himself had been more and more drawn into political developments since the end of the 1920s.

In April 1932, he was elected to the City Council of Vienna, representing the 12th district, and he would also serve as a member of the Municipal Council Committee for Personnel Matters and Administrative Reform, overseeing the city's schools, kindergartens, and daycare facilities. Acting for the Social Democratic Workers' Party, he was also sent to Burgenland, a conservative stronghold, for an election campaign, where Papanek would try to gain some ground for the party. His lectures and speeches were often dangerous for him when the rage of the local population was directed against him, but Papanek remained optimistic. After the success of National Socialism in Germany in January 1933, the situation was becoming more and more worrying in Austria as well. As chairman of the Socialist Workers' Youth (*Sozialistische Arbeiter-Jugend*, SAJ) organization, Papanek and others tried to combine political resistance and educational measures, but when the Communist Party was banned in autumn 1933, the space for such activities got narrower. The last SDAP party convention was held on 14–15 October 1933, at which it was debated what preparations should be taken for a possible nationwide general strike and under which conditions the Social Democrats were supposed to take up arms against fascism.

It was the February Uprising in 1934 that would lead to open civil war in Austria<sup>132</sup> and force Papanek into exile, while “Red Vienna” was falling. In the following years, Austrofascism<sup>133</sup> paved the way for unification with Adolf Hitler's (1889–1945) Germany in 1938.<sup>134</sup> For Papanek, these events were crucial, as they forced him, like many other left politicians and Social Democrats, into exile. Regardless of his forced expatriation, he would nevertheless continue his work to support those who had had to stay in an Austria controlled by fascist forces.

The party leadership took refuge in Brünn (modern Brno, Czech Republic), where they established the Foreign Office of the Austrian Social Democrats (*Auslandsbüro der österreichischen Sozialdemokraten*, ALÖS)<sup>135</sup> that was supposed to

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**132** Kurt Bauer, *Der Februar-Aufstand 1934: Fakten und Mythen* (Vienna/Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2019); Hans-Peter Weingand, *Die KPÖ und der Februar 1934* (Graz: Clio Verlag, 2020).

**133** Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds. *Austrofascismus: Politik, Ökonomie, Kultur, 1933–1938*, fifth edition (Vienna: LIT, 2005).

**134** Gerhard Botz, *Wien vom “Anschluß” zum Krieg: Nationalsozialistische Machtübernahme und politisch-soziale Umgestaltung am Beispiel der Stadt Wien 1938/39*, second edition (Vienna/Munich: Jugend und Volk, 1978).

**135** Dora Müller, *Drehscheibe Brünn: Deutsche und österreichische Emigranten 1933–1939* (Brno: Deutscher Kulturverband, Region Brünn, 1997); Hans Christian Egger, “Die Politik der

support party members who had remained in Austria. In addition, the ALÖS published the *Workers' Journal* (*Arbeiter-Zeitung*), whose first issue was published only seven days after the new headquarters in Brünn was opened. The journal was then illegally smuggled to Austria to support the anti-fascist resistance there. Papanek was charged with looking after the youth again and led a one-party committee that took on responsibility for all aspects related to the ALÖS youth organization.<sup>136</sup> The SDAP was restructured and renamed as the Revolutionary Socialists (*Revolutionäre Sozialisten*, RS)<sup>137</sup> and the SAJ became the Revolutionary Socialist Youth (*Revolutionäre Sozialistische Jugend*, RSJ). Papanek coordinated the activities of the RSJ and connected it with other illegal youth organizations. In addition, he authored a pamphlet about Josef Gerl, a worker who was responsible for an explosives attack on a signal system on the Danube Bank Railway (*Donauuferbahn*) on 20 July 1934 and was executed for it four days later.<sup>138</sup> Alongside such activities, Papanek also served as the RSJ's representative at the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY), using the alias "Ernst Pek." He traveled a lot to coordinate the international activities of the RSJ before he was sent to Danzig in 1935 to support the anti-National Socialist election campaign with underground lectures.<sup>139</sup> Papanek was able to work for just a few weeks before he was arrested by the National Socialists. It was only because he was helped by a member of the resistance who was serving as a security guard that the imprisoned Austrian was able to escape, and he was later smuggled out of Danzig to Denmark.

Papanek would remain in exile for the following years, although he was usually able to see his family during the summer and over Christmas, when Lene and the two boys visited him. During his exile years, on 6 November 1936, the Austrian pedagogue founded a journal, the *International Pedagogical Information* (*Internationale Pädagogische Information*, IPI), which was, however, only a short-lived endeavor to deal with educational and pedagogical questions from a transnational

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Auslandsorganisationen der österreichischen Sozialdemokratie in den Jahren 1938 bis 1946: Denkstrukturen, Strategien, Auswirkungen" (PhD Thesis, University of Vienna, 2004).

**136** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 65–67; Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen," 242–243.

**137** Otto Bauer, *Die illegale Partei* (Paris: La Lutte Socialiste, 1939); Otto Leichter, *Zwischen zwei Diktaturen: Österreichs Revolutionäre Sozialisten 1934–38* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1978).

**138** Sozialistischer Jugendverband für die deutschen Gebiete der Tschechoslowakischen Republik, ed. *Die Idee steht höher als das Leben: Ein Buch über Josef Gerl und seine Freunde* (Karlsbad: Graphia, 1935). Also see EPP, IISH, D-8.

**139** Hansen-Schaberg, "Lebensgeschichtliche Hintergründe," 18; Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 69–71; Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen," 238. On the election and the campaign work before, see Ernst Sodeikat, "Der Nationalsozialismus und die Danziger Opposition," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 12, no. 2 (1966): 139–174.

perspective. The IPI was not openly socialist, but quite a lot of its articles presented socialist points of view on the issues that were presented in the journal. It was financial problems that forced Papanek to give up the project. The exiled politician and editor had in the meantime moved to Paris, where he lived on the Rue de la Glacière.<sup>140</sup> When the Spanish Civil War began in 1936, between 800 and 2,000 Austrian volunteers<sup>141</sup> would participate in it as part of the International Brigades,<sup>142</sup> and it would not take long before Papanek also made his way to the war zone as a representative of the IUSY and the RSJ. In January 1937, he participated at the Congress of the Spanish Socialist Youth in Valencia, representing the IUSY. Six months later, in July 1937, he visited Madrid, and between 1936 and 1938, he also coordinated the aid and supply deliveries from the Workers' International to Spain. At the same time, he gained his first experience of refugee children who were brought to France or England after their parents had died due to the Civil War.<sup>143</sup>

Papanek was again trying to save the world and took quite a lot of risks, while Lene was rather pessimistic and did not like the idea of her husband being in Spain during the Civil War. Gus Papanek commented on this difference between his parents as follows: "My mother was a pessimist. She didn't want Ernst to go to Spain. She didn't want him to go to Danzig. Ernst was brave and absolutely convinced of his views and ideologies. And in doing so he was taking risks that Lene refused. But Ernst could be very stubborn."<sup>144</sup> However, as a consequence of Hitler's early expansion and the *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938, the whole family would soon be united again, albeit still in exile. After a meeting with Otto Bauer, Fritz Adler, and Joseph Buttinger (1906–1992),<sup>145</sup> the ALÖS had been dissolved on 1 April 1938. It was replaced by the Foreign Representation of Austrian Socialists (*Auslandsvertretung der österreichischen Sozialisten*, AVOES), which tried to continue to represent and support the resistance in Austria internationally as well as those who

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**140** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 77.

**141** Michel Lefebvre and Rémi Skoutelsky, *Las brigadas internacionales* (Barcelona: Lunwerg Editores, 2003), 16 counts 872 Austrians, the Documentary Archive of the Austrian Resistance (Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes) states 1,400 (<https://tinyurl.com/3bvtar4j>) and Lilly Maier speaks of more than 2,000. Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 77. Since Austrians served in different brigades, it might be hard to determine a conclusive number.

**142** On the International Brigades, see the recently published work Giles Tremlett, *The International Brigades: Fascism, Freedom and the Spanish Civil War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).

**143** Richard W. B. Ellis, "Effects of War on Child Health," *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 4544 (1948): 239–245.

**144** Cited in Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 79.

**145** Muriel Gardiner and Joseph Buttinger, *Damit wir nicht vergessen: Unsere Jahre 1934 bis 1947 in Wien, Paris und New York* (Vienna: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1978).

had been forced into exile. In Vienna, the situation for the remaining members of the Papanek family also got worse. Lene's parents lost the clinic, while she was forced to continue to work there. It was in July 1938 when she took the boys and went to Paris by train. During the summer, the family spent time in La Baule (Bretagne), where Ernst was also taking care of some children of Austrian political exiles for the holiday season. In autumn 1938, the family returned to Paris, but money was tight, and the original plan had been to set sail for the United States as fast as possible.

Lene had already applied for the necessary visas for the US while she was still in Vienna and had also bought tickets for a round-trip so that the family could cash in for the return tickets once they reached the American shore.<sup>146</sup> However, fate seemed to have a different task for Papanek. The OSE,<sup>147</sup> which had been founded in Russia in 1912 but later moved its headquarters to Paris, wanted to establish children's homes in France for the children of political refugees, who had become quite numerous in recent years. They wanted Papanek to act as director of one of these homes but later offered him full control of all of them, which he would oversee as the leading director.<sup>148</sup> Lene was against the offer, but Papanek, especially intrigued by the "free hand" he would be guaranteed as the leading director and by the idea of saving some money for the start of the family's new life in America,<sup>149</sup> especially since work there seemed at first to be quite out of reach,<sup>150</sup> accepted the job offer. He later explained: "To be perfectly frank, I took on the job originally for a limited time and for the most practical of all reasons: to put aside a little money. I was myself a political refugee. . . . It was not as a political man that the OSE wanted me, of course, but as a teacher."<sup>151</sup> Once Papanek had visited the children's home in Montmorency, close to Paris, he decided to stay in France for six months to organize the OSE's new program for refugee children before moving to the US with his family, but, regardless of the arguments he had presented to Lene and his readers in his later writings, he confessed that he also had a moral obligation to not just leave these children behind: "[W]hile I may have been basing my argument to Lene solely on the

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146 Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 37.

147 *Ibid.*, 34–35.

148 *Ibid.*, 35.

149 "No, there was certainly nothing attractive enough about such an offer to tempt me to cancel our voyage to the United States. On the other hand, there was the question of how we were going to live once we got there." *Ibid.*, 35–36.

150 "I had no assurance of a job once we landed in America, for my English was, at best, primitive." *Ibid.*, 36.

151 *Ibid.*, 33.

opportunity it would give us to save up some money, I also had the queasy feeling that this was not a very good time for a man who had done so much talking about standing up to Hitler to be running off to America.”<sup>152</sup>

The OSE probably did not really foresee how progressive Papanek’s pedagogical approach would be, and this would cause some issues with the rather conservative forces within the organization, but in November 1938 the Night of Broken Glass changed the character of the operation at large. As Maier emphasized, “[t]he children’s home project in Montmorency took on a whole new meaning overnight. Instead of just helping children who were already in the country, the OSE and Ernst Papanek decided to bring children at risk to France.”<sup>153</sup> This meant that, actually, many more children would arrive and would have to be taken care of in the OSE’s facilities. The transports were not solely run by the OSE, but also by the Central Child Reception Office (*Bureau Central d’Accueil aux Enfants*), the Rothschild Foundation (*Fondation de Rothschild*), and the Israelite Committee for Children from Germany and Central Europe (*Comité Israélite pour les enfants venant d’Allemagne et d’Europe Centrale*). In mid-February 1939, the French government granted 200 visas, and in February and March 1939, two transports arrived in Paris.<sup>154</sup> In contrast to the children transported to England,<sup>155</sup> the ones arriving in France were supposed to be housed collectively. Papanek had therefore established four children’s homes in Montmorency, namely, the Villa Helvetia, the Villa La Chesnaie, Les Tourelles, and La Petite Colonie.

Financially, the establishment of the new homes was supported by Baroness Pierre de Gunzbourg, “the French wife of a Russian-born aristocrat,”<sup>156</sup> who argued that she would only provide 40,000 Francs once, and not one centime more. Papanek, however, had identified the philanthropist in her from the start: “It was really very funny. The Baroness was an imposing woman, with hatchetlike features that she refused to make the slightest attempt to pretty over, and a warm, beautiful heart that she was always trying to hide.”<sup>157</sup> She emphasized that she was not helping these children because they were Jewish but because they needed support and it was a moral obligation. She took this

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152 Ibid., 42.

153 Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 96.

154 Lilly Maier, “Rescued Twice: The French Kindertransport – Differences and Similarities to the British Kindertransport,” *Jewish Historical Studies* 51, no. 1 (2020): 267–284.

155 Wolfgang Benz, ed. *Die Kindertransporte 1938/39: Rettung und Integration* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003); Vera Fast, *Children’s Exodus: A History of the Kindertransport* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010); Rebekka Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/1939: Geschichte und Erinnerung* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1999).

156 Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 44.

157 Ibid., 45.

obligation seriously, and “[t]hree weeks later, she gave us another forty thousand francs to buy a castle on the outskirts of Montmorency. Before the year was over, she had bought castles for us all over France at a cost of more than a million francs and was serving very actively as the chairman of our Board.”<sup>158</sup>

Before the first children’s transport arrived from Germany and Austria in February 1939, the new homes for the children aged from 5 to 12 years old needed to be finished. It was the exile community that helped to prepare the children’s homes: “They were working for the love of the children and they were happy for the chance to be working, and that meant they were working with enthusiasm. . . . [A] doctor became a mason, and a pretty darn good one. Lawyers became carpenters, professors became painters, former ministers of state became roofers, writers became laborers.”<sup>159</sup> In addition, Papanek planned to build the furniture needed in different sizes for the respective age groups. A tailor shop was set up in the basement of one of the facilities and a shoemaker’s workshop, too, as the children not only needed to be able to supply themselves but also to learn a trade at the same time. Of course, not everything went as initially planned, and there were problems in the early period when Papanek ran the children’s homes in Montmorency,<sup>160</sup> but when the children arrived, they at least had a place to feel safe again. How traumatized they were became obvious to Papanek and the other educators during their first meeting:

I explained that they were now going to have a little snack to eat and then go outside with their counselors and play until lunch was ready. A moment of silence. A somber-eyed, redheaded girl, about nine years old, raised her hand tentatively, and when I encouraged her to speak up she asked, in a sweet, tremulous little voice, “Are Jewish children also allowed to go into the park?” We were annihilated. It was all we could do not to rush out and throw our arms around her. What made it even more annihilating was that every other eye was turned up toward me waiting just as anxiously for the answer. When we did go outside, they just stood around waiting to be told what to do. They didn’t ask any questions. They didn’t even wander around aimlessly. They just followed whatever instructions or suggestions came their way. And so, at least, we knew what our first task was going to be. We were going to have to show them how to play. We were going to have to teach them how to be children.<sup>161</sup>

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158 Ibid.

159 Ibid., 47.

160 Ernst Papanek, “Initial Problems of the Refugee Children’s Homes in Montmorency, France,” *School and Society* 57, no. 1467 (1943): 141–145, in EPP, IISH, C-11. Also see Ernst Papanek, “The Montmorency Period of the Child Care Program of the OSE,” in *In Fight for the Health of the Jewish People (50 Years OSE)*, ed. L. Wulman (New York: World Union OSE and The American Committee of OSE, 1968), 116–134, in EPP, IISH, C-44.

161 Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 48.

After having been told about their non-existent value to National Socialist society again and again, these children were suffering from many traumata, including an inferiority complex, as they had begun to doubt their own value as human beings.<sup>162</sup> So the fact that they were treated like everybody else and they were allowed to act like children without any restriction based on their or their parents' identities came as a surprise to them.

Yet it was not only dealing with children who had been so traumatized for years that was problematic; initially, their different identities caused some tension as well. Papanek later described the three different groups of children whose members were "so distinctive that they never lost their identity."<sup>163</sup> These three groups were:

- The Orthodox, which was the only group we didn't try to break up.
- The Cubans, who were not Cubans at all but rather the children of middle-class Germans who had rented a luxury ship to take them to Cuba.
- The Robinsoner, who were the children of political refugees who were already in France.<sup>164</sup>

The OSE home in Eaubonne would be used for Orthodox children. This was assumed to be the easiest way to keep them separate, as different rules, e.g. for food preparation, needed to be applied. However, the children were not properly categorized as Orthodox, so in some cases, children from a rather secular family would end up in the home for the Orthodox children.<sup>165</sup> While daily life with these children was not always easy,<sup>166</sup> Papanek tried to include them as much as possible as well. He was criticized for a lack of religiosity by the Orthodox faction within the OSE, especially since its members argued that Papanek did not pay enough attention to the Jewish rules and the Jewish identity of the children, but since he was supported by powerful donors who were rather more interested in humanitarian aid than religious lobbyism, his position was relatively secure.

The Cubans arrived after "they had been on the front page of the world's newspapers for three weeks and had been wandering around the ocean on the German luxury cruiser, *St. Louis*, for five."<sup>167</sup> The attempt to bring their families to Cuba had failed, and the ship was then stuck at sea as nobody wanted to let

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**162** "All our children tried very hard to look energetic and useful and worthwhile when they first came to us. Having been so well instructed in their own inferiority, they automatically assumed that we too were judging them on their right to be alive." *Ibid.*, 7.

**163** *Ibid.*, 51.

**164** *Ibid.*

**165** *Ibid.*, 51–63. Also see Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 127–128.

**166** Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen," 248.

**167** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 63.

them into their harbor at first.<sup>168</sup> Eventually, 35 of these children arrived at Montmorency, and since they were mostly from bourgeois and educated families as well as being slightly older than the children already in the homes, they changed the dynamics a bit.

While the first two groups can easily be categorized according to religious and class-related aspects, the third one, the Robinsoner, was the politically determined group, in a way.<sup>169</sup> They were “a small group of about thirty, all of them children of Social Democrat refugees, and almost half of them Gentiles. They came to us directly from a summer camp that had been run by the Red Falcons, the worldwide organization of Social Democrats for children between the ages of twelve and fourteen.”<sup>170</sup> The Robinsoner arrived in September 1939 when the Second World War had begun, and this was the first time the OSE accepted children who had no connection to Jewry at all. This and their political preconditioning made them hard to integrate at first, but, regardless of the fact that all three groups kept their individual identities, the children eventually grew together to become one community.<sup>171</sup>

By 1939, there were 283 children in the OSE homes in Montmorency.<sup>172</sup> For Papanek, it was important that the children stayed together and were educated in a way that would help them to overcome their multiple traumata while they learned something. The director of the OSE children’s homes therefore demanded an anti-authoritarian kind of education, and he considered the children were best seen as a community, and living in this community would allow them to face their fears and nightmares together. He used methods Papanek had been testing since the end of the First World War, and “[t]he use of the first name, as the most outrageous symbol of our permissive policies, was one of the things that kept the Orthodox Community in a permanent state of discontent.”<sup>173</sup> However, Papanek was well aware that the choice of the right words and living conditions were now more important than ever for these children:

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**168** Georg Reinfelder, *MS ‘St. Louis’: Die Irrfahrt nach Kuba Frühjahr 1939* (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2002); United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, “Voyage of the St. Louis,” last edited July 12, 2021. Accessed July 15, 2021. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/voyage-of-the-st-louis>. Also see the respective chapters in Schöck-Quinteros, Loeber and Rau, eds. *Keine Zuflucht*.

**169** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 76–83.

**170** *Ibid.*, 76. The summer camp was at Le Plessis-Robinson, the place their name actually referred to.

**171** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 136; Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 186.

**172** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 107.

**173** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 87.

[W]ords do carry their own symbolism, and as a practical politician I would be the last man in the world to underestimate the importance of symbols. With the Social Democrats, the exchange of first names was exactly that, a conscious symbol of the children's full status as comrades. And so it was with us. We were a community of children and adults, sharing a common danger and engaged in a common experiment. . . . I have always felt that the community can support the individual to a far greater extent than has ever been suggested. If we were to be a true community, if community living was to be given a fair chance, authority had to be based on something far more meaningful than Mister or Sir or, heaven help us, Herr Direktor.<sup>174</sup>

Papanek wanted the children to feel good and, in a way, at home and did not want them to replace their past, determined by oppression and discrimination, with a place that continued to give them a hard time and a bad feeling. For Papanek, as he described it later, “[i]t is the relationship between children and adults that primarily determines the atmosphere of an educational institution. The children had confidence in us only after we had earned their confidence.”<sup>175</sup>

In the first two weeks after their arrival, the children would usually gain 10 pounds in weight, but “[t]heir shrunken and shriveled self-esteem, their battered image of themselves, wasn't so easily handled. These were children who came to us in a kind of psychic shell shock.”<sup>176</sup> However, this shock hardly came as a surprise to Papanek and the other teachers at the OSE homes. The young girls and boys “had seen their parents murdered and beaten and humiliated and had themselves been systematically terrorized and publicly loathed. In a strange country, they were strangers and afraid. In the truest sense of the word, they were orphans.”<sup>177</sup> In this regard, the destructive force of National Socialism and the hypnotic spell of Hitler had “appl[ied] the psychology of terror on a scale so massive as to be unprecedented and . . . appl[ied] it, systematically, against children.”<sup>178</sup> The situation was hardly understandable for the children, and Papanek, who was familiar with the work of Danish psychologist Irma Kessel,<sup>179</sup> realized that they were torn between identities that had been imposed upon them, simultaneously considered as Jewish children, political enemies of the National Socialists, and refugees in a foreign country. They were in danger of losing themselves, and Papanek tried to avoid this. His educational methods and pedagogical considerations were consequently chosen to address these problems.

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174 Ibid., 88.

175 Ibid.

176 Ibid., 95.

177 Ibid.

178 Ibid., 97.

179 Irma Kessel, *Kinder klagen an! Zehn Kinderschicksale* (Kopenhagen: Sexpol-Verlag, 1937).

Papanek's pedagogical views had been highly influenced by Alfred Adler and his ideas of individual psychology (*Individualpsychologie*).<sup>180</sup> It has been emphasized that the approaches Papanek chose to address the children's trauma in Montmorency are still important today,<sup>181</sup> and the Austrian pedagogue clearly defined the aim he pursued:

Our first educational goal was to assure the children, explicitly and implicitly, that nothing that had happened to them had been their fault. The second was to convince them that the persecution they had suffered was not their inevitable fate as Jews. The third was to create an educational system that would return them to the world with a sense of pride, accomplishment and social consciousness.<sup>182</sup>

In short, Papanek intended to treat the children as human beings again who would thrive if not pressured and would be accepted as worthy members of the community at Montmorency: "The underlying concept here . . . is that the child who is given to discover for himself where his talents and interests lie will be far better equipped to adjust himself to the more complex problems that will arise later on in life when he had only his own resources to fall back upon."<sup>183</sup> Papanek's goal was simple, although not easy to achieve: "My goal was to see to it that these children who had been brutalized in so many ways not only survived but survived whole."<sup>184</sup>

The Austrian director of the OSE homes considered himself to be working on behalf of the parents of the children who lived in his facilities and did not intend to enter into competition with the former. In contrast, he encouraged them to write to their parents as often as possible, and there was a rule that every child was supposed to write a letter at least once every week.<sup>185</sup> Furthermore, the children were supposed to face and maybe overcome their trauma as a group. For him, living in a collective was part of their therapy: "By keeping the children in touch with their parents, I was keeping them in touch with themselves."<sup>186</sup> Papanek would, after

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**180** Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi, "Pädagogische und therapeutische Grundlagen: Die Rezeption des individualpsychologischen Ansatzes Alfred Adlers durch Ernst Papanek," in *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit*, eds. Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 33–39.

**181** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 114. Also see Irene Etzersdorfer, "Österreichische Sozialisten im französischen Exil: Aspekte zur Exilgeschichte österreichischer Revolutionärer Sozialisten in Frankreich 1938–1945" (PhD Thesis, University of Vienna, 1985), 133.

**182** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 115–116.

**183** *Ibid.*, 116.

**184** *Ibid.*, 14.

**185** *Ibid.*

**186** *Ibid.*

the first six months, extend his contract, as he argued that it was not the best idea simply to transfer the children to regular French schools after such a short time. In fact, the idealist and optimist Papanek had more in mind for the OSE children's homes than to act as simple stopover stations: "I was not, after all, an unknown quantity in the field of progressive education, and I was proposing the most massive experiment in progressive education ever attempted – saturation treatment, twenty-four hours a day."<sup>187</sup>

First of all, the children had to learn how to be alive and free again. The methods used by Papanek were consequently anti-authoritarian, which, as described above, confused the children at first. They could just call him "Ernst" and did not have to do homework, as the teachers "did not believe in stealing it [time] from them by assigning homework."<sup>188</sup> If the children were supposed to invest extra time, so was the teacher if additional tutoring was needed. To ease the children's transition and arrival in a foreign country, the lessons were taught in German for the first six months, which was especially crucial since many of the children had not had the opportunity to go to school in the last years. Yet after these first few months, the language of instruction was switched to French. Papanek wanted the children to feel integrated and act as such. He did not want them to accept a self-identification as a refugee because, as he explained later, "[i]f I had one overriding concern it was that we should not become a self-imposed ghetto. To give them a better understanding of French people and institutions, we planned excursions and trips and exchanged visits with the children of the village."<sup>189</sup>

There were also no grades. Instead, the children would receive a detailed report of their progress every three months that followed 24 existing categories, 12 positive and 12 negative. These were:

- 1) does his very best
- 2) is attentive and hard working
- 3) takes pains over his work
- 4) grasps things easily
- 5) is interested in the subject
- 6) expresses himself very well
- 7) concentrates on his work
- 8) shows perseverance
- 9) prepares his work well
- 10) shows comprehension, application and perseverance

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**187** Ibid., 117.

**188** Ibid., 122.

**189** Ibid., 126–127.

- 11) shows initiative
- 12) shows imagination
- 13) could make greater efforts
- 14) is lazy and inattentive
- 15) does not take great pains
- 16) shows no understanding of the subject
- 17) is devoid of interest
- 18) has no ability to express himself
- 19) is superficial in his work
- 20) is without perseverance
- 21) does not prepare his work
- 22) shows a lack of knowledge caused by absence
- 23) is not very bright
- 24) shows a lack of imagination.<sup>190</sup>

These personal comments “were aimed at encouraging the child to keep working rather than at merely passing judgement on work that had already been done.”<sup>191</sup>

As mentioned before, Papanek was not interested in sticking to a curriculum that solely helped the students to pass exams and to receive a diploma. He intended “to turn out skilled artisans” who could make an income once they left school, which was why “a great deal of attention was paid to manual instruction with all the children.”<sup>192</sup> Papanek considered this to be important, especially considering the fact that the Second World War was already on their doorstep:

In an educational system which is truly geared to keeping instructions as close to life as possible, one also had to be mindful of the backgrounds of the children, the special circumstances under which they had come to us and the living conditions that probably awaited them. These were not children who had been sent to a boarding school by indulgent parents. They were children who would have to go out into the world to earn a living, possibly in a strange country, probably without any family tradition to guide them and certainly without any parental connections to smooth the way.<sup>193</sup>

Papanek considered these circumstances for the establishment of a student co-administration as another progressive aspect of life in the homes of Montmorency as well.<sup>194</sup> There was a kind of formulated and publicly displayed constitution that

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**190** Ernst Papanek, “Home for Refugee Children of the O.S.E. Union in France (1940),” in EPP, NYPL, Box 8, 20–21.

**191** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 131.

**192** *Ibid.*, 129.

**193** *Ibid.*

**194** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 11, 108–110.

secured the children some influence on the homes' administration, and in the case of disciplinary cases and the respective penalties or fines in particular, it was they who had to decide on the sentence in some kind of tribunal. Papanek hoped that the children would learn and get used to democratic processes by putting such a responsibility into their hands.

The children were granted many freedoms for a reason: "In tasting freedom, they tested freedom; and in the testing they learned that freedom without order can be a pain in the neck."<sup>195</sup> In addition to freedom, there should first and foremost be fun, which was supposed to make the children forget their pain and sorrow, at least for a moment. Birthday parties were big celebrations in the children's homes, although this was not the only reason to eat cake and have fun. The children celebrated all existent Jewish and French holidays alike, but if there was none at all, a reason for another party was easily found: "The world was a festival."<sup>196</sup> The children also organized sports festivals, concerts, and theater plays.<sup>197</sup> Once a visitor from the US described the homes as a kind of "Strauss operetta," a view Papanek did not share at all:

We were not a Strauss operetta. Neither were we one big theater party. We were a community of very special children with very special problems. They had come to us, strangers and afraid, and we had to make them happy again. Not merely by creating a well-ordered home. Not with parties or songs. When I speak of making them happy, I am not talking in terms of *amusing* them. Our task was to create an atmosphere in which they could develop and bloom again.<sup>198</sup>

Papanek was well aware that "his children" needed special treatment, especially since the wounds of their soul could not simply be addressed intellectually; one had to deal "with the[ir] emotions, and emotions travel on a separate wire. As long as the family remained intact, the emotional upheaval was held in check. It was death and separation that pulled the plug out, and we were a community of children without parents."<sup>199</sup> The children had experienced severe losses and were confronted with an imagined guilt, which Papanek also had to take into consideration when he decided about the form of daily life in the children's homes:

The haunting and sometimes unbearable vibrations from the past were one of the problems we had to address ourselves to. In every possible way that we could think of, we sought to instruct the children that:

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**195** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 139.

**196** *Ibid.*, 86.

**197** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 124.

**198** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 86–87.

**199** *Ibid.*, 106.

- 1) We were living in a time when very bad things were being done to many people, Jews among them.
- 2) This had come about as a result of a combination of historical and political events and was not directed against them as individuals.
- 3) They were not being individually punished for anything they had done for any congenital defect in themselves or their character.<sup>200</sup>

Regardless of the efforts invested by Papanek and the other staff members to create a secure and convenient space for the children, it was the war that would soon make reality catch up with these ambitions. The beginning of the Second World War had intensified the need for people to escape from the National Socialist regime and its troops that had begun to conquer Europe in the name of an ideology that considered both Papanek and the children in the OSE homes as its enemies.

The Papanek family had planned to leave France in October 1939, but the German invasion of Poland prevented this, although Papanek had at least been able to get a Swedish visa for his mother, sister, and brother-in-law. The war had also changed the dynamics of the work of the OSE, which could no longer wait for parents to assign their children to one of the homes; instead, one had to make sure that as many children as possible were evacuated from spheres of German influence. Due to the war, more homes, like the Villa Helvetica,<sup>201</sup> needed to be opened to provide shelter for the higher numbers of children that were arriving. In addition, the children were now no longer able to keep in contact with their parents and were literally cut off from their former lives.<sup>202</sup> Papanek would later describe his wartime experiences with the children in the OSE homes in Montmoryncy, and his words remind us what war actually meant for the hearts and souls of those who were the most vulnerable within human society.<sup>203</sup>

The Austrian pedagogue himself followed an order according to which all German and Austrian citizens living in France, who were considered “unwanted foreigners” (*étrangers indésirables*), had to register and get their paperwork checked while they were interned for the time being in one of several camps.<sup>204</sup> That he answered this request and went to get registered was, in retrospect, “the worst mistake [he] ever made.”<sup>205</sup> Between 6 September and 4 November 1939, he

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**200** *Ibid.*, 107.

**201** *Ibid.*, 44.

**202** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 136.

**203** Ernst Papanek, “My Experiences With Children in War-Time,” *Trend* (Quarterly Students Journal, New York School of Social Work, Columbia University) 4, no. 1 (1942): 6–8, in EPP, IISH, C-23.

**204** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 136.

**205** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 133.

was interned in several camps while Lene led the OSE children's homes – from 6 September onward in Maisons-Laffitte (Seine-et-Oise), between 5 October and 3 November in Domfront, and finally in Camp Damigny.<sup>206</sup> His friends tried to get Papanek out of the internment camp quickly, and in contrast to many others, he only had to spend a relatively short time away from his family and the OSE homes. Since their visas had run out and their tickets to the US had been canceled, the Papaneks had to apply for new US visas. For the moment, they could only continue their work in the children's homes, where the arrival of the Robins-soner after the beginning of the war had created a few little problems as their presence interfered with the smooth continuation Papanek had hoped for, although the group was eventually integrated and became part of the children's community.

The war, however, also demanded that all people who were living and working in the OSE children's homes make adequate preparations. Air raids were soon quite common, and the children were drawn back into a world of violence that they had hoped to have left behind.<sup>207</sup> Papanek spoke to them quite frankly about the war and the respective developments, as he wanted them to be aware of what would probably happen soon. However, he also understood that the children were being forced to confront their traumata again: "They not only saw themselves as the main object of the attack, they saw themselves as participants in the battle. For just so long as the adults were able to conceal their fear, the children of all ages behaved with courage and spirit."<sup>208</sup> It was consequently important to keep them busy so that they could focus on a task instead of their fear of another air raid or a German invasion that would again threaten their lives:

The environmental factors which have provoked the psychic trauma of European Jewish youth today have not always been of the same kind or the same power, though they have always had the same origin: Hitler's war of extermination on the Jews. There have been different developmental tendencies and phases. These alone could explain the often contradictory psychic reactions of young Jewish groups and individuals. But even psychic traumata of the same nature manifest themselves differently according to whether the

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**206** On the French internment policies, see Vincent Giraudier, *Des indésirables: Les camps d'internement et de travail dans l'Ardèche et la Drôme durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (Valence: Peuple libre, 1999); Guy Marchot, *Les indésirables: Les camps d'internés civils français et étrangers, 1939–1946* (Aix-en-Provence: Association philatélique du pays d'Aix, 2020).

**207** Ernst Papanek, "Children During Air Raids," *Progressive Education* 19, no. 3 (1942): 157–159, in EPP, IISH, C-4. Also see Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 22.

**208** *Ibid.*

trauma became effective in early childhood, after an emotionally calm and secure childhood, or after a childhood full of emotional privations, rejections and inhibitions.<sup>209</sup>

Papanek and his staff tried to keep the children's way of life as normal as possible to protect them from retraumatization, but they were not able to halt the course of history, and the Germans' success in Poland led to the German troops soon turning against France. In October 1939, the "children discovered what it was like to go about their schoolwork with the sound of gunfire off in the distance and the roar of planes overhead. They were able to find out what it was like to feel the floor shaking beneath their feet during the great air attack on Paris that killed fifteen hundred people."<sup>210</sup> In the assemblies that were held in the morning, Papanek would explain the movements of the German army and its forces' respective strategic aims and the tactics that were applied. He did this for two reasons: "To begin with, they had a right to know what was happening. Beyond that, I wanted them to understand that *nothing was happening accidentally*. Because if nothing happened accidentally, they could not look upon themselves as helpless pawns of fate. With everything crumbling around them, I considered it more essential than ever to hold the great vision of a triumphant future before the children's eyes."<sup>211</sup> Papanek also emphasized that the children would have to perform an important task: "As the inevitable survivors, it had fallen to us to preserve the culture of a civilized life – the highest impulses and the most noble aspirations of mankind – from being destroyed by the barbarism of war."<sup>212</sup> For the moment, however, it seemed as if that barbarism was heading right for the children and was fully willing to destroy them first.

When Paris fell in June 1940, it was necessary to evacuate many of the 1,600 children that by then were living in the several OSE children's homes to safer places in southern France. In early June, there were still around 150 children in Montmorency, waiting for an uncertain future. It was decided to take them to Limoges, where a castle was supposed to be available to be their new home. Papanek and the children were able to get out of Paris<sup>213</sup> and made it to the castle in Montintin, south of Limoges.<sup>214</sup> The Austrian pedagogue could offer the owner 40,000 Francs in cash, which allowed the children to move into it: "Although the French aristocracy has been notably anti-Semitic since the Dreyfus Affair it has never been

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209 Ernst Papanek, "[Report on] Social Service For European Jewish Children And Adolescents (1947)," EPP, NYPL, Box 8, 2.

210 Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 29.

211 *Ibid.*, 30.

212 *Ibid.*

213 *Ibid.*, 167–179.

214 Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 149–155; Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 181–201.

known to permit its anti-Semitism, or anything else, to interfere with the greater pleasures that come from the pursuit of the franc. . . . I was practically buying the castle and leaving the title in his hands.”<sup>215</sup> The castle in Montintin was a suitable and exciting place for the children, as it was “a big medieval castle, completely broken down and yet not without a certain charm. Three stories, and a huge banquet room that brought to mind a picture of King Arthur’s Round Table.”<sup>216</sup> Hanna Papanek would later refer to life at Montintin as a “youth paradise,”<sup>217</sup> and although the war had forced the children to leave their new home in Montmorency again, at least they were safe for the moment. To keep it that way, Papanek decided to leave, together with his family, after he had been warned by the local police that his presence as a known socialist and anti-fascist could endanger the well-being of the children, especially since Philippe Petain’s (1856–1951) Vichy Regime was likely to collaborate with the German occupation in the north of France. He had to make a hard choice, and only one day after their arrival, the Papanek family left Montintin for Montauban in southwest France.<sup>218</sup> Papanek left Asta Imbert as the new director, and although she was not as progressive as he was and would probably change some of his methods once she was in charge, Imbert had other qualities: she was “French, Catholic, and apolitical.”<sup>219</sup>

When Papanek left, many children must have felt betrayed.<sup>220</sup> Hanna Kaiser (later Papanek) noted in her diary: “One day Ernst left us with his whole family. We were left, abandoned, cynical and, for the first time, fearful. There might have been a reason for him to leave, some great danger – but even if we wanted to, we couldn’t believe it.”<sup>221</sup> Papanek was later also criticized by some parents, as it was thought he had simply abandoned the children. The decision was not taken lightly, however, and it was supposed to serve the best interests of the girls and boys who would remain in Montintin. Even after leaving, Papanek invested a lot of energy to protect “his children.” In Montauban, he met with Fritz Adler, from whom he was able to borrow some money that

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**215** Ibid., 184.

**216** Ibid.

**217** Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 186.

**218** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 157; Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 194–195.

**219** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 159; Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 255–257.

**220** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 159.

**221** Cited in *ibid.*, 160.

would be used to secure food supplies for the children. In exchange, Papanek helped Adler to hide in the OSE children's homes for a while.

In the meantime, Lene's relatives, who were already in the US, were trying to help them with their visas, but it was the influence of Joseph Buttinger and Eleanor Roosevelt (1884–1962), who had founded the Emergency Rescue Committee, as well as William Green (1873–1952), the head of the American Federation of Labor, supported by Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles (1892–1961), who eventually secured some emergency visas from President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945), which were to help especially leading socialist figures who had to leave Europe immediately.<sup>222</sup> The Papaneks, together with Oscar (1893–1963) and Marianne Pollak (1891–1963), were the first to use the Spanish Underground's route through France, Spain, and Portugal to get to the United States, although their visas for the US were considered to be fraudulent at first by the US consul in Marseille. However, once they were confirmed, the consul also helped to secure visas for Spain and Portugal. The trip from Montauban via Barcelona and Madrid to Lisbon would take 12 days, but it did not go as smoothly as planned or hoped for.

At the French-Spanish border, it took a while before the group was allowed to leave France, and in Barcelona, Georg showed symptoms of appendicitis. Lene was really worried about this situation: "If I say we have to send him to the hospital and you get caught and delivered over to Hitler, I'll feel I killed you. If I say we can go and his appendix bursts, I'll feel I killed him."<sup>223</sup> So the couple checked the phonebook for Jewish-sounding physicians and called Dr. Abraham Levy, who, as it turned out, was also part of the Spanish Underground and with whom Papanek had already spoken about plans for how to get the OSE children out of France and en route to the US. The Papaneks reached Lisbon a few days later, and on 3 September 1940, they boarded the *Nea Hellas*, which would bring them to New York, where the family arrived on 12 September. The Underground's route had worked, and others would take it as well until Lion Feuchtwanger (1884–1958) frankly reported his escape from Europe in a newspaper interview and thereby ruined the route for anyone else who could have taken it after him.<sup>224</sup> Papanek considered this interview to have been a political act rather than a stupid mistake: "The foolish act of a literary man unversed in the ways of the world, you may be thinking. Not at all. Lion Feuchtwanger knew exactly what he was doing because it seems to me inescapable that he was

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<sup>222</sup> Hansen-Schaberg, "Lebensgeschichtliche Hintergründe," 14; Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 162–163; Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 205.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>224</sup> "Flight Described by Feuchtwanger: Refugees Here from Denmark and Germany," *The New York Times*, October 6, 1940. Also see material in EPP, IISH, E-9.

doing it on orders. Feuchtwanger was a Communist and it is Communist policy to take credit for all revolutionary activity that proves to be effective and, where they cannot take credit, destroy it.”<sup>225</sup>

While Papanek and his family had eventually reached safe territory, the children were still in danger and needed to be rescued as well. There were hundreds of them in the OSE homes, although the OSE itself had now become a rescue rather than a care facility. And regardless of the fact that Papanek’s own life was not easy, he immediately began to network on behalf of the children, whom he wanted to bring to the US as fast as possible too. But at first, the family needed help themselves. They were moving quite a lot (151 West 94th Street, 155 West 84th Street, 410 W 110th Street),<sup>226</sup> and their lack of money was problematic. The original idea that their income from working for the OSE would secure their start in the US turned out to be too optimistic, as Papanek had not yet been paid and would probably not receive any outstanding payment soon. From the Jewish Labor Committee, they received US\$ 90 a month. Lene and Ernst Papanek therefore had to work their way up again. Lene, who was not yet allowed to work as a medical doctor, found a job as a night nurse, while Ernst had to work as a dishwasher at a Horn & Hardart restaurant.<sup>227</sup> Regardless of these problems, he had at least thought that the organizations like the Jewish Labor Committee or the American branch of the OSE (AMROSE) would be able to help him with regard to the plan to rescue the children and bring them to America, but there seemed to be too many interests involved and “a maze of organizations”<sup>228</sup> prevented fast action:

When life and death rides on every choice you must make, you remember only those whom you did not save. And that is the bitter irony of it: Those who did the most feel the most guilt. Those who did the least feel the least shame. It always happens when life and death are at the toss that there are those from whom no help is expected and you find help, and there are those who exist for no other purpose than to help, and they do nothing. It must be recorded that while thousands of children survived the Holocaust because the Underground was able to find shelter for them in monasteries, farmhouses and children’s institutions throughout Europe . . . there were those in the United States from whom help had been confidently expected who did nothing. And in some cases, worse than nothing.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 211.

<sup>226</sup> Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 171.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>228</sup> Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 218.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 31–32.

In fact, Papanek was very disappointed, and in a later report to social worker Elsa Castendyck, who had served as the US delegate to the Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations and who had previously visited the OSE homes in France,<sup>230</sup> he argued:

As you know, I had resisted since 1940 the desire which was shared by you . . . to tell the whole history of what we sometimes thought was criminal misunderstanding and neglect when organizations and people tried to prevent by hook or crook to have the children from France come over to the U.S.A. I still believe that we should not attack some organizations, wrong as they were for their terrible and fateful mistakes, because they still have to request money from the public to do another kind of work which they do well and which is still necessary.<sup>231</sup>

There were rivalries and turf wars between the organizations Papanek had to deal with, which made it hard to actually gain what he needed: visas for the OSE children.

The United States Committee for the Care of European Children (USCOM), which coordinated the activities related to the issue, “had managed to obtain visas for English children, but they had little success, in the end, in cutting the red tape for Jewish children from the continent. . . . They would not, and could not, bring themselves to believe that the children were in mortal danger, because once they did it became incumbent upon them to move heaven on earth to rescue them.”<sup>232</sup> Time was of the essence, and Papanek lost it due to the named problems. It took until March 1941 for the first visas to be issued, and the slow processing was also a consequence of the fear of a wave of antisemitism if a large number of Jewish children were to be rescued.<sup>233</sup> Eventually, however, the children were on their way, and Papanek would get involved in an argument that would have a great impact on their future. Children’s homes, like the ones run by the OSE in France, were uncommon in the United States, where homes were rather used for juvenile criminals. Lotte Marcuse, a social worker for the German-Jewish Children’s Aid, had to decide on the fate of the children, and in contrast to Papanek, she wanted them to leave their past behind and therefore intended to place them into foster families and break up the contact between them. Papanek would also not be allowed to get in contact with the children. The community he had built during their time in France

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**230** Castendyck shared Papanek’s opinion about the necessity to protect refugee children better. Elsa Castendyck, “Refugee Children in Europe,” *Social Service Review* 13, no. 4 (1939): 587–601. On her work in Europe, see Paul H. Stuart, “Refugee Children in Europe on the Eve of World War II,” *Journal of Community Practice* 27, no. 2 (2019): 116–132.

**231** Partial notes of a report by Ernst Papanek to Elsa Castendyck, n.d., EPP, IISH, E-5.

**232** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 217.

**233** *Ibid.*, 218.

was now considered improper, and the sense of belonging of the children was not valued highly enough to continue its existence.

That Papanek's ideas about children's homes were unpopular in the United States at that time became obvious during a lecture at the New York School of Social Work, when he was harshly criticized for his progressive ideas.<sup>234</sup> Papanek realized that the term "institution" was connoted differently in the US to in Europe: "Of course. The home is the only sacred institution in America. I should have understood that."<sup>235</sup> In May 1941, the AMROSE explained that once the children were in the US, they were no longer their responsibility, and Papanek's contract that had just been renewed in March was terminated. Due to this decision, Marcuse was the one who would decide everything.

At least the children, who had been fed and hidden by the farmers of Limoges, were on their way. They also got the chance to pass by the internment and concentration camp at Gurs, where they could see some of their parents for a last time before they were brought to Lisbon.<sup>236</sup> The first children's transport arrived in New York on 21 June 1941, and Papanek was happy to be able to meet the girls and boys, albeit only for a short time. That they were separated again after only a couple of days must have been heartbreaking, but Lotte Marcuse intended to break the old bonds, and the children were scattered across the country. During the second transport's arrival, this became even clearer: "What Mrs. Marcuse had in mind was a complete resettlement plan based on the incredible theory that the children must make a complete break with their past – as if she really believed it were possible to wipe the slate clean and begin all over again."<sup>237</sup> When the ship with the children from the second transport arrived on 1 September 1941, Papanek was not allowed to see them at all. Gus Papanek later described the situation and the bitterness his father must have felt: "It was terrible for him. She [Marcuse] prohibited him from seeing the children. She had the power, and he had nothing."<sup>238</sup> There was a third transport that arrived in late September, and this time Papanek was able to secure at least a few hours with the children to explain the new situation to them and to break the news to them that they would be separated and would have to live with

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**234** Ibid., 221.

**235** Ibid.

**236** Michael Philipp, *Gurs, ein Internierungslager in Südfrankreich, 1939–1943: Literarische Zeugnisse, Briefe, Berichte* (Hamburg: Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, 1993); Hanna Schramm and Barbara Vormeier, *Vivre à Gurs: Un camp de concentration français 1940–1941* (Paris: Maspero, 1979). Papanek argued that "Gurs had turned into the hellhole of France." Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 111.

**237** Ibid., 241.

**238** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 192.

foster families across the whole country. Of the 1,600 children in the French OSE homes, 253 had been brought to the United States, and the last of them arrived in July 1942. Those who remained in France suffered what Papanek called a second “Night of Broken Glass” when all the homes were raided on 26 August 1942. 69 children, including 11 from Montintin, were deported, and “the children who were taken from our Homes that night died in a rain of gas at Auschwitz.”<sup>239</sup> Although the French Resistance had attacked the deportation train with the OSE children and rescued and hid a large number of children, they obviously could not save all of them. Many more children were deported from France to be killed in Eastern Europe.<sup>240</sup> When Papanek reached the news that Montintin had been raided, he must have felt devastated. A letter he received from France in September 1942 described the horrible events:

Last week we lived through a kind of St. Bartholomew’s Massacre. At five o’clock in the morning we had guests with trucks at the door. They took a lot of people away with them. Then it was said that boys under eighteen would be released again, but in the meantime they were already sent further. Allegedly to Poland, but we don’t really know anything definite. Among those taken was Ernst Koppel, Benno Singer, Klans Martin. Guenther and Horst, who were with their parents on vacation, were also taken. And girls from the other houses. In the days that followed there was a hunt for those who had escaped, but the forests are large. There were tragicomic scenes as well. For instance, Friedman whom you know so well, slipped out of their hands twice. The second time he went to the toilet under guard, but he managed to escape from there too. Yesterday the little ones from our house was taken, allegedly to be taken to their parents in the concentration camps. They took even two year olds from their nurseries, and let them sleep at the railway station. What they intended to do with them we don’t know. . . .<sup>241</sup>

This made the trauma of those who survived the war and the crimes against humanity even worse. Papanek was a broken man, too, when he realized that he could not save all the children: “There are those who survived and found their lives, exactly as we had wished for them. There were those who survived into a vague, disquieting sense of guilt that they should have lived while so many died. There were those who did not survive and should have survived, and there is a bitterness about that which the years will never swallow.”<sup>242</sup> It became a burden for some to have survived while others had been killed and their memory

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**239** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 250. Papanek, “Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen,” 267–269 lists the known and recorded cases.

**240** André Rosenberg, *Les enfants dans la Shoah: La déportation des enfants juifs et tsiganes de France* (Paris: Les Editions de Paris Max Chaleil, 2013).

**241** Copy of a letter to Papanek, September 3, 1942, in: EPP, NYPL, Box 8.

**242** Papanek with Linn, *Out of the Fire*, 31.

threatened to fade away. Questions like “what if?” and “why?” haunted the minds of the survivors:

I had discovered that you can question and question, poke and probe, and never get back anything beyond a kind of vague disclaimer calculated to minimize the accident of their survival, to close the gap between themselves and the dead. For behind every innocent question they hear the voice of the Inquisitor snap:  
 Why are you alive, and the others dead?  
 What did you do?  
 Whom did you know?  
 And behind all that: *Whom did you betray?*<sup>243</sup>

Some of the children, however, came to terms with their past when they realized for themselves that it had simply been down to luck that they had not been killed like so many others.<sup>244</sup> In contrast to those who really quarreled with their fate, “[t] here were also those who set out to survive, refused to consider the possibility of not surviving and therefore accepted survival as no more than their due.”<sup>245</sup>

For the Papaneks, a new life in the US began as well, and the Austrian pedagogue “reinvented himself.”<sup>246</sup> Lene began to work as a nurse in Vermont, and Ernst decided to enroll for a degree as a social worker at Columbia University. Gus moved out at the age of 15 to work on a farm in Ithaca and later studied agricultural economics at Cornell University. In 1943, Lene passed her National Board Exams and received her approbation as a medical doctor and thereby was allowed to work in her professional role again. Papanek finished his 170-page long Master’s thesis “On Refugee Children: A Preliminary Study,”<sup>247</sup> and the family then moved to Elmhurst, where Lene opened a doctor’s office. Papanek would soon start a new career as well, but he had been politically active in the US since his arrival, too. In 1941, he became a member of the American Socialist Party and the League of Industrial Democracy, and he worked for the Austrian Labor Committee as well as Austrian Labor Information.<sup>248</sup> In addition, he founded American Youth for World Youth (AYWY), initially funded by the Unitarian Service Committee (USC), and organized relief supplies that were sent to Austria. In 1945, he was offered the position of director of the Children’s

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**243** Ibid., 271. Papanek also witnessed “[t]he guilt of the survivor. I saw it unfold before my eyes in classic form soon after the war had ended.” Ibid., 273.

**244** Ibid., 275.

**245** Ibid., 275–276.

**246** Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 12.

**247** Ernst Papanek, “On Refugee Children: A Preliminary Study,” Final typescript, EPP, IISH, D-15.

**248** Hansen-Schaberg, “Lebensgeschichtliche Hintergründe,” 20.

and Youth Welfare Organization of the USC, for which he and Lene would prepare training programs for staff who would be sent to Europe to work with children there.<sup>249</sup> In 1946, Papanek also toured Europe to inspect children's homes for the United Nations, which had requested a report about the situation.<sup>250</sup>

It became more and more clear that Papanek, unlike other exiles, would not return to Europe.<sup>251</sup> In 1947, Gus married Hanna Kaiser, and a year later, their son Thomas (Tom) was born. Papanek, who had eventually decided to stay, quit his job for the USC in 1948 and became director of the Brooklyn Training School and Home for Young Girls, where he intended to continue his pedagogical work. However, due to financial struggles, the school closed in 1949 and Papanek became director of the Wiltwyck School for Boys, 100 kilometers away from New York, in Esopus, Hudson Valley. He would stay there until 1958, and he had a tremendous impact on the young, mostly African American boys, including the boxer Floyd Patterson (1935–2006) and civil rights activist Claude Brown (1937–2002),<sup>252</sup> among others. Papanek abolished corporal punishment and implemented many things he had already gathered experience of in France. In addition, he ignored racist habits in the United States and treated all of his students as equals. Next to individual and group therapy, he also used animal therapy and tried to provide many opportunities for sports events and outdoor activities. Again, he was able to create a sense of community. He made the trip to the institution once or twice a week, while he spent the rest of the week in his Manhattan office, meeting parents and attending court hearings.<sup>253</sup>

Papanek became an expert on juvenile delinquents and also finished his doctoral degree with his work on Austrian school reform in 1960. After quitting his job at the Wiltwyck School, Papanek taught at Queens College, where he served as Lecturer and then Professor of Pedagogy from 1959 until 1971. In addition, he taught at the New School for Social Research and spent some time in Japan as a Visiting Professor at the University of Hiroshima in 1966. In 1970, Papanek received the Golden Badge of the Association of Socialist Freedom Fighters and Victims of Fascism, and his work in France, as well as his political activities, received

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249 Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 208.

250 *Ibid.*, 210.

251 Marita Krauss, *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land: Geschichte der Remigration nach 1945* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001). On communists returning from the US to the German Democratic Republic, see Mario Keßler, *Westemigranten: Deutsche Kommunisten zwischen USA-Exil und DDR* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2019).

252 Claude Brown reflected upon his time at the school and Papanek himself in his autobiographical novel *Manchild in the Promised Land* (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

253 Maier, *Auf Wiedersehen Kinder!*, 220–223.

recognition. At the same time, Lene made quite a career for herself as well, as she enrolled in a program for psychiatrists and later opened a very successful office in Manhattan. In addition, she acted as a director of the Alfred Adler Institute in New York. Finally, the Papaneks had reached the social and cultural elite of their new home country. Many of the children from the OSE homes were similarly successful.<sup>254</sup> Hanna Papanek emphasized how indispensable the children were for her father-in-law. She also highlighted with regard to Papanek's and the children's historical significance that "[i]t is indispensable to remember these children – us – because the love for people, the respect for each person, the tolerance, the collective feeling, the self-confidence that we experienced and learned in 'his' homes are his legacy."<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 255–267 provides some insight on the fate of some of the children. Also see Lilly Maier, *Arthur und Lilly: Das Mädchen und der Holocaust-Uberlebende – Zwei Leben, eine Geschichte* (Munich: Heyne, 2018).

<sup>255</sup> Papanek, "Als Jugendliche in den OSE-Heimen," 266.





## Part II: **The Texts**



## 4 Editorial Remarks

The following texts were transcribed from the Ernst Papanek Papers at the New York Public Library, Box 8 (Writings by Ernst Papanek on refugee children), but are not presented as a critical text edition. The single texts are simply reproduced as the original ones, although minor typos and mistakes have been silently corrected. Additions are clearly marked with brackets [], while omissions have been marked with [. . .]. If the text as such needed further information or contextualization, explanatory footnotes were added. Page numbers are presented according to the original texts in parenthesis as well.

## 5 Project for Establishing Training Homes for Refugee Children

The U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children would be the right sponsoring organization to help the refugee children now in England and France, who have escaped from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, etc. and found a shelter there.

When they first went to England, they stayed with families for a short time. When the war broke out, these families were confronted with so many problems of their own, that it was necessary to start special homes for them.

In France from the very beginning, about 300 children were accommodated in the 4 homes of the OSE-Union in and around Montmorency near Paris, 70 children in the Rothschild home Chateau de la Guette. Before Hitler entered Paris, the home Chateau de la Guette evacuated to Bourboule, (Puy du Dome); part of the children of the OSE houses were transferred to the Department Greuse, into OSE homes which were already established. Half of the children went to the castle Montintin, near Limoges, where the teaching staff immediately re-established the school and workshops.

After the armistice, and the confiscation of the Rothschild fortune, the children of Chateau de la Guette had to be placed with peasants as farmer's helpers. The OSE homes were barely able to carry on. Now we have two great difficulties to overcome. One is the general food shortage. The other is the attitude of many toward the Jewish children whose fathers are dead, or have been sent to Lublin, or to concentration camps. These children are regarded as undesirable

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addition to the refugee problem in France. Added to these difficulties is the exhaustion of the funds which had been collected in France. And now the expected help from the American [Jewish] Joint Distribution Committee cannot come in its entirety because of the exchange difficulties.

With these children, it is not simply a matter of safety and shelter from bombardment and starvation. But rather a matter of helping them to grow up in a happy child like healthy way, at the same time preparing them to be independent and self-sufficient, in spite of having no parents or relatives to help them. Only a few families are suitable for accommodating these children permanently. Families like children for a short holiday. In a permanent stay, however, only the really beloved child is not a burden; for such a foster child, the family is the best place. But if he is not as beloved as would be one's own, the foster parents desire to be relieved of him, and will return him, as they did in England.

The combination of home plus training school offered by OSE houses in Montmorency, helped the children to become adjusted as easily as could be expected to the new community and country. They provide systematic training, opportunity to learn a useful trade, and to learn to become a normal part of their environment in a wholesome manner. Though at first it is a saving for the Welfare Organizations to place children with families, so much time has to be made up, and money spent on training, that it is really more economical in the long run to place the children in homes such as the OSE from the beginning. We might add, that such well managed homes are good publicity for securing funds repeatedly, because the donors can see that their money is not being spent on professional beggars, but is

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used for conscious, constructive work and for productive welfare. Should such homes be established in America, the best location for them would be near a city, preferably New York. The supporting donors would then have an opportunity for direct contact with the homes. The greatest need would be for a large tract of farming land for training vegetable gardeners, fruit growers, and other agricultural workers. The home should have its own school and would include workshops.

The cost of managing such homes comes from \$360 to \$400 per child a year, depending on the location and if there are 100 children in the group. This sum includes board and room, elementary education medical care and supervision, vocational training, guidance in recreational activities, pre-professional training and administration. Not included is the expense of renting or leasing the necessary property, and the furnishing of living quarters, school rooms and workshops, and the replacement of clothing. But we feel certain that many items in this last group would be donated.

Since at this time no children can come from England, we suggest that for the present the 70 children from the Rothschild home at Chateau de la Guette and 250 to 300 children for the OSE homes in France could be considered for these homes. These children might be brought over from Lisbon.

There are still an enormous number of children deprived of parents and homes, victims of Hitler, in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. They did not flee only to England and France, but to Vilna, Lithuania, Lettland and Estland. There are also lots of children whose parents wander, unsettled, in the U.S.A., South America, San Domingo, and Shanghai. Besides, there will be those

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who under the new German decrees will have to leave Alsace-Lorraine, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, Rumania and Norway. Campaigns of organizations already existing for helping Jewish refugee children would receive a new impetus, and a new goal in the establishment of well managed homes. They would be fine propaganda for continued fund raising.

## 6 Children in Wartime

Since one can never take practical experience gained in one country and apply it in another without adapting and adjusting it to the new situation, it would be wiser to illustrate the principles of child protection against war injury with examples of our own experience in France rather than merely to describe methods to be adopted.

When war started in France, for example, we blindly followed the experience they had had in Spain. We instructed our children to leave the children's houses when the air-raid alarm sounded and to scatter about outdoors so as to escape being crushed by crumbling walls. So they had done in Spain. But summer nights in Spain are warm; you can stay outdoors. And the houses in Spain had no cellars that would make good shelters. Even before the first alert sounded we had changed the order in France for our children. As for New York, with its skyscrapers and its lack of adequate cellars – and its eight million inhabitants – we know what a failure it would be if we persisted in blind imitation of French and English procedure. The principle – protection against bombs and tumbling walls – is the same everywhere; the methods must be different.

When Hitler marched into Poland at noon on September 1th, 1939, I received a telephone call at my office in Montmorency, ten

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miles from Paris. The Prefecture informed me that war was inevitable; air attacks were to be expected at any moment. I must promptly take steps for the protection of the four hundred children in the children's houses of Seine et Oise.

We immediately assembled all the children and adults in each of the four houses. I explained to them that war threatened and that we too were in personal danger. But of course we must have the cooperation of all, children and adults.

When I told them that for the present they should not expect any word from their parents, an unforgettable silence followed. They were for the most part refugee children and the parents of many of them had to remain in Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia, a large number of them in Hitler's concentration camps.

It was evident that the children felt a deep relief when they received directions as to what each was to do in our defense program. We immediately started clearing out the cellar; we removed all wood and coal to a distance from the house so that there should be less for a fire to feed on. To accustom the children to making straight for the cellar when the signal was given, we had an air-raid drill every hour. The children were told to leave shoes and coats beside their beds when they went to sleep so as to have them ready for use in an emergency.

We put flashlights, covers, water, chocolate and tools in the cellar so that we could stay there a long time or dig ourselves out if necessary. We

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began throwing up piles of earth and sandbags in front of the cellar windows.

At this time we did not have a single gas mask and we were sure the Nazis would make use of gas immediately. The girls sewed rubberbands on washcloths so they could be fastened over mouth and nose. Our doctor had the job of preparing sodium bicarbonate solution, into which the clothes could be dipped for greater efficiency as gas masks. We got our javel water ready for spraying the covers we hung over the cellar doors and windows to stop the poison fumes. We practiced walking against the wind so as to be able to get out of the gas zone as quickly as possible.

In the house of the kindergarten children and that of the girls and younger children two groups of older boys helped to do the job. At the end of the first day's work we all fell asleep at midnight from sheer exhaustion; even the adults were worn out with excitement and hurried labor. We were all rather worried; we had not been able to accomplish everything we thought necessary for our protection.

Toward two o'clock that morning the sirens sounded. In less than a minute the school bell was shrilling and the children were heading for the cellar. They were still half asleep, some of them were a bit confused, but they went in good order. But many forgot their shoes and coats, which they had laid ready near their beds. The representatives elected by the children for their parliament went with two teachers from room to room, collecting the forgotten garments. These they took down to their owners in

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the cellar – they never forgot their clothes again in an alarm; it was cold in the cellar – washcloths were soaked in the prepared solution and tied over mouth and nose; one flashlight shone weirdly in each cellar . . . And we waited . . .

After a bit the children began to be a little nervous. As long as they had been kept busy and could help fight the danger they were all right; so when there was nothing else to do we talked to them, and then we sang with them.

In two hours the all-clear sounded. We were astonished and relieved. No bombs had fallen, no guns had fired. Had it only been a drill – or had the enemy been driven off? The children were sure it was the latter. Gleefully they estimated the probable number of Nazi planes downed: tens, hundreds, thousands – they wallowed in fantastic figures. Then we went to bed.

Next morning we got up as usual and followed our usual routine, weary and agitated though we were. We explained to the children that it was our part in the war to follow our normal routine as closely as possible so as to avoid disturbing the fighting men by our nervousness. But we most, of course, do whatever we could for our own protection. The mounds of earth in front of the cellar windows must be built higher; the windows must be painted blue to help the blackout; strips of paper must be pasted on to the glass to prevent splintering from bombs; the fire extinguisher must be increased and tested. On the first night in the cellar we had sat on uncomfortable rugs; now chairs must be carried down by the children when the siren sounded and this procedure

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had to be rehearsed.

Both children and adults were in dread of a terrible unknown danger. The older they were the more firmly they were convinced that unlimited aerial warfare would begin immediately. Thousands and tens of thousands of airplanes to spread death and destruction. And of course the bombs would fall on us first of all; we should be the object of all attacks. But since the adults concealed their fear, the children also behaved with spirit. My friend General Koerner, a soldier distinguished with various decorations of the highest order, often remarked: "Bravery is not showing you are afraid." So we were all heroes. It did happen one night a teacher had a fit of hysterical weeping, whereupon the older girls with her went through a siege of group fear. They trembled, some of them screamed, all of them cried. Unfortunately I could not get to the spot for half an hour and when I arrived the uproar was still going on. My talking to them did no good; not until I shouted at the teacher and gave the big girls a few of the younger ones to look after did the panic gradually subside. The last signs of this group psychosis finally vanished when we began singing together.

After the all-clear a few of the older girls came and declared that they were in fear of the next alert. Not that they were afraid of anything definite, not even of their own death. They could not imagine anything like that in concrete form. They were frightened of "it"; I was so lucky, they said, because I was so brave in spite of everything.

Before them all I declared that I too was frightened – but less

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of "it" than of airplanes and bombs. I told them that I could even picture quite concretely the devastation that bombs could bring – but as a consequence I simply did my best to determine what we could do to fight this danger. We must all pitch in and help; then we would not have any time to worry about "it."

The next morning we held an assembly of all the children in each of the houses and talked things over with them. We discussed the effect of bombs, the chance of attack; we told them about the anti-aircraft – and what we could do about the whole thing. Each one of us was assigned his air-raid duties, which duties might in some cases be only to clean up the blue spots splattered during the window-painting or to see to it that the pasting of paper strips on the windows was done tastefully and not only correctly. For we had a great task to perform: we must preserve the culture of civilized life from destruction by the barbarism of war. This war we felt it our duty to wage with spirit and well, that humanity and all the works of peace might be kept alive by us.

That evening we had singing and music for the older children in the darkened assembly hall of our main house. We devoted the evening to Mozart and Beethoven. Nine months later, after our flight from our houses near Paris, that first night in our new home in Southern France, when we lay down to sleep on the bare earth, one of our boys said: “And we will hear *Freude schoener Goetterfunke* [sic]<sup>256</sup> again after all – like that time in the dark hall of Les Turelles – But this time without the accompaniment of anti-aircraft guns.”

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Our experience with the three to six-year-old children obliged us to use a special method with them. For the most part the little ones did not wake up when the sirens sounded at night; those that did wake up would not go to the cellar, or else they fell asleep on the way. We had to let teachers from the other houses sleep with the babies and take them down during alarms. We had to arrange for them to lie down in the cellar and go to sleep again. And they slept, nothing disturbed them. They slept peacefully through all the alerts of nine months.

For a time we had alerts almost every night; during this period there was no singing or story-telling, even the games were discontinued. We simply went to sleep – and got used to doing so – in stages. First stage, bed in bedroom; second stage, sitting on a chair in the cellar; third stage, back to bed again if possible.

During the Nazi offensive in Northern France there were often raids without alarms during the day. It was ordered that at the sound of anti-aircraft fire everyone was to remain indoors. In such cases instruction continued. We took great pains to carry on normal life and concentrate on our work even during gunfire and the roaring of plane motors. But once when a Nazi plane was shot down less than a mile from our house, the teachers let the children rush to the windows – since all the adults were there already.

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<sup>256</sup> Ode to Joy, Beethoven [added by EP].

The second night of the war the sirens sounded about three o'clock in the morning. As I hurried from house to house, checking up on the procedure, I noticed a light mist along the ground. In ordinary times I should have taken it for morning mist. I went quickly

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toward the house and was greeted by a chemical odor, which intensified as I approached. I ran to the cellar, clenching my fists in fury; "The dogs!" I thought. "Gassing children! The dogs! Gassing children! Gassing the whole population! The dogs! Gassing children!"

Outwardly calm and cool as ice, inwardly seething, I went to our doctor – my wife –<sup>257</sup> and ordered her to dip the washcloths into the sodium bicarbonate solution and distribute them to the children. They were to bind these improvised gas masks immediately over their noses and mouths. We were about to leave the cellar, walking against the wind, when I noticed where the smell was coming from. Our anti-gas brigade had hung the covers over windows and in their zeal had sprinkled too much javel water on the covers. Hence the foul odor; hence, smell added to morning mist and war psychosis, my assumption of a gas attack.

The all clear signal after each alert, relaxing the tension and marking one more fortunate escape, seemed to us a good omen for the next hour of danger. The children made jokes, often painful to us adults. "What kind of alert was that? Not a single bomb!" or "No dead again!" But it was difficult, impossible most of the time, to let them know that we considered their jokes to be in bad taste without spoiling their high spirits. Therefore we mentioned the matter only the next day in assembly.

The most important thing is the manner in which danger is explained to a child. Fear of a particular situation is not inherited, only the instinct of general fear, of any situation which the child does not feel capable of handling and so wants

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to escape. We fear fire only after we have found out by experience that it burns and only as long as we do not understand it and do not know how to control it.

We are all afraid of war, we know the danger and the destruction it entails. And we should know of this danger and destruction, so that we try to avoid it. We also have to explain the danger of war to children in such a way as to

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257 This insertion was added by Papanek in handwriting.

overcome the pleasure of sensation they have when hearing and reading of hero worship and heroic feats of the past. Yes, we fear war, we hate it; but we fear no more the dangers and destruction and loss of freedom with which our enemies threaten us if we do not fight. All this must be explained to the children; do not be afraid of not being properly understood. To overcome fear, not just to repress it, you must make clear what the situation actually is and why you believe we must accept it.

Of course no such explanations are necessary for the children of pre-school and lower grade school age, since they do not infer a danger[ous] situation from its necessity by any intellectual process. They see only the actual facts in the actual situation. If, for instance, they have never received any personal injury from air raids, they are not afraid of the whistle of the siren, of the blackout or the bombs of the thundering of the anti-aircraft guns. These youngsters measure the danger that threatens them only by reactions of those about them; especially of their trusted parents and teachers, their older sisters and brothers and their comrades. They are frightened when these are frightened. Do not forget that they fear blackouts only if they have at some

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previous time been afraid of darkness and noise.

The older the children – and worst of all are the grownups – the more experience of danger they have heard and read in books or papers or seen in movies and pictures, the more they anticipate danger. You cannot overcome their fear by denying the danger; you must acknowledge it and show that something can be done to master the situation. Children are optimists; their every little attempts to do something give them hope of full success. When I was a child of about nine years, I read in the paper that the melting snow had damaged an alpine village and taken many lives. I was much impressed by the terrible pictures in the paper. On that very day the snow began to melt in the streets of Vienna. I was really frightened when I saw it. I thought things over and went out into the street armed with a child's shovel. I stood in the gutter and hacked away at the pieces of snow every time a big one got stuck and held up the flow. I was much relieved by my activity; I was sure that I was preventing an accumulation of snow not only at this one spot but all over the city. since I thought it would have stopped up the whole sewage system and flooded the entire town.

When we sat with our children in the air-raid shelters in France and sang the Marseillaise, the children not only overcame their fear of an imminent danger but were convinced that they were being very active in the war. "When our fliers hear us they will be inspired to do their best; when the Nazis hear us they will know that we're not frightened or broken and they will fly back and worry."

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One day the rumor started that the Nazis had dropped poisoned candies and fountain pens filled with dynamite which exploded when touched. Every candy, every fountain pen was now suspect; hysterics suspected that their own pens had been changed by the Nazis. We tried very hard to make it clear that they could not be dropped into our houses, that we had bought the candies in the store in Paris; we never were entirely successful in our persuasion. A good deal of candy and a lot of pens we had to “render harmless” by throwing away, though we never found a poisoned candy or a loaded pen.

This kind of fear, aroused by rumors or imagination – imagination dangerously heated by fantastic comics – is psychologically worse than any other danger, because it is very difficult to offer a weapon against the imaginary danger. But worst of all is the unrealistic fear of the “it” I mentioned before. The feeling of security in sharing the dagger with others is very important in overcoming fear. “Two men are heroes; one man is a coward,” my soldier friend used to say. Once during an air-raid we had to leave one of our children in the sick room because our doctor thought it would be more dangerous to take the feverish child into a cellar than to expose him to the faint chance of a bomb. Besides, his grippe would endanger the others. One of the counsellors stayed with him. When I came upstairs to look in on them during the attack, I found the child quiet, holding the counsellor’s hand, listening to the story she was telling him. When I entered the counsellor smiled happily through the tears that filled her eyes, tears of fright at being left alone with the sick child. And this counsellor had always been one of our

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most courageous when she was with the others in the cellar.

Many of the children who were not a bit frightened when in the cellar with the other children did not want to go to the bathroom, though there was one in the cellar, during air-raid, even if the attack lasted for hours. They were afraid to leave the other children. We had to let them leave the door of the bathroom open a crack so that they could have a glimpse of the group.

Of course, having a large number of children together means that they are liable to group fear if one or another of the children becomes panicky. But I think this is a less serious danger and the injury done [to] the individual much less important than when the individual suffers fear alone. The expression of group emotion is far more relieving, even when exaggerated, than the feeling of aloneness in emotional distress.

Perhaps this sense of security that helps the individual overcome his fear when in a group and enables him to take danger more calmly will influence democratic philosophy and behavior after the war.

In my opinion it is easier to manage fear situations of children when they are in groups to which they are already accustomed and are under the supervision of teachers in whom they have confidence.

Since there is not great need for underground air-raid shelters in this country and large groups will seldom be gathered in the

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event that air-raids do occur, the educational methods used to prevent psychological injury are more important than the direct influence of the persons in charge during air attacks. We must fully recognize the fact that the evil consequences of mishandled fear situations are dangerous as the air raids themselves – and much more frequent. Defense against air raids, bombing, fire and so on is the function primarily of military and civil defense organizations. Defense against the highly important psychic injury resulting from fear is the task of every individual, and the task especially of parents, teachers and social workers in relation to children.

These responsible adults must learn how to explain to their children the reasons for their fear and must try to make clear to them that all of us – the military forces, the civilian defense organizations, the fire department, we ourselves and the children too – can and must take part in the fight against the common danger. Fear does not enable us to escape that danger; neither trembling nor weeping will drive off the enemy planes. Only our action can help.

Let the children help darken the room; let them open the windows; let them prepare ater<sup>258</sup> [shelters]; let them turn on the radio. Do not tell them there is no danger while you yourself are trembling with fear. Tell them the truth – that the danger for any particular individual during an average air raid is not so very great. Tell them what you yourself should know, that they and you are not the objectives of this war action. Let them feel that their behavior is of great importance for the whole war effort

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of the country – as indeed it is – even if our own fliers cannot hear our songs and take courage from, not the enemy hear them and be alarmed.

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258 Papanek might have referred to *ater*, i.e. Latin for black or dark. There is a handwritten addition above this word in the original, namely “shelters.”

Let me read you some passages from the autobiography one of the boys of our houses wrote when he arrived in this country<sup>259</sup> from France. He was fourteen at the time.

“A week or so later something was in the air. The grownups went around as gloomy as could be, while just before our house the usually so busy road was nearly deserted. Our nerves were on the edge, and when the bell rang and called us into the dining room we obeyed as quickly as possible. Ernst was waiting for us and he immediately told us: ‘I have grave news to tell you. Poland was attacked this morning by Germany, as England this morning. We will immediately take all precautions.’

In the following confusion the group arrived for the second time, this time to stay. We had only time for a short ‘Hello, well, it has come,’ then we had to get to work. I had to show the girls the way to our second home, called ‘Helvetica,’ which was about ten minutes away, as the bigger boys and girls lived in separate homes. In the meantime the others had begun to clean out two rooms in a small house that formerly had not been used. After some hours of hard work the room was usable. After we’ve had dinner all of the older boys were assembled in one room. The aspect of the meeting was really sinister. As we had no air-raid precautions we could use no light and we could

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only see each other’s silhouettes. After everybody had been assembled, we were told why we had been called together. A system had to be organized in case of air raids. Volunteers were called who, when the signal was given would remain in their respective rooms until everybody had left so as to assure themselves that nobody had slept through the alarm. Immediately the one who was needed for each room had given his name. As I was one of those I know that we all believed ourselves heroes to accept the responsibility and danger of this job. It really was a fantastic meeting: the somber room, with everybody only barely visible, and then ‘Who will take the room on the upper floor?’ A slight silence ensues, then somebody says ‘I will’ and in the following pause everybody turns to the speaker . . . Then the rest of the organization was explained: we were to be divided into groups of five, each group was to have a leader, and a certain place where to assemble in the future shelter. There the leader was to ascertain if everybody of his group was here. Then only the leaders would be called thus making the roll call less complicated. After everything had been organized we

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259 The United States.

were sent to bed as we had to begin with the work of transforming our cellar into an air raid shelter early in the morning.

‘What’s the matter, can’t they keep quiet. Making a lot of noise during the night. Leave me alone will you!’ Suddenly I heard something that made me wide awake. ‘Alerte’ somebody yelled into my ear. In the next moment I was feverishly dressing myself. I was excited, afraid and somehow I had to give this feeling expression. I began to yell: ‘Hurry up, get going, faster, alerte, alerte, wake up.’ But nearly everybody else had done the

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same thing and all of us were yelling. Above the noise we were making we clearly heard the Soooooiiuuuhuh of the air-raid sirens and the shrill ding-ding of our clock. I was dressed in a hurry, and next moment I was looking around my room to see if everybody had left. Gerhart who have been harder to wake than myself was still there but everybody else had left. I almost hated him that moment from keeping me from going into the abri<sup>260</sup> but my duty was my duty. He left, a last glance with my electric torch over the beds, then I was running with all my might after the last of the others into the great lawn that stretched before our house.

As soon as I arrived there we all were ordered to go into the cellar. A really wonderful discipline was preserved considering that we all were afraid, as we thought that the Nazi planes would come in thousands to try to undermine the resistance of the people. Not one of us ran, everybody walked calmly into the abri although we were shaking inside. As soon as we were into the cellar the attendance was taken and everybody was present. Then we tried to settle down on the naked earth as nothing had been organized as yet.

The day before I had talked with somebody who had been in Spain during the civil war. He had told me [that] ‘The best thing is to keep near to a wall, even if the ceiling falls in the walls remain standing most of the time. The nearer you are to a wall the more chance of surviving a direct hit.’ Now in the abri this went through my mind. And suddenly, looking up I realized that the two windows in the wall had not been barred as yet. If a shell exploded in the garden, the fragments could go to all

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corners of the room. But at the wall there was only a very slight chance of getting hit. So I moved a little here and a little there until I felt that my back touched the wall. But suddenly I realized that I had been a coward, I had used

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**260** Abri: Air-raid shelter [EP].

my information to make myself secure, to get a better place than the rest. Immediately I was away from the wall, as far away as possible. Slowly, almost unconsciously I again began to move towards the wall till I had reached it again. This time I stayed longer. Everytime I wanted to move a look at the windows held me back. You have to keep in mind that we were in actual danger. We thought that the Nazis would start their blitz by bombing London and Paris out of existence, with thousands and thousands of planes, with gas bombs, incendiaries and explosives . . . I told myself that now was my chance to prove that my courage could stand under real conditions, to no avail; I told myself I was a skunk if I stayed there. This helped. I moved away, never to come back to the wall again.

Slowly, it became lighter and lighter. Slowly our fear disappeared. Then one of the cooks, who was an excellent comedian, began telling jokes, although we felt none too comfortable we laughed here and there. The spell was broken. After a while the all-clear sounded. It was 5 o'clock in the morning. We had been in the abri for four hours. As there were two more hours before our normal rising time we went to bed again to catch some more sleep.

In the morning the bigger boys immediately went to work on our

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abri, while another group of them were sent to the girls' house to help there. I formed part of the latter group. We put our shovels and other materials in a wheelbarrow; we left. Walking our fastest, so as not to be taken by an alerte before reaching the other house, we soon came there.

Immediately we went to work. Shovel in the earth, once twice, sandbag full, on the wheelbarrow, a short run, down with the bag, right in front of the window. Only a few hurried bags, no time now. We had to go down to the cellar, and shovel the coal there to other places, to make room for an air-raid shelter. We shoveled heaps and heaps of coal. Coats were flung aside, shirts followed. Sweat began to pour down our faces. Sometimes one would drop his shovel and stretch himself on a bench while another would take up his work. But we were as yet not accustomed to the continuous work and when dinner-time came we were all relieved to be able to sit down and rest. We were dead tired, and expected to be served by the girls. Funny how everything had changed with the war. Before it boys and girls had always been considered equal by all of us. But now we were the workers, men, we expected them to serve us. Naturally this changed situation would bring many difficulties. The girls had worked too, and they believed we should look out for ourselves. But we were nervous, dog-tired and easily irritated. We began to quarrel and when we fell down on the grass after dinner to regain our forces we believed that the girls were the laziest lot ever seen.

After half an hour of rest we went to work again. All our muscles

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strained under the effort. We really were a ghastly looking lot; our faces were black as tar from the coal dust. Our noses were filled with particles of coal, as well as our ears. When we gnashed our teeth the small coal particles could be heard crackling between our teeth. The pauses between the working periods grew longer and longer as the day wore on. But we could and we would not stop. We worked until it was too dark to continue. Then we crawled home.

Before going to bed we greeted each other with: "See you in the air-raid shelter" or with "Good air raid!" We all expected the bombers to come this night and although everyone was dead tired we could not sleep for fear that we might sleep too soundly and miss our chance to get to the shelter fast enough. But finally everyone was sound asleep, and only the clothes and the flashlights at our sides showed that we were ready for anything. Suddenly the air carried a far-off noise to us. Here and there someone's head would be seen above the pillow, listening to find out what that sound in the distance meant. It was the far-away sound of a siren. Then hell burst loose. The sirens wailed in the neighborhood, our own bell rang furiously and everywhere figures jumped out of their beds. Shielded flashlights flared up and in their beam everyone could be seen dressing as fast as possible. Figures began walking rapidly towards shelter, silhouetted against the searchlights on the surrounding holls. We made it in two minutes flat, two minutes from the first sound of the air raid warning to the arrival of the last person in the shelter.

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This time we were not new to the situation anymore. And so after some excitement we tried to settle down for the night. Sleep was impossible but we tried to get as much rest as possible because we knew another hard day was before us. Everyone was silent, everyone thought the others were asleep, that he was the only one awake. But later we found that no one could sleep, that we were all waiting for what we thought was inevitable. But the hours passed and nothing happened. For three hours we stayed in the shelter until the all-clear sounded and we went to bed again. We were still a little bit shaken from our experience and it took us a long time to go to sleep again. Hardly had we closed our eyes when suddenly the sirens sounded again. Again we dressed, again the flashlights shone, and again we went to the shelter. This air-raid alarm lasted for another two hours. The all-clear sounded at six in the morning, an hour earlier than our usual rising time. Our feet felt like lead, and most of us had a headache. But our morning setting-up exercises and breakfast brought us to our feet

again and we set out to finish the work we had begun the day before. Set out to work twelve hours after a night spent in a shelter.

The last two nights had taught us that we could expect an alarm every night and so we went to work with a will. We had to fill burlap bags with dirt, cart them before the windows and arrange them there to give the best protection. Some took shovels, one took the wheelbarrow, while another one was occupied in placing the sandbags. We worked like madmen. Faster and faster all the time, until we were running with the wheelbarrow, dumping our bags and running back as fast as we could. We took more and more

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bags at a time, until we thought we could stand the strain no longer. Although we wore as few clothes as we could, sweat was pouring down our bodies and formed little rivulets on our faces. The mountains of bags grew before the windows but we were not satisfied. Nothing short of perfect could satisfy us, and so we worked more and still more. We ran mechanically, we saw no more, our eyes were dimmed by the sweat. Lunchtime finally arrived and we sank down on our seats, content to be able to rest.

After lunch there was no time for rest. We had to go on. The shelter had to be finished before the evening. For the whole afternoon we went on with our work. Wooden boards were made on the inside of the windows, chairs were put into the shelter. Safety precautions against gas attacks had to be taken and the sandbags were covered with sod. This is not a very hard kind of work, but we made it so by doing everything as fast as we could. Chairs were not handed from one to another, they were thrown; the earth was brought in at a run and the hammers flew and drove the nails into the boards with lightning speed. When the evening came all the rough work had been done. With a last 'Hope you enjoy your new shelter!' we started to run home. We run as fast as we could so as not to be surprised by an alarm while on the way from one home to the other.

When we came home we could see immediately that everything had not been going as well as with us. Deprived of seven pairs of strong arms, the work on our shelter was not finished by a long shot. Especially as our shelter was bigger than the girls' [one]. So after a quick supper we went to work again. The evening came, we could not stop. Flashing lights were fastened to the trees

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and work went on. At about eleven [o'clock] in the evening the work was finished. A sense of security came over us and we looked over our handiwork. We knew it was our own work, and we knew its strength and its safety and we felt secure.

Air raid followed air raid. Sometimes they were shorter, sometimes longer. Sometimes there were two during the night, sometimes there were none. The shelter grew more and more gay. At first we read, later on some played cards, and finally we began to sing. The morale was high, but some of us lost weight. Then the air raids stopped altogether. The long sit-down war began. Life went on in our home as if no war existed.

Week days we had lessons in carpentry or gardening, as well as theoretical subjects. Saturdays we went over to the girl's home and had dances, that is to say, we were taught how to dance. After school and on Sundays we played games, most of the time together with the girls. Sometimes we put on plays and skits and sometimes we would gather and sing. And there were holidays and birthdays. We had small misunderstandings and we settled them again. A very large part of the administration of our community was in the children's hands. So we had meetings, elections and trials. But above all we were good friends and made this time one of the best in our lives.

We decided to have a mock circus for the neighboring communities, the proceeds going to the Red Cross. We worked on it hard and for a long time, and we had fun doing it. The performance was a huge success and we all were proud. Then we decided to

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level off a part of our park to be used as a sport field. We worked on it hard for weeks, trying our best to realize this ambitious project. Everyone did his share and more than his share. The accomplished work gave us an additional feeling of belonging together, of all of us pulling on the same chord. The fruits in the garden began to ripen; the grass began to grow on our sport field and a track meet was planned to inaugurate it; the projects of the carpenters were almost finished. The girls that had learned dressmaking began to turn out their first shoes. Everyone was happy and the war seemed almost to us as it now seems to some Americans. But . . . ”

I regret that this autobiography, which the boy wrote for school after arriving in this country in the fall of 1940, ends at this point and does not describe the month of the collapse of France and our flight with four hundred children from Paris to southern France a few days before Hitler entered the capital.

The children did a marvelous job. When war started almost all our male personnel had to leave. The French were called to the colors, the foreigners were asked to go to the camps set up for the purpose to check up on them. Some of the foreigners remained in the camps for months, some afterwards became civil workers in the French army.

And the children pitched in to make up for the shortage of hands in the houses. We had a kind of children's parliament; we called it "co-government" or "coadministration," not "self-government." We had no desire to deceive the children with that pompous

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term or to make a game of the whole thing. There is no self-government by children in any educational structure like a children's home. But there can be coadministration, and it is a highly important factor in democratic education in peacetime and in war.

The children's collaboration did not help only in the physical running of the houses and the building of the shelters; it was a real contribution to the mastery of their fear. The children were busy all the time and had no time to worry; "We knew it was our work, we knew its strength and its safety, and we felt secure."

We wanted to bring the youngsters through this ordeal without phisic injury, unbroken by fear, unwarped by repressions, unbrutalized by the primitive morals of war. This war is being fought for freedom and humanity against tyranny and barbarism; the fruit does not fall into our laps of itself, it must be won. To give our children this spirit of fight without letting them lose their will to freedom and democratic living, without letting them lose their sense of human dignity and their humanity, more, to make these the very mainspring of their will to fight – such is the lesson we have to teach in this war.

We must, of course, protect our children by adult activity, by military action, civil defense, perhaps evacuation, and so on. And our explanations to the children can give them some sense of security – in the midst of all the upheaval – but only active collaboration on their part can give them real relief from fear

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and can contribute something positive to the molding of their characters.

"Breakdowns are rare among people who know what they are fighting for," says Dr. Gillespie<sup>261</sup> of Guy's Hospital in London; and delinquency is rare among people, young or old, who are busy and absorbed in working for a cause.

War itself must not inevitably increase juvenile delinquency. If you make errors of commission or omission in war – even more dangerous than in peace – then of course, juvenile delinquency may rise. If you close down schools or endanger education and instruction by aggravating bad school conditions, then you naturally may be provoking juvenile delinquency. If you permit

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261 Robert Dick Gillespie (1897–1945).

unorganized evacuation, officially facilitating sanctioned truancy, or you close down or restrict instead of expanding the recreational activities of boys' clubs, group agencies, day nurseries and camps, you give our children a false education for fear, cowardice, hate and swaggering, feigned bravery – then certainly you are provoking juvenile delinquency. Some statistics for England – there are many different figures on the subject – inform us that juvenile delinquency increased 62% during the war and that 75% of these cases were from “broken homes.” I do not doubt the figures, but I strongly doubt the necessity for this development.

Of course lack of parental control plays an important part, as does the pre-occupation of the police with wartime duties and the disruption of normal school routine and leisure time activities.

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There is no doubt that separation from parents is an important factor in delinquency, as it is a cause of fear during war actions and a source of mental conflict in child evacuation. But though I estimate highly the work of Anna Freud<sup>263</sup> in England, I should like to warn against overemphasizing the significance of the experience she had under certain special circumstances and particularly with very small children.

It may be that evacuation is unconsciously interpreted by some children as a rejection; there may be some children who suffer deeply from a feeling of unworthiness, unlovedness or inadequacy as a result of evacuation. Some may feel it as a kind of punishment (it had indeed been used as a threat to naughty boys by overwrought parents). But our experience with the evacuation of more than a thousand children in France, children with whom I lived for a long period, was quite different. Their removal to institutions where the children's community and properly trained teachers and counsellors supervised wholesome, planned activities gave them no chance to feel rejection, unworthiness or inadequacy.

Children do not fight and should not fight in the trenches or the foxholes of the battle front. But since they are suffering participants in this total war, they must – that their passive role may not endanger them mentally for all their future – be active collaborators in the war effort. Let them collect paper and tin, organize farm work for our youth. They can wash and darn, mend and knit.

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**262** Papanek had written page 25 and 26 twice. Additions from the latter version have been added here to complete the text.

**263** Anna Freud (1895–1982) was the daughter of Sigmund Freud. Papanek obviously disagreed with both Freuds to some degree. For Anna Freud's relevant publications see Anna Freud, *Die Schriften der Anna Freud*, vol. 2: *Kriegskinder; Berichte aus den Kriegskinderheimen “Hampstead Nurseries (1939–1945)”* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1987).

They can collect and distribute to soldiers and sailors what they need in the way of books and periodicals. They can address envelopes and carry messages. They can paint curbstones yellow. They can cellophane windows and help to blackout and dimout. They can work in victory gardens and pull up weeds. They can help organize and direct their own activities and entertainment.

This war – a war not between nations but rather between two, that of aggressive dictatorship and that of peaceable democratic community living – has brought on, along with its many terrible consequences, a tremendous access of the spirit of helpfulness, neighborliness, community feeling and cooperativeness. It is no more than natural that this war and its consequences should affect and influence our children also, should teach them to suffer hardship together, and to adjust themselves to democratic community living. It may be – and I hope it will be – that this spirit will survive the war and flourish in the democratic society that will be the world when this ordeal is over.

## 7 Jewish Youth in a World of Persecution and War

I am a part of all that I have met  
—Tennyson

Every war has its child welfare and educational problems; every nation in war must face the breakdown of its educational system and the bewilderment of its youth and must undertake the difficult task of leading back to normalcy both adults and children after the wartime disruption of normal life. It is not surprising that we have a vast literature of fact and fiction dealing with these problems after the first World War. In a “Preliminary Report on Children’s Reactions to the War,”<sup>264</sup> Dr. J.L. Despert, psychologist of the New York Hospital, gives us a critical survey of this literature up to 1942. In 1943, H.F. Conover compiled for the Division of Bibliography, a list of references on “Children and War.”<sup>265</sup> Concerning more of recent years, we have the publications on smaller children in war situations in England published by Anna Freud<sup>266</sup> and Dorothy Burlingham (“Young Children in Wartime”, “War and Children” and the “Monthly Reports on the Hampstead Nurseries”);<sup>267</sup> the studies of Dr. Gustav Bychowski, former professor of psychology and brain pathology of the Faculty of Medicine in Warsaw, Poland, published in various periodicals;<sup>268</sup> Dr. Suzanne Mercier’s reports on her work with children in France during war and occupation; Susan Isaacs’

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**264** J. Louise Despert, *Preliminary Report on Children’s Reactions to the War: Including a Critical Survey of the Literature* (New York: n.p., 1942).

**265** Helen F. Conover, *Children and War: A Selected List of References* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1942).

**266** Freud, *Die Schriften der Anna Freud*, vol. 2.

**267** Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud, *Kriegskinder: Jahresbericht des Kriegskinderheims Hampstead Nurseries* (London: Imago, 1949); Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud, *War and Children*, ed. Philip R. Lehrman (New York: International Universities Press, 1944).

**268** Gustav Bychowski, “Physiology of Schizophrenic Thinking,” *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 98, no. 4 (1943): 368–386. Bychowski might have been better known to many for his reflections about dictatorships. Gustav Bychowski, “Dictators and their Followers: A Theory of Dictatorship,” *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America* 1, no. 3 (1943): 455–457.

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**Note:** Ernst Papanek wrote this text in German in June 1944 and it was published in Inge Hansen-Schaberg, Hanna Papanek and Gabriele Rühl-Nawabi, eds. *Ernst Papanek: Pädagogische und therapeutische Arbeit – Kinder mit Verfolgungs-, Flucht- und Exilerfahrungen während der NS-Zeit* (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 61–79. In 1945 he had written the text in English as well, but with some minor changes.

“Cambridge Evacuation Survey”;<sup>269</sup> and the author’s own articles and reports on his experiences with refugee children. In his “They Shall Inherit the Earth,”<sup>270</sup> Otto Zoff gives a terrifying account of “what we have done

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to the children of the world”.

And yet we still have no special study and evaluation of the situation of the Jewish children and Jewish youth all over the world.

Do we need such a special study? Are Jewish children and Jewish youth in a situation peculiar to themselves? Is there a Jewish youth? Is it the youth of a race or a nation? Is it the youth of a religious community or of a language group? Is it the youth of a group united by a common decent or molded by a common social and educational influence?

We need not attempt to decide these controversial questions for the past or for the distant future. For the present, Hitler has undoubtedly created the psychological species [of] “Jewish youth.” This species consists of the children of a group of human beings who have been subjected to a special type of cruelty or who feel themselves threatened by such cruelty.

National Socialism has subjected to this kind of persecution a motley variety of other groups as well. We shall certainly find among children of other groups many psychological phenomena common among Jewish children. But there are psychic trends more or less characteristic of Jewish youth of today, and an understanding of these and a knowledge of their proper treatment will be of great importance for the future of the whole group and its individual members.

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### **The Environmental Factor**

Louis L. Snyder, in a “History of Modern Ethnic Theory,”<sup>271</sup> expresses the opinion of many authors as to the species “Jews”: “The ‘typical[ly] Jewish face’ is not an anthropological or physical in character, but psychical and social, a result of centuries of Ghetto life.”<sup>272</sup> Social environment is certainly not the only factor that forms and influences body and soul, but for the purpose of our discussion of the psychological situation of Jewish youth in the world of today,

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<sup>269</sup> Isaacs et al., eds. *The Cambridge Evacuation Survey*.

<sup>270</sup> Otto Zoff, *They Shall Inherit the Earth* (New York: The John Day Company, 1943).

<sup>271</sup> Louis L. Snyder, *Race, a History of Modern Ethnic Theories* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1939).

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

one factor is of preponderant importance, i.e. the relation of the Jews to society, the persecution of some and the threat of persecution to others.

Under Nazi persecution the Jewish children of Europe have been cruelly made aware of their common fate. This paper will give particular attention to the European group. Non-European Jewish youth has not experienced just this kind of persecution. They have felt compassion for Jewish children on the other side. They have sometimes been afraid – it could happen to them. But they have never actually experienced personal humiliation and danger; forced separation from parents, relatives and friends, hunger, cold, persecution or death.

The environmental factors which have provoked and are provoking the psychic trauma of European Jewish youth today have not always been of the same kind or of the same power, though they have always had the same origin – Hitler's war of extermination of the Jews. There have been different developmental tendencies and phases. These alone could explain the often contradictory

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psychic reactions of young Jewish groups and individuals. But even psychic trauma of the same nature manifest themselves differently according to the past psychic experiences of the individual and his emotional status at the moment of the trauma, and according to whether the trauma became effective in early childhood, after an emotionally calm and secure childhood, or after a childhood full of emotional privations, rejections and inhibitions.

We must not regard the psychic condition of an individual or a group as static, but rather dynamic. In most cases, however, it will be found a static mental and emotional developmental tendency which is promoted or hindered by traumatic experiences. The knowledge of such tendencies will be the starting point for individual treatment and educational program for the groups concerned, careful consideration being given to individual differences, the developmental history of the individual up to the moment of the trauma, the various type of traumata, the promotion of retardation of psychic tendencies of the trauma, changes in the acute status of the individual's emotional and mental life, and the social background of these developments.

### **The First Phase of Persecution – Hope to Escape, Hope to Survive**

When the persecution of the Jews in Germany began, it was still a matter of temperament whether the individual chose to base his hopes on a speedy end to the terror or even the early overthrow of Hitler himself, or on emigration from his sphere. The majority, and especially the youth, did not react to the social fact of persecution with despair. There was still this or the other way out. Psychic readiness to find a way

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out, the expectation of socially impossible developments, and similarly unrealistic conceptions were not limited to the children.

In her study entitled “Ruth,” Irma Kessel “*Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie*, Copenhagen, 1936”<sup>273</sup> reports on her experiences with a six-year-old Jewish girl in Germany about six months after Hitler’s seizure of power. “. . . she changed completely in a short time,” she writes, “she became ambitious, peevish, pale, and was seized with an intense interest in arithmetic and writing.”

“. . . Will the teacher be very happy,” Ruth asked, “if I know so much? If I can write up to a hundred, will the teacher tell the principal and then will the principal be glad? And if I can write up to a thousand and write all the letters and read all the names, do you think Adolf Hitler will like me a little bit too and forget that I’m a Jewish child?” “. . . I’m not allowed to play with Inge anymore because Inge’s father is in the S.A. Inge’s mother says I used to be Inge’s best friend, but I’m still Jewish and that could hurt them.” “. . . All the Jews have to get out of Germany soon. Adolf Hitler has a long list of all the Jews and he goes down the list and chases them all out. I’m so scared when they’re coming to me. And what if there’s no room in any country? Once I said ‘Heil Hitler’ in the street and a S.A. man slapped me in the face; and he said I should go to Palestine because I’m a dirty Jew . . .”

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“Maybe if I’m very good and study very hard, Adolf Hitler will let me be a German child and like me too.”

Similar experiences like the one described by Irma Kessel were made by the author of this article when he was general director of the homes and schools for refugee children of the OSE Union in France. When the children from Central Europe arrived in 1938, some of them didn’t want to talk about their experiences under the Nazis at all. Later on, however, they spoke of these matters more frequently; some of them even wrote short papers on incidents they remembered, which were published in the form of mural papers or in magazines which the children themselves put out.

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<sup>273</sup> Next to a chapter of her book *Kinder klagen an*, which Papanek seems to refer to (*Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie* 3, no. 3–4 (1936): 113–120, only one article by Kessel was published in 1936, namely: Irma Kessel, “Über kindliches Kriegsspiel,” *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie* 3, no. 1–2 (1936): 62–65. Both, however, are not titled “Ruth.”

Speaking of the year 1938, after the occupation of Austria but before the bloody November days, one twelve-year-old boy, a Viennese, described the spirit prevailing in the “Jewish school” which he attended after Hitler’s invasion: “They talked mostly about emigration. When the teachers, who had all, with one exception, been transferred to a Jewish school on account of their political opinions, advised us to emigrate, and one remarked, ‘ah yes, before when things were better . . .’

Since we had nothing to be happy about, we were tremendously happy when [Max] Schmeling was defeated by Joe Lewis.<sup>274</sup> We repeated to each other all the slogans about his ‘certain victory’ that had appeared in the newspapers before, and we rejoiced that things had come out differently. When we found out that in the fall there would be only one high school left in Vienna for Jews, we got all excited about who would get into this school, and every-

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one was happy who knew that he would no longer be in Germany in the fall. When we received our report cards at the end of the term, we took our leave and hoped to see one another abroad.”

### **The Second Phase – Hopelessness and Despair**

Children who experienced only the early days of Jewish persecution, when the aim was still simply to force the Jews to emigrate, reacted – and react today – psychologically otherwise than those who went through the second phase of closed borders. Utter despair led many who were in a relatively favorable position to give up all hope of a normal or even a better future. At the beginning of 1939, when the children of the “St. Louis” – the ship whose passengers were not permitted to go to land in Cuba despite their visas – were picked up in Boulogne-sur-Mer to be brought to the OSE children’s homes in Montmorency, one fifteen-year-old said to the author: “What’s the sense of our going to these homes? What can we expect there? First they drove us out of Germany, just because we were Jews, then they didn’t give us visas to the United States. They didn’t let us into Cuba, even though we had visas. Then we went to San Domingo and Haiti. We could not land anywhere. Our voyage took us along the coast of Florida. It was so beautiful and peaceful, that country, but there was no harbor for us to land. Now they’ve

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<sup>274</sup> In 1938 African American boxer Joe Louis (1914–1981) won the second fight against German Max Schmeling (1905–2005) with a knockout in the first round, after he had lost the first one in 1936 in round 12. Lewis A. Erenberg, *The Greatest Fight of Our Generation: Louis vs. Schmeling* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

let us land in France. How long will they let us stay there? Where do we go next? What a life!”

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### **The Third Phase – Crushing Fear and Horror**

The third group consists of those children who were not so fortunate as to suffer “only” pre-war terror, “only” humiliation, “only” despair of a better future, “only” separation from their parents, friends and homes, and to find deliverance from persecution, hunger, cold and want in emigration. This third group was exposed also to the horrors of the gas chambers, saw their relatives murdered, performed slave labor in the military service of their enemies, and suffered constant hunger and cold. Aside from the thousands who have been destroyed physically, there are thousands who can be saved from moral and psychic destruction only by a supreme effort. Of these many are perhaps so far gone that we must regard ourselves as successful if we can prevent them from doing society serious injury. Among those not physically ruined we shall find some who never went through anything like a normal childhood development. We shall find those who grew up without parental love and without substitute for it. Many youngsters, without home or school, without friends, will know of only one way to win toleration, to gain small advantages – and that is to humble yourself, to grovel, to meek, treacherously to betray your neighbor, to denounce and deliver him up to the powers that be. Morals, propriety, the relation between the sexes, the position of the individual in the social group, all these will have to learn from the beginning by the children and youngsters who have grown accustomed to an abnormal life under terror and fears. Drives that human society has sublimated in the course of thousands of years will take

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a bestial form in these young people. Instincts have been developed in them that must set the individual in a civilized society in constant conflict with the community and must inevitably endanger the community. True, all this applies to a certain extent to it all of warring humanity, and it certainly applies to large numbers of the people who have been oppressed by the Nazis; nevertheless, many of these problems are the problems of Jewish youth first and foremost – the young Jews who lived through the terror of Hitler’s war of extermination against the Jews.

### Resistance Against Psychic and Emotional Destruction

We have several reasons for offering the following examples of children and young people who did not succumb to the psychic and moral temptation to degrade themselves, individuals who fought with heroism and ingenuity against such degradation – and with success. In the first place, we have no contact, for the time being, with those children who have been emotionally and mentally crushed by the terror; we shall have them before us in sufficiently horrifying numbers now that Europe has been liberated. Most important, however, these examples demonstrate even more clearly than the successes achieved in the conscious treatment and education of the children of the first group of Hitler's terror victims that we need not give up hope of restoring to health these injured child souls. Perhaps it will take decades of the most intensive efforts of the best psychologists, sociologists, parents, guardians, educators and teachers to achieve this restoration – the field cannot assign a more important, a more painful or a more wonderful task to its

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workers. But the task can and will be accomplished. We may draw confidence from the examples before us of children who rebelled against their own social and physical decline and of those who responded readily to treatment and education given with scientific knowledge, with understanding and with love.

Most of the examples we now set forth to support our optimism, as well as most of the examples cited to demonstrate the problems and difficulties of the adjustment, are taken from a study on refugee children which the author of this article made with the New York School of Social work in 1942 and 1943 as a project.

The techniques used in this study in obtaining the children's reactions consisted of questionnaires, interviews with refugee children and adults who work or worked with them, letters, autobiographies, case records and school reports. Only in a very few cases was literature or personal observation used to illustrate one or another problem.

Two forms of questionnaires were used: one for children and the other for adults. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a letter explaining its purpose and the proper way of handling it. These letters also asked for other suggestions and advise, with reference, for instance, to problems not included in the questionnaires.

We wanted to study the effect on these children of:

- Their separation from parents, friends and homeland.
- Their being shoved about from country to country.

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- Their experience of danger and persecution to themselves, their relatives and their friends.
- The shift from danger, bombing, persecution and insecurity to security and protection.
- Their removal from dictatorship countries to democratic countries.
- The change from authoritarian education (schools for Jews, no schools at all) to democratic education.
- The effect of the sudden acquisition of freedom – as to whether it leads to excessive unrestraint.

In questionnaire 'B,' the questionnaire for agencies, social workers and teachers, we asked for direct answers to these questions and inquired as to what behavior problems arose in connections therewith. Other questions in 'B' concerned the past and present backgrounds of the children discussed, so that we might learn if, how and why the same problems under different conditions and circumstances elicited no reaction or behavior patterns different reactions or patterns.

14 social work agencies and 4 schools contributed their material on refugee children and discussed their experiences. In addition to these, 17 social workers, 10 teachers, 2 pediatricians and 2 camp counsellors answered the questionnaires. All these work or have worked with refugee children. 9 refugee parents and 5 foster parents wrote us their opinion on their children. The answers came from New York, Illinois, New Hampshire, Maryland, California and Pennsylvania in this country, and from Palestine, Canada England and Mexico. Besides active social workers and teachers in these countries,

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4 social workers who had experience with refugee children in Europe contributed their opinion.

In questionnaire 'A' for children, we broke down the same questions into more specific detailed queries which could be more easily answered and promised a clearer picture of the subject under study. The background questions in questionnaire 'A' were also more detailed, on the one hand so that we might obtain a fuller knowledge of the individual reaction of each child's personality, and on the other hand so that we might have an opportunity to compile some kind of statistics.

The 214 children who answered the questionnaires represent a good cross-section of the entire group. But we do not believe that the statistics set forth in this report can do more than give a better understanding of the group interviewed; they

do not admit of exact conclusions as to these problems in relation to the entire group of refugee children.

“I have the feeling that my various emigrations have given me much that I would have never experienced otherwise. But still I have a certain feeling of insecurity.” Thus writes a boy from Poland now seventeen years old. He arrived in this country a year and a half ago, after wandering from Poland to Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.

In April 1943, Peter M. arrived in New York City from Lisbon. He was born in Germany sixteen years ago, the son of a well-to-do Jewish merchant. After the bloody days of November

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1938, the whole family fled from Germany to Antwerp, Belgium, where they lived for two years. By that time, Hitler had already occupied Belgium too, and one day the Nazis ordered all non-Belgian Jews out of Antwerp. Peter went to Brussels.

“As you certainly know,” he starts his story, which he wrote himself in the Quaker office at Lisbon on January 1, 1943, “by the middle of July 1943, all the Jews from Belgium were deported to Poland. At the time I was there, they were sending only children from 13 to 21 years old, making no difference between sexes. One day I was sitting at home reading a book, I heard the bell ring, but as it was not in good condition I didn’t pay much attention and proceeded with my reading. After a few moments, I heard something like a whisper inquiring ‘is R. B. at home?’ As soon as I heard this I had quite a shock knowing that something bad was coming, for I knew what the point of the question was. However, I did not lose my head. From the window of my kitchen there was a ladder leading down to the yard. I came down the steps and ran as fast as I could to the house of a Belgian acquaintance of mine. I stayed there till night came. Then I went home very quietly, packed up my things and went with the next train in the direction of Paris. So I left Brussels on September 1, 1942 and got to Paris on September 3. I stayed there for one day and then proceeded to the border of occupied and unoccupied France to a town named Angoulême. I remained there for two days and then went on with a smuggler over the demarcation line. When I was already on the other side I took a train to Périgieux. Afterwards I was sent by the Committee to a children’s colony

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which was not far from Limoges. The name of the colony was Château de Montintin. I was there for two days. Then at three o’clock in the night came French Garde Mobile and took all the children in order to send them to Poland. But I said to myself, ‘I saved myself in Belgium, why should I now in France let

myself be taken to Poland?' I left my things there and jumped through the window. I hid myself and in the morning I went on foot to Limoges, walking about 45 km. I stayed for six weeks at Limoges. I saw that there was not any possibility for me to stay in France and decided to go to Spain. Then I proceeded from Limoges to Perpignan and there I was arrested in the railway station for I was not legally there. They were planning to send me from prison to Poland, but I was cleverer than the police. I tore all my documents up and said I was a Rumanian, as Rumanians were not to be sent to Poland, and I remained there for five days in prison when miss Elmes from the Quakers in Perpignan came and released me; from there I was sent to a children's colony in Canet Plage where I stayed for two weeks. Then I went with a hunter who was going to hunt to the Pyrenees who took me for nothing to Spain. The hunter left me, of course, in the middle of the Pyrenees, already on Spanish territory. I didn't know then what route I should follow. Then I summoned all my courage and decided to go straight ahead. After having walked for five days and nights I got to Barcelona. There I met Dr. Sequerra who gave me money to live on. After a stop of five weeks I went to Vigo. As in Spain there is very careful inspection on trains, and as I had no documents at all. I played deaf-and-dumb. I was unable to hear or to speak. When

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the conductor appeared I only made signs with my hands and so I arrived at Vigo where I stayed for eight days. Then I went with a smuggler to Portugal. This was on the 28th of December. Five months are gone since I fled and till now I have no news at all from my parents."

When he arrived in Lisbon, he stayed in his room for several days and cried. Everybody had someone there, only he was alone. He did not know where his parents were. He had received only a postcard from an uncle in Belgium informing him that his parents and little brother had been deported to Poland. He was utterly exhausted. He had felt little fear during his exciting journey – his first time away from his parents – because "I had nothing to lose. There was only deportation to Poland."

Here in the United States. Peter is still nervous even today. Noise startles him and it usually takes him a long time to get to sleep. He suffers from headaches and has a slight eye tic. He wants to be a furrier because his father was a furrier. Before his separation from his family, Peter had never had any interest in that business.

In 1944, one hundred and twenty-two Jewish orphans from Rumania, whose parents had perished in Transistria, arrived in Palestine. One boy was called "young Tarzan" by the Palestinian papers because for more than one year he had wandered through the forests and fed on grass, fruits and roots. Ira Hirschman, who in the same year, as representative of the President's Refugee Board, made possible the escape of many

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Jews from the gas chamber, tells of one boy whom he saw on the child's arrival in Constantinople after an adventurous flight from Poland. The spirit and mental development of this boy made such a wonderful impression on Hirschman that he wanted to adopt the youngster at once.

Dr. Joseph Friedjung, psychological consultant for refugee children in Haifa, wrote to the author a letter upon the arrival of the Polish children in Palestine after their flight from Poland through Russia: "It is really astonishing how few visible signs of neglect these children show after their three-and-a-half years of wandering about."

One social worker in New York, in her answer to the questionnaire in the above-mentioned study remarked: "A few children of the group that did not leave Europe until 1938 exhibited rather marked fear manifestations even after they arrived here. But once they had regained some measure of security feeling, they were rather more optimistic than the other children in facing new dangers. One girl, for instance, tried to comfort and encourage her foster parents when they were frightened and worried over the news of Pearl Harbor."

### **Emotional After-Effects of Persecution Trauma**

The following less positive examples are given not to corroborate those just cited but to establish that the optimistic view is in most cases not a simple, definite diagnosis but rather a hopeful point of departure for a systematic purposeful

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therapy. Such therapy can achieve its greatest success only by seeking to restore to these children their sense of shelter and security.

"I was separated from my family. My parents and my brother were dragged off to Poland. I saw how the Nazis burned the synagogues in Berlin in November 10, 1938. I saw how they broke the windows of the Jewish shops – threw all the property of the Jews out in the street . . . I was in despair when I saw all this in the land of my birth. I knew that the Jews were not well treated, but I was deeply shocked when I experienced it myself. Today I am even more desperate – things are getting worse everywhere."

So writes a fourteen-year-old child from Germany who has been living here in America with foster parents for three years, peacefully and under favorable circumstances.

A youngster, now sixteen years old, answered our questions as follows:

I did not bear these persecutions very courageously or proudly. I shall never forget this cowardice. Not because I am ashamed that I was cowardly, but because I hate my

humble, submissive spirit. I was so frightened, and I cannot get rid of this fear. I never feel safe; I don't even feel safe from my fear.

The New York Bureau of Child Guidance, in its answers to the questionnaire referred to above, reports three cases of refugee children who were emotionally disturbed in various ways by their experiences. One child, who had been carefully pro-

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tected by her parents in Germany from every slightest danger, in this country turned into an over-anxious, neurotic young girl who did not even dare to go out without her parents. One boy who had been in several concentration camps developed into a retiring, bashful youngster in this country, shy and solitary both at home and in school. The third case was that of a very aggressive boy who was haled before the juvenile court with his gang because of his passionate desire to treat others here as the Hitler Youth had treated him in Germany.

When the first children from Germany came to our refugee children's houses in France, it would have been easy to achieve discipline among them by the methods employed to enforce slavish obedience among the Hitler Youth. The children actually longed for such methods, for all the forms of the life and education of the Hitler Youth, from which they had been excluded, were in their eyes highly desirable. They would have been only too happy to play a bit at Hitler Youth themselves.

### **Mass Trauma – Mass Neurosis – Group Treatment**

It would lead us too far afield to undertake here a discussion of all the most important individual and social psychological problems of the Jewish youth of today, to say nothing of a closer examination of their traumata and the proper treatment of individual cases. The abundance, the gigantic proportions and the pressing nature of these problems are sufficient warrant for their extensive and intensive study by as many as can devote themselves to this task. True, most of these cases are just the old regulation neuroses and psychoses as we see from the observations of Dr. Robert Gillespie ("Psychological

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Effects of War on Citizen and Soldier"<sup>275</sup>) made in connection with the psychiatric patients of Guy's Hospital in London during the period of Nazi attacks on England:

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<sup>275</sup> Robert D. Gillespie, *Psychological Effects of War on Citizen and Soldier* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1944).

“. . . the patients that came to us presented chiefly with a few exceptions, the same problem as in peacetime.” But the number of cases and the type of traumata creating the neuroses make a mass problem of what were formerly the problems of some relatively few individuals. And the sheer number involved must necessarily alter the kind of treatment applied.

Fear neurosis caused by group persecution which the individual experiences in common with many others is not the same fear neurosis as that caused by an individual trauma. Thus it is not simply the impossibility of giving individual treatment to such vast numbers that must lead us to resort to group treatment; we must recognize that such group treatment is indicated where mass neurosis has been created by a trauma suffered by many in common with many. This is not to say that individual psychiatric treatment is not to be rendered here also; but it must be clear that in addition and in the interest of such individual treatment education, activity and community life are essential, in many cases even more essential than individual treatment. Such community life must be the cornerstone of the psychic reconstruction of the individual.

### **Super Ego and Conscience Formed by Social Ideals**

It has been observed that with the establishment of the family as a social institution the period of childhood of human beings was prolonged. This lengthening of childhood made it possible for the child to inherit the vast cultural and scientific

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wealth of mankind. Freud had indicated how the Super Ego, the conscience of man, is formed through the relationship of the child to its parents. Must those children whose parents have been murdered inevitably lack this conscience that should serve as their guide and standard of action? Or can a Super Ego be formed by the relationship of the children to their community when the natural parental stimulus is absent? There is little probability that we shall be able to find substitute parents for all the children whose parents have perished in the mass murder and destruction of the Jews. How will our perception of the need of these children for a guiding social sense and the importance of developing in them such a sense without the normal parental influence affect our thinking in regard to the inner structure and educational methods of the homes instituted for their care? How shall we advise the substitute parents and the natural parents as to the treatment of their children after years of horror and separation in order that these youngsters may be led back to normal family relations?

Today there is for most men sufficient opportunity for the indulgence of violent aggressive instincts to warrant our hope that the reaction of young people

in the opposite direction in relation to the outer world will bring them, in their maturity, the inner peace that we have all been longing for. Such is not the case of the Jewish children in Nazi Europe. Their aggressive impulses have nowhere found outlets; they are forced to cower and be silent. They are not permitted to engage in sports that sublimates the aggressive drives.

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Their normal reaction to the attacks of others upon them must be forcibly suppressed if they would not risk death. They are rather against their own “humble, submissive souls” than against their oppressors. Yes, even the ideal of the heroic warrior battling against oppression is granted these children only in the misty realm of wish dreams. The total Nazi terror leaves room neither for the sense of security nor for the identification of self with parents or social ideals. The Jewish child is offered only hopelessness, fear, depression or escape through crime.

Only the dreamer far removed from reality can ignore the terrible psychic danger facing a whole generation of victims of total oppression; but only the hopeless pessimist can believe that it is possible to root out utterly the higher human instincts in our children. We must see the danger in order to meet it successfully; but at the same time we must hold fast to our principles of human psychology and take courage from the examples before us of individual endurance and individual rebellion, examples of heroic resistance to spiritual brutalization defeatism. Our recognition of the strength of this resistance will permit us to hope and to dare fight the danger, to strive purposefully for the rebuilding and remolding of psychologically imperiled individuals and culturally imperiled society. Thus the heroic battle of the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto will attain a significance beyond the merely historical; it can become the cornerstone for the rebuilding of the moral and social psyche of the humiliated Jewish child.

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The psychologist will not be surprised to find that these youngsters, having suffered persecution, having been trampled underfoot, seize upon any and all kinds of ideals with wild passion and devotion. All the oppression, despair and doubt, all the fear, cowardice, insecurity and longing for shelter, all the sense of guilt, humiliation, and rejection, all the hatred and desire for revenge that these children have suffered and nourished are sublimated in new worships – the worship of democracy, of Socialism, of Communism, of Zionism, of nationalism for the country in which they find themselves, or pacifism, or self-sacrificing heroism. The educator must undertake the tremendous task of guiding and forwarding this process of sublimation and adjustment to reality.

Sublimation and adjustment are active processes, and they can be developed and promoted only by activity. In his longing for the Messiah who will release him, the passive day-dreamer becomes a self-consuming neurotic. "Need and helplessness," says Alfred Adler, "normally lead to a sense of inferiority," and "the keener the sense of inferiority, the higher the goal of personal power." Boundless egocentrism is the mark of infantile underdevelopment, just as the lust for revenge is the demon driving those suffering from the sense of inferiority of the helpless. Our study of refugee children growing up in this country under normal conditions, however, has revealed an astonishing renunciation of revenge. Instead of a hunger for revenge, we find a deep desire to fight injustice and help the persecuted all over the world. It is almost a rule that this attitude gains strength with the

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depth and scope of the individual's own experiences, whereas the egocentrism and desire for revenge intensify in proportion as the personal experiences of the child are more limited and his sense of danger and helplessness in the face of persecution and cruelty keener. While in the latter case the personal fear of the child has the greatest influence on his mental set, along with his sense of guilt because of his fear and perhaps because others and not he are actually suffering, in the case of those who have themselves suffered persecution, the sense of release and deliverance from the cruelty of their experiences and of gratitude for the smallest kindnesses takes precedence over all other reactions. In many cases along with this gratitude goes a certain acknowledgement that after all the expected worst did not come to pass.

A boy now twenty-two years old, for instance, describes his experience of the boycott of the Jewish firms in Germany. "But at the same time I remember how loyal old Aryan customers continued to patronize Jewish stores in spite of the boycott."

A sixteen-year-old boy from Austria, on the other hand, describes how his father was taken to Dachau, how the synagogues were burned, how his mother and other Jews were forced to clean the streets. "I couldn't feel anything; it was too much for me to watch. I shall never forget it." And he concludes, "Although you are not supposed to be vengeful, I still felt nothing but bitter hatred for the Nazis."

Many of these children will express the traumata of their experiences in neuroses; the aggressive will often give vent to their reactions in antisocial activity. An education

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that gives encouragement and goal can overcome the traumatic inferiority feeling and the urge to antisocial conduct that comes from the many traumatic suppressions carried over from the Hitler terror. Such education can achieve sublimations that will contribute to the happiness of the individual and the welfare of the social group.

### **Social Sense and Community Feeling to Help Cure Trauma**

Our task must be undertaken not only for the sake of democracy, for which we are fighting this war, but also for the sake of the individual lives of the parentless children, the children without family security, the children whose sense of inferiority has been intensified by terror, fear and deprivation. For all of these we must so plan our psychiatric treatment and educational guidance that the individual lust for power is impeded and the “innate social sense” is promoted.

It is of secondary importance for our present considerations whether we regard this social sense as something inborn or the product of life in human society. Certainly it is astounding how highly developed this social sense is in the normal child, and it is equally astounding what a tremendous contribution its cultivation can make to the “normalization” of the gravest psychiatric cases.

In the many letters we have received from children who were with us in the homes in France, their anxiety as to the welfare of the other children of the homes makes its appearance again and again. The great common experience of absence from parents, seems to have had the effect on many children of lessening the sibling rivalries and of expanding the

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feeling of brotherly love to embrace all their fellows.

When asked if they were still interested in the peoples of Europe and would like to help them, all the children said yes. “Since I myself went through so much there, I naturally want to help the people over there in every way possible.”

Almost all the refugee children answered the question as to what they liked least in the United States with “the discrimination.”

“I like everything here except that there is still discrimination against Jews and Negroes,” writes a sixteen-year-old girl, and a fifteen-year-old boy writes: “I don’t like the discrimination against Negroes, Italians, Irishmen, etc.” And: “I am against racial discrimination,” comes from a twelve-year-old girl living in California, “the way the children in our school treat the Mexicans.”

### Wavering Love for Parents: Loyalty

Whether these children suffered persecution together with their parents or were separated from them, their love for their parents – always one of the most important factors in a child’s life – plays a manysided role. The process of emancipation from parents is often forced by the violence of external circumstances. But even where this independence is built up not simply by outer events but with the inner approval and desire of the child, there often remains a host of conscious and unconscious memories of events and experiences of the child’s life with its parents; there remain

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emotional ties with distant loves – ties that lend cruelty to the fact of separation.

As long as some tie with the parents remains, many children try to fit the details of their own lives into their relationship with their parents or an anticipated common future with them. One fourteen-year-old girl, who had studied Spanish in a children’s home in the hope that she would one day be able to emigrate with them to South America, wrote to her parents, separated from her by many miles and many barriers: “. . . last Wednesday we had our first Spanish lesson. Today we have another. I thought it would be impossible for you to study Spanish in U., and since the pronunciation and spelling are identical, I decided to write you everything I learn and add a few remarks about the pronunciation whenever necessary. So you’ll be able to learn Spanish this way. Please keep these remarks. Each of you is to send me ten sentences from the first lesson and ten sentences from the second lesson when you write. Let’s hope I’ll be able to help you learn Spanish this way. The pronunciation is very easy, and I hope you’ll be able to learn a lot in spite of the insufficient explanations. Well, now, let’s go to work!”

When the children from the refugee children’s homes in France were en route to America – many of them had lived in these houses for more than two years – they were permitted to see at the station those of their parents and relatives who were then interned in Gurs. The evening before the meeting, the transport counselors gave the children a scanty bread ration. These counselors were much moved to see that the next morning

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in Gurs the children gave their parents almost the entire ration distributed to the group; they had saved it from the night before. Edith, thirteen years old, who saw her parents in Gurs after her separation from them in Germany more than two years before, told us soberly, in a matter-of-fact kind of report, of how happy she had been to see her parents again. Mother had looked better than she feared, but

Father had looked very pale and thin and much older. “We should have begun saving bread earlier,” she said, “then we could have given them more. Do you think I’ll be able to send them anything from America?” Then she went on quickly to describe the reception in Lisbon and how nice it was there.

A short time ago we received a visit from a seventeen-year-old boy from France who had come to America more than three years before and since that time had lived in a small Connecticut town. To our question as to whether he heard from his parents, he answered as follows: “I never heard anything after the outbreak of war. The last letter came from Poland. I don’t miss them anymore and I’m quite independent already, but I’d like very much to help them and I’d be very happy if they could live in a safe country. But I don’t worry. I know my parents sent me away so I wouldn’t worry, so it would be against their intention.” In response to an unexpected horror at his apparent lack of feeling, Emil went on: “I’m only worried now that they may not have gotten my last letter, in which I told them that my operation had come out all right. They knew I had to

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have this operation and they would worry a lot if they didn’t find out what happened.”

Another boy, sixteen years old – the age of the awakening urge to independence – writes: “My separation from my parents doesn’t bother me much. In a way I even like it. But I do wish so much that my parents had it as good as I have it. Another says: “I feel plenty old enough to take care of myself, but I still long very much for my mother.”

From children of all ages we heard: “I miss my parents very much,” or “although I have a very nice home and very sweet guardians, I often long for my parents.” One thirteen-year-old writes: “I don’t think about it, because it hurts too much.”

Of course there are children who like to dramatize their misfortune. They enjoy commiseration. And of course, there are others whose flight into self-pity produces neuroses. It is really rather astonishing, however, how few cases of fear hysterics and milieu neurotics we find among these refugee children and how seldom neurotic fixation to the trauma makes its appearance. Here again it should be noted that in regard to the cases that will have to be treated in liberated Europe, our observations thus far will do more than aid us in diagnosis of these neuroses; more important they can give us hope of successful therapy. Attention should here be called to the frequently occurring incubation period of neuroses which, in cases of prolonged danger, naturally develop only after the cessation of the danger, often a long while after the danger

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has disappeared. Such delayed neuroses often manifest themselves suddenly in puberty.

### **Past Experiences Consciously Used as a Cornerstone of Hopeful Adjustment**

The adjustment and adaption of the mangled psyche of the Jewish youth of Europe, to human society, to the culture, customs and conceptions of democratic and civilized mankind after war, can be achieved, despite the horrible trauma suffered by that psyche, by means of progressive individual and community education. Much will depend upon what society, what customs and what conceptions we can offer these young people as ideals to replace the horror of Hitlerism.

These ideals can also help us in the sexual education of young people who in most cases will lack the attitude and understanding that make possible a normal healthy sexual relationship. Although we cannot consider the subject here, we wish to call attention to its importance.

One of the most important points upon which we find agreement between our own observations and those of nearly all of the authors who have given us reports on their experiences with children in the last World War and during former periods of persecution – i.e. that in very few cases are children, no matter what their previous experiences, unable to start a new life unburdened by the “tyranny of the past,” provided they are given halfway sensible treatment and education. And the most important element of such “halfway sensible treatment and education” is the careful effort of the educator not to repress or destroy the past, not to root out old loyalties in

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an attempt to leave room for new. “I am a part of all that I have met” – and the severe psychic trauma suffered by these children can be disposed of in only two ways: They can either be forcibly repressed and suppressed into psychic burdens or neurosis that must weigh down the future of the individual, or they can be built into the keystone of a character elevated through “noble suffering,” of an intensified love of life, of a stronger will to happiness – a happiness not regarded as a prize gained at the expense of others but as a good created and enjoyed with others in and of the social group.

## 8 Some Fragments

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“You will perhaps be surprised that I write you from France. But maybe you have already heard that I have been in France since March 8th. I feel splendid and I am very happy to be out of Germany. I am here with about 57 children in a wonderful home close to Paris, approximately 10 miles from that city. We have an enormous park with two lawns where we play during our free time. The food is excellent and I have already gained 11 bs. and have become much taller. But that is also because of the change of climate.

Early in the morning we have gymnastics. After breakfast we have classes until twelve. We study physics, French, English, German, drawing, mathematics, geography, general culture etc. We also have sports during part of our free time. In the afternoon we have class for one hour and then we are free. There are four big houses for the children, all of them belong to the USEon? OSE which is a splendid organization. Our houses have a general director who is very kind. Our headmaster also teaches sports and handicrafts. At present we are making attractive leather things. Before that we made baskets and soon we shall have a workshop for carpentry and bookbinding. Next time maybe I shall write part of my letter in English and you can do the same if you like with your whole letter.

My parents hope they will be able to go to England soon; let us hope they will make it. Recently we had a great opening party in one of our homes. There were about 400 people and also some barons. We performed a lot of very funny things. I was dressed in a straw skirt and a necklace of dried macaroni which represented the bones of my victims. I played songs on the harmonica and on the accordion and I joined in a chorus. A lot of pastries, lemonade and ices were served.” -14 year old boy at Montmorency.

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“Many of the children were waiting for their parents to fetch them overseas – somewhere. We had to prepare them for their future fatherland and at the same time help them to carry with them this newly acquired cultural and intellectual wealth. Our task was complicated by the fact that in many cases the children had been without regular instruction for years. They were no longer accustomed

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**Note:** The following fragments, which describe autobiographical episodes as well as work-related aspects, were used by Papanek for multiple other writings, but are included here, because they offer some important descriptions as well as transcriptions of letters he received.

to systematic study. But above all we had to consider the mental shock which the children had suffered as a result of persecution, separation from their parents and their friends and emigration.” – Director of OSE Homes

“It’s wonderful here. I should like you to be here too. I can imagine what is happening with you now.” – Boy 12 from Vienna

“Unfortunately, my dear mother writes to me that she got a refusal from Australia. Couldn’t you help her to go to the United States, uncle dear?” – Girl 12, Ludwigshafen

“Imagine, I had been without news of you for three weeks. You can surely realize how upset I was. This morning I was awakened with these words: ‘You have a letter from your parents.’ You can imagine how quickly I got out of bed. My dear parents, don’t worry so much about me. The Lord has helped us out of Germany, let us hope that he will also bring us together. There, there, we must be brave! I am not homesick any more. Most of the children still have their parents in Germany and they must stand it too.” – Girl 15, Vienna, parents in S.A.

“. . . The things they let us have for breakfast! It was really wonderful. Wish you could have had some of it too.” – Girl 7, Palatinate

“Dear mother, I dreamt that you came here in your gray dress. And when you came in you began to wait for Auntie.” – Girl 7, Lower Austria

“. . . Is daddy with you again?” – Boy 7, Berlin

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“I ask you again, whether Ernst and Leo (brothers in concentration camp) have come back. Some day you will answer at least by saying yes. But this time it is no.” – Girl 9, Vienna

“. . . You, my dear mother, you get worried right away if I don’t write to you for a few days. Well, it’s the same with me . . .” – Girl 12, Breslau

“How are you? I hope you are all right. I am all right. I have already written three letters to you but didn’t get an answer. I beg you to answer at once when you get this letter, for I am very worried. How are things with my dear Father? Is he all right? I can write no more, I am so worried.” – Girl 7, Vienna

Extracts from the letters of these children not only give some idea what torments they suffered but the feelings of hope. [. . .]

Letters from parents

“. . . and pray that we find some possibility, whatever it may be, to get away from here.”

“Your father will soon go to England, but I shall stay on with Rose in Stettin.”

“We hope something can still be arranged about Cuba.”

“Father writes that he arrived safely in Shanghai.”

“. . . There has been fine weather since last week, so we don't go to Loquai Park to sit on the benches for Jews but we go to the roof of Lilly's instead. As for you, you don't have to do that sort of thing anymore.”

[. . .]

“. . . Write very often to your poor Mother, as often as you can, so she won't be worried. If you do anything, help your dear mother, for you know what your mother has had to suffer for you.”

Our approach to the normal child's reactions differs from our approach to those of the refugee child, who has, suffered the loss of and is struggling to regain the all-important sense of security.

Certainly separation from parents, relatives, and friends, from home and familiar surroundings, almost always creates serious behavior problems in children.

Very often children interpret separation from their parents as rejection. Sometimes they regard it as punishment, and a real or imaginary guilt feeling makes the poor child sick and miserable.

Being sent out to face a new and unknown environment is enough to arouse a fear feeling in any child, even when a disorganized home has failed to give the proper protection in the past.

These problems are second in importance only to the prime factor of security, of the loss of the sense of protectedness in the child whose parents have suffered Nazi persecution and the ravages of war of the BLITZ kind and whose tormented family has been unable to defend itself.

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. . . there, which became the guiding line, not only for the OSE work later on, but also for the work with refugee children for many other agencies.

There are three main events which influenced greatly and constructively the future of the Jewish refugee children. One was the battle in the Warsaw Ghetto, the historical importance of which can only be compared with the fight of the 200 Spartans under Leonides at the Thermopyles. The Warsaw battle

became known only later, but it was most important as an historic event which permitted the refugee child to identify proudly with a group which had suffered a tremendous beating for the same reasons they had to suffer, and had not given up the fight, although they knew they had to pay with their lives. Second, the hopes and vision of positive results of an emigration to Palestine, or a country of their own choice and, third, the encouragement and spirit which they found for a constructive promotion of collective and individual cooperation and happiness offered in the educational approach and practice of the children's institutions of the OSE in France.

There we also tried to educate never to give up our trust in humanity, in spite of so many happenings which would seem to prove the opposite, to preserve culture, music and arts of the whole human race in us when others had forgotten, to face difficulties and to master them, to understand and respect others and still not to lose our own identity, and to become more and more our brother's keeper.

We too often overlook the "response" in responsibility. Youth always likes to have something asked of them. From the confidence the grown-

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ups have in the child, the child gains a sense of responsibility, self-confidence, courage and poise. Too often children can see no need for their help, but when they do, their response will come quickly and effectively. In this assumption we were never deceived by the children in the OSE homes. These homes were not just institutions conceived and directed by grown-ups, professionals or lay people. They were children's communities with no pretense or self-government – such a thing does not even exist in political establishments, where sovereignty is always limited by internal democratic concern for other human beings or outside considerations for other nations. But what we called co-administration and not self-government was genuine and powerful, taken from the preamble of the "constitution" of the OSE homes, which was worked out with the representatives of the children in dozens and dozens of sessions and committee meetings, in assemblies of all the children and grown-ups, an informal but heated conversation in class, during intermissions, in the dining room, kitchen and living room, and in the dormitories before the lights went out. It became part of the striving for a meaningful life, and it kept us all in on this striving.

When Hitler marched into Poland at noon September 1st, 1939, I received a telephone call at my office in Montmorency, ten miles from Paris. The Prefecture informed us that war was inevitable; air attacks were to be expected at any

moment. We must promptly take steps for the protection of the four hundred children in the OSE children's houses of Seine et Oise.

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Some of us did not stay long in Montintin. At the request of the Mayor, who warned me that he was ordered to hand me over to the Nazis, we had to leave overnight, not to endanger the whole setup. We had already left once before for the same reason but came back again only a few days later. When leaving Montintin, now for good, the representatives of the children's parliament walked with us, holding our hands, one asking, "What will happen to us?" we answered, "We will try to get to the U.S.A. and bring you over," reminding them that they should never give up; and that just as we had had our immediate goal Montintin when we had to leave Paris, although we had not even known where exactly it was, whose property it was, how big it was, whether it still existed, or whether it was still available to us, we all had gotten there and now our next step was the U.S.A."

What the idea of the OSE's institutions in France meant even to Jews outside of France can be understood by relating a personal experience we had when we were smuggled out by the underground from France to Spain, to get from there to Portugal and over to the U.S. On one of our involuntary stops our younger son had an attack which my wife, a physician, was afraid would be an appendicitis. This was the time when penicillin was not known. She didn't want to make a decision as to whether we should stay to get the boy to a

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hospital for an operation when necessary or whether we should continue our trip. "If we would suggest we should stay and you would be arrested and handed over to the Armistice Commission, I would feel that I am responsible for you being killed. If I would say we should continue our trip and the appendix would break through, and no hospital around, I would believe I would have killed George." So we decided to ask for a doctor and look in the telephone book for a Jewish name. When the doctor came, he said, similar to the opinion of my wife, he could not make a decision at this moment. We should stay at least for a day and wait for what would develop. We told him that we would be eager to get out of Spain where upon he asked for our name. When I said Papanek, he asked, "Are you related to the Papanek who organized the Children's institutions of the OSE in France?" When I said, "I'm this Papanek," he seemed to be very enthusiastic upon meeting us, but when he quickly left we became worried.

About half an hour later, he came back with three men who were representatives of the Jewish community. They embraced us and kissed us and said, “What could we do for you? Do you need any money?” When we said we could manage, that we’d only like to get out of Spain and over to the United States, and to get the children of the OSE institutions over there, they stated the idea of the OSE homes had revived hope and the will to survive for so many that they

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felt they also had to do something now. We discussed a kind of “underground railroad,” as John Brown had organized it for the Negro slaves before the Civil War, and they promised that children and grown-ups who would have to use it would not have to worry about the money it would cost.

More than a year later, in 1942, there came a boy of about 16 to the OSE office in New York. He did not know me personally, and I did not know him – just his name on a list. He came to Montintin after I left. He was one of those who had used the “underground railroad” through Spain. He brought greetings from our friends and told us in a casual way of an adolescent that a hunter whom the OSE had hired had brought him over the Pyrenees to Spain. There he was brought from one relay station to another. It took him more than two weeks, and he had to pretend that he was mute and deaf all the time because he couldn’t speak Spanish, and he was always worried that if he would open his mouth, people would immediately know that he was not a Spaniard. He said he could do all this; to pretend not to understand a sound and not to say a word, even when the going was rough, because he had a mission to keep the road open and let the other children know that it could be done. I would like to confess that I wanted to get up, snap to attention and listen to the boy in awe and in admiration, but we only embraced each other.

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Only in very few cases are children, no matter what their previous experience, unable to start a new life unburdened by the “tyranny of the past”, provided they are given sensible treatment and education. And the most important element in such “halfway sensible treatment and education” is the careful effort of the educator not to try to repress or destroy the past, not to root out old loyalties in an attempt to make room for new ones. “I am a part of all I have met” – and the severe psychic traumata suffered by these children could not be disposed of by telling them to forget. They needed help with their participation in making decisions about their future, to overcome it by working out their problems in a democratic way.

Just a few thousand of the homeless orphan children who have been in German concentration and labor camps were lucky enough to have left the camps

and gone to Switzerland, Sweden, France, England or Palestine, temporarily or permanently. Most of these have been placed in institutions; some have been placed with relatives or foster parents; an extraordinary high percentage, however, has completely failed to adjust for quite some time. Children enthusiastically received in institutions in France and Palestine have run away after a short time; some have never returned, some have come back from time to time, only to leave again. Some of them have formed gangs in the cities near the camps where my thousands of children were still living. These runaways roamed about, living on odd jobs and theft, preferring this kind of life to normal adjustment.

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### Terror Psychology

Dr. Eugene Minkowsky (France)<sup>276</sup> who heroically organized and headed the OSE underground in Paris during the war and who had an opportunity to examine many of the children coming from concentration camps in Germany to the children's homes of the OSE in France, described them as undisciplined, unstable, primitive, even bestial, but nevertheless eager for affection. He found them much attached to one another and possessed of marked "gang" spirit. The Nazis had taught them vice systematically and that's all. They showed a great eagerness for learning. Having seen people die in their midst and come very close to death themselves, they had lost their sense of death and their respect for life.

We have to be aware of those difficulties and try to handle them, but at the same time we are encouraged by many other reports: When the children from the OSE home France were en route to the U.S.A. – many of them had lived in those houses for more than two years – they were permitted to see at the station those of their parents and relatives who were then internes at Gurs. The evening before the meeting, the transport counselors gave the children a scanty bread ration. These counselors were much moved to see that the next morning in Gurs, the children gave their parents almost the entire ration distributes to the group; they had saved it from the night before. Edith, thirteen years old, who saw her parents in Gurs after her separation from them more than two years before told us soberly, in a matter-of-fact kind of report, of how happy she had been to see her parents again.

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<sup>276</sup> Eugène Minkowski (1885–1972) was a French philosopher and psychiatrist. For his work see Annick Urfer, "Phenomenology and Psychopathology of Schizophrenia: The Views of Eugene Minkowski," *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* 8, no. 4 (2001): 279–289.

It takes time to overcome their distrust. “A group of children and grown-ups was to leave Feldafing Camp. As the order was given only a day in advance (it came from the authorities), they were very suspicious and refused to go. They were used to

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being dragged out of their beds at night and carried away by force that they fled and spent the whole night in the forest surrounding the camp in a downpour that defies description.”

In the same report on Camp Foehrenwald, Marth Warburg writes that a check-up of the children was once made at 11:30 p. m. “Incredible scenes took place. The children had been frightened by so many raids at night when they had already gone to bed that they reacted hysterically. The check-up was made because the children were suspected of double registration.”

### **From Gang Mentality to Community Spirit**

More than other children, they had to regain the conviction that they are accepted, that they are members of a group, that they are no longer an object to be handled but proud and independent individuals.

Although the purpose of this essay is to give a report on the work of the OSE in France and the U. S. A. in the years 1938–1942, it – by its content – discusses the educational problems created by the experiences of refugee children and the way in which these experiences affect their social adjustment and discipline, and the road from persecution to democratic education.

Dr. Leon Wulman had organized an office of the OSE in New York and when I arrived in the U.S.A. in the fall of 1940, we tried to carry through the – as we knew – absolutely necessary decision of OSE to make arrangements for bringing over the 1, 600 children from the French institutions. It was difficult to argue when many people so far away from France believe that

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the children in the OSE homes were safe in unoccupied France while we were deadly sure that the whole of France would be occupied by the Germans the moment the allies started their offensive. But it was something else when we ran into another unsuspected obstacle, namely, what to do once the children would come over to the United States.

When the first group of children arrived in New York, one most unfortunate conflict arose with some professionals and lay people who had the completely unprofessional and not very human idea that the children who had suffered so much should and could completely forget the past and start a new and happier life. This

they thought could easily be carried out if the children would break all relations with people who, up to today, had played a role in their life. We were convinced that quite the opposite had to be done. Every new relationship would come easier if it would not conflict with former loyalties. The children could not and would not forget; a new life, new loyalties could only be firmly constructed if they were built on a positive interpretation of the past. Certainly their unwarranted bad conscience because they had left their beloved ones to be saved, their unwarranted but dangerous guilt feelings that they had survived while so many others perished could not just be forgotten on command; it had to be treated. To have all ties cut with us was making them again feel rejected. I would like to quote here from a letter of Dr. Lagare Gourvitch, International Secretary of Union OSE, who expressed his concern about this unfortunate attitude when I reported to him about it.

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“It is difficult for me to convey to you the sad impression I had after reading your letter. The question raised by you of the stoppage of all connection between our children and our Committee after the arrival in New York greatly worries me. These children have been under our care for a long time, some of them for nearly four years, and we are interested in their fate and wellbeing. It is painful for us not to receive letters from children. We are told here that it is not a proof of children’s forgetfulness, but a result of the policy of the United States Committee<sup>277</sup> who forbid correspondence between children and their relatives and friends in Europe, in order not to break up their assimilation and upbringing. This seems ever so strange to us. It was not our viewpoint at Montmercy. We never allowed parents to interfere with our methods of education, but we never forbade the children to write to their parents and friends! We wrote about this question at full length to the American Committee, expressing our astonishment and bitterness. Other children who did not leave and were promised long letters and reports from their little friends who emigrated, are very disappointed and have the impression that they are already forgotten.

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“You are aware that the second group has left and arrived, and the third group left Lisbon on the 9th. These were our best children. I spent several hours with them in the train and deeply felt the close bond which exists between us. The

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<sup>277</sup> It was not the policy of this committee; it was the policy of, especially, one of the receiving agencies which caused all this trouble [EP].

children were dead sure that they were leaving one O. S. E. Home for another in America, and perhaps they will be disappointed at the beginning; not for long, though, as children forget quickly.

We have every reason to believe that the children's emigration will continue for some time, and we are already preparing a new group of children, this time from centers.

We are still preoccupied with the thought of the creation of an O. S. E. Children's Home in America. Perhaps someday this idea will actually materialize. We must be patient and wait for an opportunity. My old experience taught me that there is nothing like strongly wishing for something, and in the long course the wish eventually comes true.

I have now to take an important decision regarding myself. My visa is expiring and there is no possibility of obtaining an extension. Our friends in New York are now busy in trying to make it an immigration visa, but there is no knowing as to whether they will succeed. Maybe I shall have to go to America myself; in this case I shall have pleasure in discussing with you personally all problems pertaining to our work. Meantime, kindly keep me informed. you know how I appreciate your letters."

/s/ L. Gourvitch  
Sept. 19, 1941 from France

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It was almost impossible to cut through this strong prejudice for instance, I was not even able to get the address of one of our boys whose father was shot as a hostage in France and whose relatives had written personally to me that I should tell the boy about this on the assumption that he could more easily take it from one whom he felt pretty close.

The children did not accept this requested breaking off of their past. Most of them wrote to us asking to remain in contact with them. They met with their friends who they knew were in the same city as they. There were a few meetings which the OSE organised. There was a surprise party for my family and myself – my wife had been the chief physician of the four homes in and near Montmorency and the Associate Executive Director, and our two young boys were "OSE Home children" living in groups, according to their age, in one of the homes. At this meeting they performed a kind of a skit which reported on the details of great importance to them which they and we would consider to be a part of their past.

**Haunted by Bad Conscience and Guilt Feelings**

It was a terrible secret in their mind, shared by almost every one of them. They needed help very badly to face it openly but most of them thought it was impossible to handle it; they didn't even dare to talk about it and yet it was of extreme necessity just to do that, and important to show to them that in most cases they had not committed any crime, and that they were the least guilty one when – seldom enough – they had been involved.

## 9 Report by E. Papanek to the American Committee of “OSE”

In the children’s homes of the “OSE” Union in France are accommodated 1,600 children; 1,100 children from Alsace-Lorraine and occupied France; 300 children are German, Austrian, Czechoslovakian and Polish refugees with parents in concentration camps in the respective countries and in Lublin. Two hundred children are refugees from Holland and Belgium who had lost their parents while in flight. After their evacuation from the four homes in Montmorency, the last 500 children are kept in overcrowded homes, they lack food and do not know what will happen to them if the Nazis enter that part of France where they are living at present. In France they are undesirable foreigners, growing up without any other outlook than that of going to a French concentration camp when they reach sixteen. Two of our boys were taken to such camps upon reaching their sixteenth birthday, and we fear for two other boys and four girls who will be sixteen within the next few months.

Before I left France, in August, 1940. our President, Dr. Brutzkus and our general- secretary, dr. Gourwitch asked me to try my best to bring the children of our homes out of France and, if possible, to the United States.

In Lisbon I got in touch with HIAS-HICEM,<sup>278</sup> with the Argentine Committee for Aid to European Children and with the Mexican Committee, but all without success. I also took up the question of help to these children with Dr. Schwartz of the American Joint Distribution Committee.

When I arrived in this country, I took up the problem of the refugee children in France with Dr. L. Walman, Mr. B. Pregal and Mr. Breyner of the “OSE.” I also had a meeting with Mr. Tropper of the A.J.D.C.<sup>279</sup> who was to get in touch with Mrs. Levy of the U.S. Committee. This meeting did not materialize as Mr. Tropper departed for Europe before Mrs. Levy returned from Chicago. Mr. Tropper knows our children’s homes which he had visited and always shows a great interest in them.

The U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children, whose director, Miss Elsa Castendyck, had visited the “OSE” children’s house in France, expressed a

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**278** The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAM) later became part of the “HICEM, an abbreviation of the names of three resettlement organisations: HIAS, an American organisation with its headquarters in New York; the Paris-based Jewish Colonisation Association, and Emigdirect, based in Berlin.” Valery Bazarov, “HIAS and HICEM in the system of Jewish relief organisations in Europe, 1933–41,” *East European Jewish Affairs* 39, 1 (2009): 69:

**279** American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

willingness to help in the evacuation of the children. Miss Castendyck introduced me to Dr. Habor and to Mrs. Rosovsky of the National Refugee Service, who I know through correspondence that we had concerning some children in our homes in France. They informed me that the National Refugee Service was in touch with Mme La Baronne Eduard de Rothschild regarding the evacuation of the children from her home in Bourboule to the Philippine Island and that this might be undertaken also for our children. I could not agree with a proposal to send these children once again to a country menaced by was activities. I believe it is advisable to keep in touch with Me. Haber and Mrs. Rozovsky of the N.R.S. as well as with Mrs. Marcuse of the German Jewish Children's

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Committee. With Mrs. Marcuse I discussed previously all questions concerning the children in France.

When I met Dr. Joseph Rosen, we discussed the question of bringing the elder children to a farm-school settlement in Santo-Domingo. For elder boys and girls this could offer a very important start to a settled life and wholesome work. The more so, since the children from our homes in France had learned farm work, like it very much and are accustomed to manual labor.

On the advice of Dr. A. J. Rongy, Chairman to the "OSE" committee, I discussed the children evacuation with Dr. Hexter of the Federation of the Jewish Philanthropic organizations. Dr. Hexter did not think he or his organization could be of any help to us, but he mentioned that they would not oppose the efforts of "OSE" in bringing the children to this country and in placing them here.

When I was in Washington. I was informed by the Visa Division of the State Department that they would not oppose the granting of visas to our children, provided the demand is made by the U.S. Committee for the care of European Children.

With that committee I am in closest contact and have had many meetings with its president, Mr. Marshall Field, its executive president, M. F. Biddle and above all with its director, Miss Elsa Castendyck. The U.S. Committee will take care of the visas for children under sixteen. The "OSE" Committee will have to undertake the obtaining of visas for children over sixteen. In this work they will have the support of the U.S. Committee.

Through the intermediary of Miss Castendyck a meeting took place with Mr. Clarence F. Pickett, general secretary of the American Friends Service Committee to prepare the evacuation of the children from France to this country at the expense and with the help of this committee. Through the Quakers Service in France the U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children is already working to this effect together with the French "OSE" Committee.

Introduced by Miss Castendyck, I asked Mrs. J. Wise-Polier for her help. Mrs. J. Wise-Polier promised to help and it seems that she interested many prominent people in assisting us to bring over and place our children here.

We are in constant touch with the children's relatives in this country to inform them and to get their help for affidavits and in placing the children afterwards with them. In lectures – there were already one in the New York School for Social Work and one in the Newark Junior College – and by articles we try to prepare the public to receive the children as welcome friends and to prepare for the children adequate and good shelters, either home or foster-parents houses. In this connection it may be of interest that Miss Sybil [. . .]<sup>280</sup>

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professor of the New York School for Social Work, spoke in her lecture there about our children's houses in Montmorency as an example of children's institutions which gave good results.

Now, with the establishment of the American Committee of "OSE", it is possible to give my personal negotiation the official backing of a responsible organization in this country. Starting with the "pourparlere" we must establish a firm and steady contact with respective organizations and persons. We are responsible for these ?? refugees children In France, for thousands in England and Poland, whose parents, despairing in their own salvation, Entrusted us with their only and highest possessions. We cannot fulfil this mission in Europe now, we must try to get all possible aid for our children from the powerful and willing organizations from this country.

E. Papanek  
December 26, 1940

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<sup>280</sup> Due to a damaged page bottom, the name could not be read and the author was unable to identify the person.

## 10 “I Like Everything but Air-Condition”: How Refugee Children React to the American Way of Life

Peter is eleven now and a terrible problem in class. He walks out of the room, or even leaves school, whenever he feels like it; he doesn't do any homework. From time to time he beats up other children in school and fights with his teacher. He certainly was no «model child» when he came over to this country from France three years ago, but these difficulties started only a year ago, after an incident in his former school. It was an incident rather rare enough in our New York City schools and yet highly illustrative and instructive in relation to many behaviour problems of refugee or immigrant children.

Peter's class was preparing for the next school assembly in which one of the members of the class was to carry the flag from the rear of the assembly room to the front and another was to lead the group in recitation of the allegiance to the flag. Peter wanted to have one of the two parts in the ceremony, but the teacher, who liked Peter but forgot herself for the moment, said to him: “Oh no, Peter, you still have an accent.”

Peter flew into a terrible temper tantrum. He threw his books at the teacher, spit into her face and ran away from class. The next day Peter fought with the teacher and the pupils, starting with the one carrying the flag, and ever since then he has been a problem in school and at home. Principal and teacher have tried to help him. Peter changed classes and even schools, but so far in vain.

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Peter's case is illustrative and instructive, to be sure, but certainly not at all characteristic of refugee and immigrant children in this country and of the role the school plays in their adjustment. It is now more than a year since the author of this article made a study, with the New York School of Social work, in which 214 refugee children who had come to this country from 16 different countries were interviewed, wrote papers and answered questionnaires in regard to their former experiences, their adjustment, their problems and their opinions on the differences between then and now.

“How do you get along in school? How do you like your present school? How was school in in your native country?” Such were some of our questions on the school problem.

“U.S. schools are not so strictly ruled and on the whole I like them better. I get along very well but not very good,” writes an English boy of thirteen, and

another English boy, eleven years old, expresses tersely what he finds most important: "No caning here. It is nice." "U.S. schools are easier," writes an English girl of ten, "There are boys in my class; no boarding schools."

"Schools (in Italy)," says an Italian girl now 20 years old, "was nice and the method of teaching quite good. I liked it, but, I don't miss it because I am conscious now of the way that most moral values were being distorted to suit the purpose of a Fascist education. I attended school in Argentina but did not like it. U.S. schools treat all subjects in a much more specialized way; they are therefore superior in all scientific subjects but inferior in all literary courses."

A girl of sixteen from Germany writes: "In U.S. more emphasis is placed on things which I believe are really useful; although my present school

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(Hunter College High School) is academical, we are not weighed down by too much dead knowledge. Besides we have more freedom in choosing our subjects, which – if limited – I think definitely worth copying."

"If one girl would have dared to have lipstick on, she would have been expelled from school," says a girl, who had attended schools in Germany and France, summing up an apparently important difference from our schools here.

"Languages and mathematics were taught at earlier stages. Rules and regulations pertaining to our behaviour were more strict, and there were more of them. I liked it, especially since I did not know anything else. I think we learned more than in any given year, although we did not have as many subjects to choose from. The main difference exists in the student-teacher relations. Respect and strict subjugation must be observed by students of all ages. However there were exceptions and many teachers became to be quite human- especially the younger ones. U.S. schools seems to allow a greater development of the students initiative, because he may choose most of his subjects. After my Junior year in high school and throughout college my being an alien did not bother me in my relations with my fellow students anymore. I made good in in high school and hence was able to go to college. When they did find out that was a refugee they honoured me all the more." The German boy who wrote thus, is now fighting overseas with the U.S. Army.

The Commissioner of Education of the State of New York sent out questionnaires to students who previously attended secondary schools in foreign countries. These excellently worded questionnaires addressed the students through their principals in the following words: "Probably at no other time will American schools have opportunity to profit more by advice and suggestions

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of students who have attended schools in other countries. We are asking your help in regard to several aspects of high school life." Some frequent suggestions for improvement in our high schools were: More outdoor sports in the school program; a more varied program; less homework. Refugee children were very much impressed by the attention their experience was receiving. The questionnaires helped many of them to an easier adjustment in school. They had feared that their being students from foreign countries would be regarded as something of which they must be ashamed. Now their principals were telling them that the American school would "profit by the advice and suggestions of students who have attended schools in other countries."

Without doubt Peter's experience in his school was unusual and not at all characteristics of any school in this country, but the fact that he is so touchy and easily disturbed when not treated as an equal in school or anywhere else is highly characteristic of almost all the refugee and immigrant children. It is characteristic even of children who have moved into a new section from another part of the country. But with refugee children this need for acceptance as an equal is of even greater importance because one of the chief emotional difficulties in their young lives has been the fact of racial, national or political persecution, the fact of not being accepted by the surrounding community.

It is no wonder that almost all the children who answered with enthusiastic hymns to the U.S. our question: "What do you like here?" emphasized discrimination in their answers to "What do you dislike here?" Only a few felt that they themselves discriminated against; most of them discuss discrimination they observe towards others:

"It, (U.S.) is the best place in the world," writes an Austrian girl of twelve now living in California. "I never think of belonging to another

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country. It is modern. It offers a chance for me. I have a swell time here. Austria was very small. America is great and powerful, something to feel part of, to be proud of. I like schools, government, people. I like churches. I dislike racial difference, the way children in our school stand off the Mexicans." A Gentile girl of seventeen: "I like everything except the still standing discrimination against Jews and Negroes" and a Jewish boy of 15, who especially likes "the fact that it is not a shame to work manually here" dislikes "discrimination against Negroes, Italians, Irish a[nd] s[o] o[n]."

"I just heard Marian Anderson sing. That reminds me of the protest in Washington when she, a negress, was to sing there. A spot of the honour of the country. Without such things or perhaps with a little education for such matters – this country and her people could be so excellent and so superior. Too bad, nothing can be nearly perfect." The then seventeen-year-old German boy, who wrote that the answer is now serving in the Army of the country whose spot he is so sensitive about.

All the 43 British children questioned in our study like America very much but only one fifteen-year-old boy would like to live here, "if my folks weren't still in England." He adds: "People live at such speed. Much less reserved – the people, i.e. control over their emotions much freer, which I like. I don't like some of the narrow-mindedness about foreign countries. In general I like the outspokenness and broadmindedness."

I like schools, stores, theatres. I honestly can't think of anything I dislike. I feel it's a great experience but often wonder how I'll feel when people ask me what I did in the war. Many English children as this eighteen-year-old girl, express in this or another way their embarrassment to be safe here while their country is bombed and in danger, and

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while their nation is waging a terrible war. "I live in a city now, therefor more people around. No class distinction – except from coloured people in some places – but colour makes no difference with me.

I like it here. The young have much more freedom and attention. I like everything but air conditioning and the emphasis put on money" answers an eighteen-year-old girl from England and a thirteen-year-old boy states: "The only thing I dislike is the extreme climate. I like the schooling system, but I do not like the long winter. I expected to find The U.S.A: more backward than England, but I find that there are a good deal more luxuries. I get less hope now. (I miss) the mild climate of Britain. I hope that I have not rubbed in the fact that I dislike the climate over here too much."

The seventeen-year-old French boy: "I respect everything that is essential American and am grateful for the shelter it has afforded to me", expresses well the high regard for America of those children also who intend to go back to their home countries. A twenty-year-old Italian girl, who also feels "a great oath of gratitude toward destiny for a life in the safest and most desirable country in today's world," takes back this impression to her beloved Italy: "What most affected me is the change in standard of living and the different concept of the role a woman here and her opportunities for work."

“I feel happy here because, obviously, it is the best place to live in right now. Also because I have opportunities here that I would have no place else. The United States must be described – it cannot be compared to other countries . . . - Pardon the epigram.” This “epigram” of an eighteen-year-old girl summarizes the answers of all the children to our question as to their feelings toward a country, where they were not born but where they have found security and belonging, a country to which they have consciously adjusted their emotions and their love.

# 11 Initial Problems of a Children's Home and Experimental School for Refugee Children: The Refugee Children's Homes in Montmorency, France

Just four days before Hitler entered the French capital, the last of three hundred refugee children managed to make their escape to southern France from their homes in Montmorency, near Paris, where they have been living for two years.

They came from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland, these children, and most of them had left their native countries without their parents. Many of the fathers were in German concentration camps, some were dead. The parents had, for the most part, no possibility of fleeing because they had no visas for other countries; those fortunates who were on their way to new countries planned to bring their children over when they were settled. About eighty percent of the children were Jewish, the rest were the youngsters of political refugees or of victims of political persecution.

The organization that ran the four houses for the children in France was the French Committee of the OSE Union. These homes, which also gave vocational training, were accepted as an experimental school under the direct supervision of the Academy of Paris. I myself organized these houses and then was their general director.

The educational task that presented itself to us was of a complex nature. We had to keep in mind the previous life led by these refugee children, the special circumstances of their coming to the home and the probable living conditions that awaited them in the future.

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And our task was complicated by the fact that in many cases the children had been without regular instruction for years. They were no longer in the habit of studying systematically. But above all we had to take into consideration the mental shock which the children had suffered as a result of persecution, separation from parents and friends, and emigration.

Some of these young ones had come quite alone. One morning we found a boy of fourteen and a girl of nine standing in the garden; they asked for a place to stay. The only thing the boy had with him was a slip of paper with our address on it. His father had died in a concentration camp. When his mother had heard of his death she had wept and called the Nazis murderers. Consequently she had been sent to the camp herself and the boy had left, heartbroken, their

home all by himself, taking with him only the little daughter of a neighbor who had to flee without coming home first because the stormtroopers were after him. The children had gotten the address from a minister, crossed the border with the help of a farmer's wife, who had bought them tickets to Paris – and here they were.

Many of the children came to us confidingly with their hopes and thoughts, but there was in them some depression and embarrassment, the mentality of persecution they had tasted in their bitter days in Hitler's Germany.

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The educational principle comes first and its necessities naturally limit the administration as well as the freedom of the adults and children.

Thus, instead of giving the children an illusion of unrestricted freedom, we sought to define with them the limits to their freedom, relying on those principles in which the children themselves saw justice and which made the whole administration not play for them, but reality.

In our home rules only principles were laid down, and with these are descended compliance?

Particular cases and circumstances were not mentioned, since these changed continuously.

Here I should like to give the preamble of

### **The Constitution of the Children's Homes of the OSE Union**

All the children and adults who live in the children's homes of the OSE Union form a community that directs life in the homes by cooperating democratically in the administration. This community is one part of the great community of all human beings. It is proud to live among the French people and is conscious of belonging to the OSE Union.

"The democratic rights as well as the duties of the members of the community and the larger ones. The liberties and rights of the members are limited by voluntary subordination to all other human beings, to the nation in which we live and to the associations to which we belong."

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<sup>281</sup> Some parts with redundancies to other works by Papanek, where he cites the children's reports about their experiences, have been cut out here to avoid unnecessary repetitions.

We had wonderful experiences with our co-administration and our disciplinary council. The children approached the problems of co-administration with such dignity and gravity. Much time, of

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course, had to be given to explaining the necessity of treating each case of discipline with justice and so making the children understand that certain acts should be punished or censored and that it is necessary to regard certain punishments as just. But the time was not wasted. In our opinion a real educational system must be based on a comprehension on the part of the children that work is a necessity and on their voluntary consent to certain restrictions.

Our children were willing to make the decisions that seemed necessary to us and to execute justified punishment. In fact we had to hold them back from overdoing punishments in their youthful eagerness.

Occasionally we were obliged to interfere in these matters, but we always did so in a way to make the guilty child sure of his guilt. Our effort was to explain to him the meaning of his behavior. Very often it was painful to see the unhappiness of the culprit whom he realized the significance of his "crime". The effect of this educational work was of long duration.

Punishment by grown-ups is in most cases accompanied by the child's sense of being "terrorized" and created inner resistance to what he considers unjust punishment. He excuses himself and makes light of his misconduct. Discussions before the disciplinary council, on the contrary, aided us immeasurably. The chance given the defendant to talk and explain his act, as well as the circumstances of its performance, made him forget to sulk. He came to understand his mistake.

The necessities and complications created by the voluntary cooperation of the children – sometimes troublesome, we admit – were answered with practical success by the method of co-admin-

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-istration properly understood by the children. This co-administration was in no wise regarded as merely instructive play, either by the children or by the adults. It was an important part of our educational work. On the one hand it was a scene – and the chief means of that – of moral training and character building. And on the other hand it was an inherent part of the deductive *Arbeitsunterricht* (work-study) school, which seeks to replace superficial knowledge of school subjects by real assimilation of the material and to give the children an opportunity to work according to their individual talents and abilities, with the help of the teacher.

### General Orientation Courses

In the beginning our school had no definite program in the strict sense of the word. Each group of children had a daily French lesson, and then there was what we called the "general culture" part of our scheme. All the children – there were about a hundred of them at this time living at the Villa Helvetia – met together for that lesson. We discussed the events of the day in our little world and in the "world at large". We reviewed them in relation to our personal lives, to our future opportunities. On the arrival of the St. Louis we made the voyage to Cuba and back in our discussions. We explained why these American islands are called the West Indian Archipelago. This furnished an opportunity to speak of the discovery of America and that period in general, of the country and its inhabitants today. We also discussed the possibilities of going across and the need for learning what would prepare us for emigration. Following these talks our English lessons were instituted.

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When the news of the shipwreck of the submarine *Squalus*<sup>282</sup> and the efforts made to save its crew were stirring the world, we too spoke at length about it. We estimated the distance between us and the accident, we computed the quantity of oxygen necessary for the rescue. This gave many realization of their lack of knowledge of figures. That week we begun our lessons in mathematics, graded according to the ages of the pupils. We followed the efforts to save the crew as undertaken with the new "diving bell." At this point we entered into the subject of water displacement and hydrostatic pressure. This began for the juniors their object lessons and for the seniors the lessons in physics.

We cut out pictures of the submarine episode from the papers and collected them for a "photo mural." We stressed the courage, the calmness and composure, the tenacity of the shipwrecked men in their submarine prison. We gave admiration to this ideal example of courage and perseverance that had stood up to such difficult circumstances without loss of hope.

Our purpose was to mold character and will-power by citing such examples and fitting them into the framework of humanitarian, moral and democratic education. In the course of our discussions on ethics and real life problems we compared the methods of the military dictatorships, which consider solely their own interests, with the generous notion of the American Government in putting at the disposal of all who needed it the "submarine bell" just successfully done.

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<sup>282</sup> Later known as USS *Sailfish*.

### Relationship Between Children and Adults

It is the relationship that obtains between children and

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adults, that plays the greatest part in determining the atmosphere of any educational institution. The children had confidence in our words and our deeds – but we had to win this confidence. At first the distrust was very fret. When we first announced that such-and-such would take place on Thursday, the children whispered about on Tuesday, Wednesday, and even Thursday morning, “it’s not really going to happen, of course.” When we insisted, “yes it will,” they answered, “You: – you always say ot will.” When the doctor promised this or the other wouldn’t hurt nobody believed her, and when we said no exceptions would be made for anybody, everybody was convinced that all the others would be preferred. But we kept our word. We explained the situation carefully in any cases where we were unable to do what we had promised. And so confidence came quite naturally. We never concealed our own insufficiencies; we were the first to admit them and so avoided the mockery and tricks of the youngsters. Our frankness, furthermore, won their respect and awaked in them some chivalry toward the weak points we should never have been able to hide anyway. Very seldom and only in the beginning did the familiar form turn into impudence and arrogance. We hardly had to make any effort to check these indiscretions; the children considered it extremely unfair to abuse our comradeship and they themselves did everything to suppress the impudence of some of their school-mates.

In our comradeship with the children we never lowered ourselves to the child’s level. That would have made us ridiculous. We always insisted on the right to lead independent personal lives. It was a community of children and grown-ups; every individual had his right to individual life, all together we forced a respected community.

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Here it may be reveling to mention a small fact interesting from an educational point of view. The walls of our houses were never adorned with pencil marks; there were never any designs or drawings even in the lavatories, though we never mentioned the subject to the children.

## 12 Some Children's Letters

These are the thoughts of children all over the world as expressed in letters they have written to this country. It is from these letters that we over here can gain an understanding of our friends in need overseas.

From a children's home in Otwoch, Poland, children aged 10 to 16 write (in English):

We are very glad when we receive your package, not, therefore, that we received clothes but therefore we see you remember about us and we feel we are not alone.

From Belgium, a girl of 11 writes (in English):

I am glad to see that there is somebody who thinks to the children without parents.

From France, a girl of 12 writes:

Although my letter is short, my gratitude is very great. It is very good to see that we are not forgotten by all the world, for if one loses one's daddy in such circumstances one believes to have lost everything.

From France, a girl of 18 writes:

My dear Ilse and Vera . . . As for me, I'll try to tell you what I have done during these years. I stayed in the Children's Home until September 1942 and during four months we were hiding, travelled here and there, from the center to the South, but we had no stable location. In January 1943, a hotel school was found (by OSE) where we were able to hide and under a false name of course, . . . I'd like to thank you in advance for the package which, at this moment, is on its way: it is very kind of you and makes me very happy . . . Write me soon about yourself. I'll answer . . . Many kisses and thanks, Yours, Eva (Paris, France)

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Rome, my native town! One of the most beautiful and known cities all over the world, which has a millenary history. There are many cities larger and with more inhabitants, but there is only one Rome. But now I begin to like this new great and big city. Also in New York, it is possible to be happy and I believe that I shall be able to. (Girl, 17 yrs., Italy)

Danzig – one of the few places on earth where art and nature happily join hands – may destiny save you from the terror and destroying of war. (Girl, 16 yrs., Germany, expelled from Danzig)

The question on what I miss and why I am homesick are difficult to answer. If you have ever lived in Paris, you will know what I mean. It is that indescribable something which makes Paris the most beautiful city in the world. (Boy, 17 yrs., France)

So I had to live it, my Vienna, I still love it very much. (Girl, 17 yrs., Austria)

And as the last quotation in this group, the poetic essay of a girl of seventeen:

Once again a day is over.  
 A summer day.  
 I sit in the comfortable chair in the garden adjoining my friend's house.  
 It is getting dark.  
 From the house next door, the soft music of a Strauss Waltz is carried to my ear.  
 A Strauss waltz – Vienna – that's one thought in my mind.  
 Vienna – the city where a few years ago I still was so happy.  
 Where my grandfather was born and my parents raised.  
 Vienna, the city of my birth.

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Yes, I am Austrian, how proud I once was to say that!  
 But I was happy in Vienna!  
 My friends were there, my work, and so much fun.  
 How nice was it, for instance, to take a skiing trip, and spend one week in a farm house  
 surrounded by mountains, with the other girls of our school.  
 Or to take a day trip to a lake, or a place of interest.  
 To go to the theatre, or the opera to hear the plays, and music, for which Vienna is  
 famous.  
 To stride on a holiday through the streets, and see the happy and often beautiful faces of  
 the inhabitants of one of the happiest, and gayest cities of Europe.  
 Best of all, though, I liked to go to school.  
 Not only because I always liked to learn, but because of the fun we girls got from being  
 together.  
 School was over at 1:30, so we had plenty of time to do all those things we liked.  
 Swimming and Tennis, skating and skiing, belonged to our favorite sports.  
 We liked every kind of outdoor recreation, and I especially liked ice-skating.  
 Oh how I loved to skate! . . .  
 Then abruptly everything changed.  
 Where are all my friends?  
 Who are those people who look at me and say in despising tone: 'Her grandfather is a  
 Jew!'  
 Could it be possible that at twelve years I had to learn all the horror and hardships result-  
 ing from not being wanted.  
 Is it true that the girls in my class who loved me once, turn their backs to me?  
 Why was I disliked?  
 Why couldn't I go skating, or to the theatre?  
 Why couldn't I go here and there?  
 Those were questions too hard to understand for a girl of twelve.

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Or, how lovely and inspiring was it, to see, that in the horror of this year our house, was the refuge for the desperate and depressed.

How proud I was to see how many people came to my father and mother to get help from their courage.

In those days, when the day of our departure came nearer and nearer, I understood for the first time, how dear this city was to me.

And wherever in the world I may live, whatever nationality I may have, deep down in my heart, there will always be a place belonging to Vienna.

A place where through the years the memories of the happy days spent in that wonderful city, will live on.

The music changes suddenly.

I wake up from my dreams of the past.

Now a different tune strikes my ear.

No waltz – but – What are the words to this music? Oh, yes, I remember now: 'God bless America, my home, sweet home.

## 13 Homes for Refugee Children of the O.S.E. Union in France (1940)

Maybe you will be surprised that I'm writing you from France, or maybe you have already heard that I've been in France since March 8th. I feel splendid and am very happy to be out of Germany. I am here with about 57 children in a wonderful home close to Paris, approximately 10 miles from the city. We have an enormous park with two lawns where we play during our free periods. The food is excellent and I have already gained 11 lbs and have become much taller. But that is also because of the change of climate.

Early in the morning we have gym. After breakfast we have classes until twelve. We have physics, French, English, German, drawing, mathematics, geography, general culture, etc. We also have games during part of our free time. In the afternoon we have class for one hour and then we are free. There are big houses for the children; all of them belong to the Union OSE, which is a wonderful organization. Our houses have a general director who is very kind and the houses also have their own directors, who are also very kind. Our director also teaches gym and crafts. Now we are making pretty leather things. Before that we did basket weaving and we'll soon have a workshop for carpentry and book-binding. Next time maybe I'll write part of my letter in English and you can do the same if you like with your whole letter.

We made a six hour auto trip through Paris, and we saw a lot of things. It is impossible to give you all my impressions of Paris.

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I can only say that the song is certainly right: "Paris, thou art the most beautiful city on earth."

We went to some of the Paris museums. We went to the zoo, too, where even the wild animals are only kept away from people by deep ditches of water. There are no cages. If possible we're going to Versailles soon and some time maybe to the sea shore. We have also been to the circus already.

Just now the children from the "St. Luis" are with us – the boat that was not allowed to dock in Cuba. These children are going to have their own home. My parents hope they will be able to go to England soon: let us hope that they will make it.

A few weeks ago we had a big opening festival in one of our homes. There were about 400 people and also some barons. We did a lot of funny things. I was a negro and they painted me with cocoa. I was dressed in a straw skirt and a necklace of dried macaroni, which was supposed to be the bones of my

victims. I played songs on the harmonica and on the accordion and I sang in a chorus. We had a lot of parties, lemonade and ices.

Ernest, a 14-year-old boy from Frankfort am Main, wrote the Above letter to a friend in London. Ernest came to Paris with the second transport of refugee children from Germany and Austria. In February 1939 the first children arrived at the Montmorency home of OSE.

“Are Jewish children really allowed to go to the park?” Such was the astonished question of the children when they learned they were to

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play in the park of the Villa Helvetia. They were soon made themselves perfectly at home both in the villa and the park however. They rapidly recovered from the painful shock they had suffered from the persecution of their family and friends. Before long, happy laughter filled the houses and bubbled up to the tops of the centenary trees in our gardens.

At the end of June came the children of the St. Luis – the fugitives who had wandered around the globe and then been disappointed in their hope for a haven in Cuba. A little later we welcomed several children from Czechoslovakia, then some from Poland; a number of them had lost their fathers in the war, some of their mothers could not be found. We also took in other children whose fathers were serving in the armies of the Allies.

Today, one year after the opening of the first home, we accommodate in the four OSE Union homes for refugee children, 283 youngsters. 21 children are lining at the sea shore (18 in Ares and 3 in the “Preventorium” of Archon), which brings the total up to 304 children. The following letter from another child:

“. . . When Mother left me at the station, we had to lie down. But I could not sleep all night. When we got to the home, they were glad to see us. Oh, I forgot something! We also took a trip on the bus that was wonderful. The home is very nice. The children are very kind to us. The house is very beautiful. The walls are decorated with painted flowers and there are curtains on the windows. The food is good. Only there is too much milk in the coffee, but that does not matter. For about two days we were in the Rothschild hospital. Now don’t get worried and don’t think I’m sick. Everybody was there

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and nobody was sick. I’ll explain it to you. They do ot so no sickness can spread among the children of the home.”

This description comes from a ten-year-old-little Viennese girl who wants to give her parents some idea of her travel experiences and her arrival in Paris and the home. The children all stayed in the Rothschild hospital for a few days, they

were examined and vaccinated against small-pox, and were thereafter assigned to the different homes.

The educational task that faced us was of a complex nature. We had to keep in mind the previous lives of the refugee children, the particular circumstances of their coming to the home and the probable living conditions that awaited them later on. These children had to bow suddenly to the fate of the prosecuted – forced upon them with abruptness and cruelty.

They had grown up and been educated in the atmosphere of German culture; now they had to learn to understand French culture, its conception of humanity, of the Rights of Man, of its bond with all other nations. Many of these children were waiting for their parents to take them overseas – somewhere. We must prepare them for their future fatherland and at the same time help them carry with them this cultural and intellectual wealth. Our task was complicated by the fact that in many cases the children had been without regular schooling for years. They were no longer accustomed to study of gymnastic work of any kind.

First of all, however, we had to consider the mental shock the children had suffered – the consequence of persecution, of separation from parents and friends, and of emigration.

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[. . .]<sup>283</sup>

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Sometimes despair drives an adult to burden a child with moral conflicts and problems it cannot solve. Thus an elder brother writes to his sister:

“. . . Write very often to your poor mother, as often as you can, so she won't worry. do anything you can to help your dear mother, for you know what she has had to suffer for you. If mother could not get the immigration visa, it would mean saving your father from Dachau. Daddy

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must at all costs get out of there because you know poor dear father is very delicate. Show your tears and ask for help, for there is no other hope. Say you still want to have a father and you still want to see all your family. I imagine that is only you could get a visa, Father would be saved from torture. How unhappy he

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**283** Page 5 and parts of page 6 are left out here to avoid unnecessary redundancies, as letters are cited that have already been cited in other writings.

must be to be imprisoned so long and not be there when you, dear J. and I left. He must be thinking of mother, too, how she must torture herself and go without food and sleep, getting weaker every day. I'm sure he is thinking of us all. Maybe you've heard that two thousand expatriated Jews have been sent from Vienna to the Polish frontier and there they don't know where to go to. They can't take anything with them, everything has to be left behind and, on top of it, people are beaten and go through a lot of other things too. It is not certain whether Poland will let the Jews come in. It would be awful, these people straying around in all directions, not knowing where to go; they are not allowed to go into Germany or Poland either. Lots of them would like to die; there will be sickness because of lack of food. The lord protect us so that poor mother and our dear sister don't have to go through all that. I don't want to write anymore because I am crying already and anyway, I don't want to make you sad. But look around and see whether you can't help your mother."

These children arrived at our homes burdened by anxieties, haunted by thoughts beyond their grasp. Our first task was to make them "children" again – in plain words, to make them happy.

We believe we succeeded in this. And that success gave us the more pleasure because we knew that their feeling at home with us did not mean that the children were estranged from their parents and families. Parents' visits were sometimes trying. The difficulties were tenfold in a house where most of the children could not see their families.

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As to writing them, few children did so regularly and of their own free will, however great their affection for their parents. We asked each child to write home once a week; he might, of course, do so more often. Nearly four thousand French francs a month are set aside in our budget for this one item of correspondence. The outbreak of war interrupted communication by mail with parents in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. There is a moment we shall never forget, the terrible moment of silence that followed when we had to tell the children: "At least not for the time being you must not wait for mail from your dear ones." Thereafter we were able to resume correspondence, mostly through the intervention of the Red Cross. We wrote regularly every week. How many children did not receive any answers for six months at a time! Yet they continued to write.

Our second educational goal was to accustom the children once more to an orderly life, to develop their sense of social adjustment and discipline. They must learn what it means to learn. It would not have been a difficult task to cultivate in the children an understanding of discipline had we taken as point of departure their experiences in Germany – the blind obedience of the Hitler

Youth, the rigid routine of their life, the ritual of the Hitler salute, which had so deeply impressed many of our boys and even some of the girls. This hocus-pocus, their rejection as unworthy of such participation, made it all the more attractive. They would have been delighted to be able to play at “Hitler Youth” a little now.

That was why we tried to awake in the children a contempt for Prussian discipline and blind obedience. At the same time, however, we would work hard to develop in them a sense of order and comradeship, spontaneous social adaptation, and fair play. We were astonished at the

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ease and rapidity of our success. Our principal methods were tireless explanation and guidance, practical demonstration carried out in cooperation with the children themselves, and participation by the children in the administration of their own community affairs. We did not begin our collective work by making class rules, time schedules – cooperation however, was our idea from the beginning. “You see,” we said, “we can’t control you all the time and keep you in order in the house you may keep order yourselves.” A little later: “Wouldn’t you like to choose someone among you to see that there’s no noise and disorder?”

“Here’s a football for you, here is some other equipment, distribute them among yourselves so that everyone can enjoy them. You may make some one child responsible for taking care of them so that nothing gets lost. The football and all the athletic equipment are your common property.”

“We may make an excursion tomorrow, when we come home we’ll have to eat. So before we leave, wit down and peel the potatoes. Keep at it so it’ll get done soon.”

Many children came to us confidently with their hopes, and yet there was in them a depression and embarrassment – a product of some hundred years of ghetto life, and recent years of persecution. “They stepped on us and beat us in Germany,” a fifteen-year-old child told us on his arrival in Boulogne, where we had gone to meet the young passengers of the “St. Luis”. “We only wanted to escape and wait in Cuba for our immigration visa to the United States, quietly, without any trouble. But they drove us away from there too. Then we went along the Florida coast. It seemed full of quiet and peace, but for us there was no port to dock in. Neither in America, nor in Haiti, nor in St. Domingo.

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They sent telegrams to all parts of the world to get permission for us to disembark somewhere. Now we can enter France. For how long? Where can we go next? What a life we lead!”

No, these children could not be made happy just by a well-ordered home, by lawns and towering trees – which would not be sufficient for any child. It was necessary to convince them that the persecutions they had suffered were not the inevitable fate of the Jew, and that they must not simply search for a sheltered hiding place among other people, but courageously battle against all anxieties and difficulties of life. We sought to teach them that unremitting work, founded on the skills they acquired with us, would in the future enable them to forge their own fates. We sought to educate true men, free men, men of responsibility who understood their obligation to the community, men possessed of the industry and knowledge necessary that they might create for themselves purposeful lives.

At first our school had no definite time-table in the strict sense of the word. Each group had a daily French lesson and what we called “general culture”. All the children living at the Villa Helvetia – there were about a hundred at this time – gathered together for that lesson. We discussed the events of the day in our little world as well as those of the “world at large”. We considered them in their relation to our personal lives and our future opportunities. On the arrival of the children of the “St. Louis,” we made the trip to Cuba and back in our discussions. We explained why these American islands are called the West Indian Archipelago. This led us to a discussion of the discovery of America and the age of exploration, of America and its inhabitants today. We discussed the possibilities of emigrating there and the necessity for learning in preparation for that

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emigration. Following these discussions our English class was started.

When the story of the ship-wreck of the submarine “Squallus” and the efforts to save its crew was stirring the world, we too talked about it. We calculated the distance between our homes and the scene of the accident; we estimated the quantity of oxygen necessary for the rescue. This brought home to many children a realization of their lack of knowledge of figures. That week we began our classes in mathematics, graded according to age. We followed the efforts made to save the crew with the same new “diving-bell”. We discussed displacement and hydrostatic pressure, and the juniors began their object lessons and the seniors their instructions in physics.

We stressed the courage, the quiet composure, the tenacity of the shipwrecked men in their submarine prison. We made clippings of pictures in papers and composed them into a “photo mural”. We admired the courage and perseverance that could face such difficult circumstances and never lose hope.

Our aim was to mold character and willpower through a consideration of such examples within the framework of a humanitarian, ethical, and democratic education. In the course of our discussions of and their application in

real life, we compared the acts of the military dictatorships which consider solely their own interest, with the generous proposal of the American government, which put at the disposal of all who needed it, the “submarine bell” just successfully employed. July 14th, the glorious French national holiday afforded a solemn occasion for speaking to the children about the Declaration of the Right of Man. In the morning we had a party for the children of all our homes in the festive garden of the Villa Helvetia; in the after-

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noon we joined in the celebrations of the school children of Montmorency; in the evening we witnessed the bonfires of Paris and its suburbs. In the weeks that followed our general culture lessons were devoted to an explanation of the meaning of the Rights of Man. The problems created by the spontaneous collaboration of the children – troublesome sometimes, we admit it – were satisfactorily met by our system of “co-administration.” Co-administration was in no way regarded as merely instructive play either by the children or the teacher; it was an important part of our educational program. On the one hand it is a method – and the principal one at that – of moral education and character building. It is at the same time an inherent part of the deductive “Arbeitsunterricht” method. This method seeks to replace a superficial acquaintance with school subjects by real assimilation, and enable the children to develop their peculiar abilities with the help of the teacher.

In the middle of April, 1939, instruction began in the school of the home. For the first two months all classes were conducted in German exclusively, but every day two hours were devoted to the teaching of French.

Our first task was to put the children back to systematic work. There were some who had not attended school in Germany for the past two years preceding their arrival. We had just succeeded in reawakening their interest in school-work; we should have destroyed that interest had we begun our teaching in German, accompanying this instruction with discussions of our material in French.

After the first two months we adopted the French language for gym-

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nastics and drawing, later for geography and French history, and finally for the natural sciences and mathematics. Thereafter, one day a week all classes were given in French, then three days, and beginning October 1939, all teaching was done in French.

Since we believe that a child over a certain age can not learn a language thoroughly without instruction, we gave the children systematic French lessons instead of depending wholly on the influence of the milieu.

The little ones from 3–6 learned French quickly from their immediate daily contacts. Among themselves they soon spoke French almost exclusively, after 6–12 months. For many of them German was soon just a familiar language, for others a foreign language they knew. The children from 7–10 received systematic instruction as well as the influence of their surroundings. Their progress was also rapid. They soon understood French perfectly and made use of it more or less correctly in their contact with persons belonging to the home, but among themselves they usually used German.

For the older children, systematic instruction was all important. They too, however, had the advantage of daily intercourse with their French surroundings and have quickly enlarged their knowledge of the language. Every new acquisition can be practiced at once, while bits of knowledge are picked up from their French neighbors, and theoretical foundation given in class. Children of that age were soon to understand French and even express themselves in that language, but among themselves they nearly always talked German. We were never annoyed when the older children spoke their mother tongue among themselves. Emigrants entering a new country in compact groups always cling for years to their own language. We were of the opinion that our method of teaching would give results at least as good as if we had brutally

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forbidden the use of German and made French the exclusive school language. Our experience justified that belief.

Some of the children who came with the first transport were received by another organization similar to ours. Their directors considered our method poor and used French exclusively in teaching as well as daily intercourse. Later we had occasion to talk to these children, some of which were transferred to our camps, and we observed that most of them did not speak French so well as our children. More important than the acquisition of language, however, is that no character building or moral acquisition would have been possible had we tried to instill our ideas with words unfamiliar to the children. On the other hand, once the children had grasped some of the conceptions of democracy and the French way of life, once they had gained some sense of security, of being at home, of being permitted to learn and work, once they understood the meaning of courage and perseverance, of responsibility, freedom and human dignity, then there was no difficulty in teaching them the French words for these ideas. To give them a better understanding of the inhabitants of France, its institutions and the country itself, we planned excursions and trips and some participation in the entertainments of the village children. These children joined in our games and we were on friendly terms with our colleagues in the neighboring

schools. – After the outbreak of war it was not possible to continue the excursions to Paris which we had begun with the help of a group of car-owners, friends of the OSE. The first and only excursion of this kind was made with some thirty cars, driven by their owners and conducted by Dr. Ettinger. The preparation of this trip took weeks – the route we were to take was studied and sketched; the history of every spot, every house, every interesting monument were related, photographs were hung on the walls, detailed maps showed the loc-

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ation of monuments.

The night before the excursion a movie about Paris was shown to the children. The trip was a big event. The children greeted each new landmark as if it were an old acquaintance; the names had for them a living background. We were at last becoming a part of the big world called Paris. After the trip we went on talking about Paris – we described the town, figured out her distances, spelled the names of her monuments, read her poets, sang her songs, and learned her language joyfully.

From the very beginning we tried to group all the class instruction around some leading idea suggested by our chats on general cultural questions. These chats were conducted by our general director once or twice a week in each of the three groups into which the children were divided according to age. The voyage of the St. Louis, the ship-wreck of the Squalus and excursion to Paris gave some idea which topics we chose and the way we treated them. We wanted to draw as many examples as possible from real life, and thereby help the children to understand the development of humanity and human culture, the technique of work, the framework of community life. This was to the child the means of adjusting himself in the more or less restricted circle in which he actually lives, and of adjusting himself later on when faced with more complex situations with nothing to fall back on except his own resources. It has not been possible to carry out fully our plan to group all instruction around one central theme suggested by the general culture discussions. First of all the time for preparation was much too short, so that we could not assemble all the material necessary for teaching all subjects according to this method. Instruction began almost immediately after the opening of the homes; we had to con-

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-form as quickly as possible to the material given in the French elementary schools and prepare the children, insofar as possible, for the same examinations. Though the French teaching staff followed our experiments with friendly interest, we could not in so short a time complete quick preparation for the

State exams with the kind of instruction that centered about our general cultural themes.

In January 1940 our school organization were partially changed. Thereafter 75% of the children of school age attended the public schools at Montmorency and Eaubonne, while 25% of the children attended our own centralized school in the ville Les Tourelles. The children made good progress in the village school. Seven of them reached the head of their class, three were second best, two were third best. There was even one class where the five best pupils were our children.

Seven of our youngsters went to high school in Enghien. There too one was at the head of his class, another was third best. during school hours – the same in our school and the public school – we tried to give practical help to those children lacking sufficient knowledge of French to progress properly in their studies. During free periods and on holidays all the children got supplementary instruction in their favorite subjects, whether it was “general culture,” foreign languages, handicrafts, music, sports, outdoor games or gardening. Our home school had three sections. The first was the nursery for children of pre-school age. This whole group was installed in “the little camp.” The children learned about everyday life, especially daily hygiene. Morning gymnastics, a feature common to all our homes were in the form of games and were accompanied by songs. The children, even the three-year-olds waited on table and did various chores.

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Among the chief subjects were rhythmic gymnastics, singing, handicrafts (tearing and cutting, paper-pasting, modelling). We often made use of Decroly and Montessori material, without, however, following any of these methods exclusively. Tables, chairs, brooms, all equipment was of proper size for use by the children.

The second group was that of the school-age children. The five forms corresponded approximately to the public school grades. The subjects and methods followed a syllabus checked and approved by an inspector of the Academy. All the children in this group, like those of the vocational classes, received preparation for the “certificat d'études”. We felt that the Dalton method was best for the initial instruction of children of widely varying levels of knowledge. All the pupils of one class, however, were soon able to follow the same program. We gradually introduced group work and thus made common use of our time. At the end there were five homogeneous classes with 15–25 children in each; it was possible in such classes to give attention to the peculiar abilities of each child while at the same time following a class program. The class of beginners was subdivided into two groups of 8–11 children each.

Our chief educational principles were inspired by the Viennes school reform, which sought to keep school instructions as close to real life as possible. The most attention was paid to manual instruction. The three lower classes had lessons in drawing and painting, drawing and modelling. In the fourth and fifth grades the children had elementary vocational instruction. In the fourth class nine of our girls attended the dress-making workshop, six boys took carpentry, these classes were given twice a week, two hour each.

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In the fifth grade the nine girls and eleven boys took beginner's courses in tailoring, dress-making and carpentry, three hours, three times a week.

All the children worked on our flowers, fruit and vegetables. The youngest had 2–4 hours of gardening a week, the older ones 4–8 hours. The third group, the one for professional training, received 20 hours of practical work and 19 hours theoretical instruction – ie French, literature, mathematics, history, geography, natural sciences, history of art and sports, etc. Aside from their professional training the children learned some other manual skill, usually gardening. For this the older students used some of their theoretical instruction time, the others used extra-class time. This secondary manual training was in some classes a bare outline of the rudimental principles; in other cases it was a really complete training for a second profession. Our shoe-maker apprentices, for instance, had 16 hours a week of shoemaking and up to 12 hours of horticulture. In addition to 8–12 hours of theoretical instruction. We used this system to compensate for the professional drawbacks of the shoemaker's trade and to give our future shoemakers a supplementary means of making a living. We gave the factory hand a healthy enjoyment of work with the soil and the possibility of putting this knowledge of gardening to economic use if necessary. We had four workshops for our apprentices where they could acquire real skill. Eleven girls learned dress-making, sixteen boys joinery, fifteen children – boys and girls – studied gardening, and four, shoe-making. The shoe-makers took gardening as their 2nd handicraft, the carpenters and dress-makers also received some instruction in gardening, the boy-gardeners in carpentry and the girl-gardeners in dress-making. The carpenter's workshop and the gardening

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course were instituted by the ORT; they directed it within the system of our school organization. The other workshops were under our direction. We planned to open with the ORT, a workshop for leather tooling, polishing and pasteboard work. During and after school hours our shoe-makers and dressmakers did repair work for our homes. A course in making posters and designing on tissue was part

of the regular work for boys and girls, giving them further preparation for the learning of handicraft.

At the beginning of the second year our homes opened a cooking class. Before the war started we had intended to give this course in a specially equipped room, but the space we hoped to use in the Villa Helvetia became an air-raided shelter and we had to allow the use of our own kitchens.

Shortly afterwards we arranged for a course in professional dancing, under the direction of Mrs. Eduardova. Children who showed some special abilities in the regular dancing class and rhythmic gymnastics had the opportunity to get professional training.

We also sent one boy every morning to the "Cordon Bleu" cooking school to attend their theoretical classes. Two others went to a pre-apprentice school for electricians, another to a school of cinematography. We had English and Spanish classes for children whose parents intended to emigrate overseas.

". . . Wednesday last Spanish classes began. Today we have a lesson again, and the pronunciation of the language is identical with the writing, I made up my mind to write down everything I learn and to add whatever notes are necessary for the pronunciation. In this way you will be able to learn Spanish with me. Take care of these notes, please. Each of you send me ten sentences for the first and ten for the second lesson. Let's hope I'll be able to help you learn Spanish

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this way. The pronunciation is very easy and I hope you'll learn a lot in spite of the poor explanations . . . Now get to work!" (girl of fourteen to her parents.)

The whole way of life in our homes was intended to give the children the capacity to lead healthy and happy lives in harmony with the spirit of their foster country. Our work and organization sought to make them really free men, conscious of their responsibilities. The instruction given from Kindergarten up through the vocational training classes aimed at offering them as much knowledge as possible and at developing their occupational abilities fully. The choice of and preparation for a profession was the more necessary to these children because they must struggle for a livelihood with nothing but their own abilities to keep them going. There was no family tradition to guide them, no parental success or connections to smooth their way. Their studies – except in the case of the college students – were not exclusively brain work. They helped bring the future manual workers up to the very highest intellectual level possible and make of them educated people.

So guided and trained, our children one day would, we hoped, become something other than crippled intellectuals or ill-famed Jewish second-hand dealers; we hoped they would become intelligent workers of the soil and in the

factories or skilled artisans. Every three months each child got a report on his development. We did not give marks. A kind of grade was given by the letters A to E, each letter corresponding approximately to 2 points in the usual French classifying 0–10 system. But the important feature of our reports were their comments. There were 24 different evaluations, something like those used in American schools. The subjects were grouped into categories, manual work far from being neglected. Social adjustment was judged

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as to manners, cleanliness, politeness, helpfulness, comradeship and co-operation. Under a special heading we noted in which direction the greatest progress had been made and where improvement was most necessary. The above remarks and the following list should make clear that our reports aimed rather at encouraging the child's work than at passing final judgement on the work done.

NOTES OF PROFESSORS AND COUNSELORS:

- A. /8-10/ very good
- B. /6-8/ above average, good
- C. /4-6/ average
- D. /2-4/ below average
- E. /0-2/ unsatisfactory

APPRECIATIONS:

- 1) does his very best
- 2) is attentive and hard working
- 3) takes pains over his work
- 4) grasps things easily
- 5) is interested in the subject
- 6) expresses himself very well
- 7) concentrates on his work
- 8) shows perseverance
- 9) prepares his work well
- 10) shows comprehension, application and perseverance
- 11) shows initiative
- 12) shows imagination
- 13) could make greater efforts
- 14) is lazy and inattentive
- 15) does not take great pains
- 16) shows no understanding of the subject

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- 17) is devoid of interest
- 18) has no ability to express himself
- 19) superficial in his work
- 20) is without perseverance
- 21) does not prepare his work
- 22) shows lack of knowledge caused by absence
- 23) is not very bright
- 24) shows lack of imagination

A psychological and physical file was kept on each child, a kind of history of his whole development. Aside from the usual questions as to the condition of the child, there were questions concerning his social and intellectual development, and others in connection with the problems of emigration, separation from parents, next of kin, friends, familiar surroundings, and also the problems of adaption to the new milieu. We can mention here only that nostalgia played an extremely small part among the children of our homes. Doubtless that was a result of our therapeutics rather than a diagnosis – remark once made by a doctor who had visited our homes. We had forms with a prepared series of psychological questions worded precisely and briefly. It proved a good idea to furnish the teachers and counselors also with detailed explanations impressing on them the importance of regarding their answers for the development of each child, including their statistical value.

Later we changed these forms into note-books, in which more detailed questions and answers could be given. The health conditions were generally very good. We had no epidemics. Despite the contact with the village and other schools and workshops we had only one case of scarlet fever which the child caught during vacations when visiting his

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mother. Any child with fever, whether the illness was contagious or not, was instantly separated from the others, medically supervised and tended. All the children were vaccinated against diphtheria and whenever it was considered necessary, their inoculation against smallpox was renewed. All the children were checked as to their cutaneous reaction to TBC. Those of pre-school age showed negative reactions; of the children under twelve there were twenty-one positive cutaneous reactions; of the older ones forty-two out of one hundred and four. Every child was examined by our doctor; in the doubtful cases where the children had frail constitutions, she asked the advice of specialists and x-rays were taken.

We distributed 27 pairs of spectacles to our children and obtained 15 arch-supports for flat-footedness. In gym we insisted strongly on exercises that strengthened the arch of the foot. These exercises were repeated daily during morning gymnastics.

At least once a month a dentist came to our dental office in the villa "Les Tourelles" to treat the children. Every child who had been ill once had a medical record card to which future illnesses and the treatments necessary were added. Serious or chronic illnesses were also noted on their psychological and health cards; the same applied to inoculations and reactions thereto. The monthly remarks on changes in weight and height provided a constant check on the health of the child; sometimes the doctor of our homes saw reason to intervene. In each of our dining rooms was a list of children who should gain weight and therefore get special foods; vitamins, more sugar in their chocolate, more butter on their bread etc. The first year after the opening of our homes we had the satisfaction of seeing many increases in weight, sometimes up to 20 lbs.

An ultraviolet lamp compensated for the lack of sunlight during the

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winter months. Constant instruction on care of the body – brushing the teeth, washing and bathing, setting-up exercises in the morning, exercise through gardening, and outdoor games and sports, having the dormitories, dining rooms and work shops properly ventilated, vigilant medical supervision, immediate segregation of children with fever and conscientious medical treatment, certainly did much to diminish the amount and seriousness of illness among our children. We should like to mention here that three of our children whose frail constitutions made them susceptible to illness were sent to a preventorium at Arcachon, while eighteen children of delicate health got some rest at the sea-side in Aras.

The attitude of our children toward the doctor and their reactions when it was necessary for them to receive medical treatment of some kind demonstrated admirably the principle of unity of physical and mental education. Superstitious fear of illness did not exist among our children; they were not afraid to say they felt unwell. They were not afraid of medical examinations. They did not resist therapeutic or preventive measures and endured without protest the sometimes painful treatment of the dentist. Even the youngest did not refuse to take medicine. We were much impressed when all our children bravely presented themselves for anti-diphtheria vaccination after the doctor had given them a little lecture on the subject, warning them that they might have to endure considerable pain and high temperature after the three vaccinations. Of course there will always be timorous and frightened children and those specially

sensitive to pain, but the atmosphere of confidence created by explanations given with complete frankness helps to overcome the resistance of the more fearful children. In spite of the painful injections and bitter medicine given, and in spite of the quick recognition of simulated illness among school-

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children, the doctor was loved by the children. The same was true of the counselors and teachers, who could not allow the children to do everything they wished, who had to demand work when they wanted to play, who sometimes had to inflict punishment, every child felt sure that he was loved and that our aim was his happiness; he understood that it was sometimes necessary to take unpleasant measures against him. The teachers and counselors were his good comrades; they always kept their word.

The free hours were very carefully organized. In most case the children themselves did the necessary planning, but outsiders to the Homes were also permitted to participate. The greatest disadvantage of community education is that the entire life of a child in all its many aspects, is lived in the same environment. The problems of life outside the group never reach the child. The Home provides school, family, friends, comrades, athletic groups, and travelling companions – the same counselors always guide them, the same friends surround them, the same problems face them. These problems are aided in their solutions by the counselor who either impose the solutions on the children or recommend such solutions in order that the discipline of the Home may be maintained.

The children are divided into classes and home-groups. The classes are composed of children from our various homes. Only the little ones have classes in their own home; the older children suffer the inconvenience – and sometime even the danger – of a 30–40 minute walk to counteract the staleness of the home routine that isolates the youngsters so completely from the outside world.

Twice a month, on Sunday afternoons, the oldest children of all the homes gathered for youth meetings which they planned and organized

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themselves. On one of these afternoons the children heard a lecture on the aims and organization of the OSE Union (by Dr. Minkowski); another meeting was devoted to spiritual and physical instruction, a third to a discussion of pupil's examinations and reports. They also discussed Palestine and youth movements, they recited the "Malade Imaginaire" by Molière. We introduced them to the "Barbier de Seville" and "La mariage de Figaro," singing and playing them airs and choruses from both operas. The children arranged a concert, a ping-pong competition and a big athletic meet.

Their visit to the studio apartment of the great sculpturer Aronson made a deep impression on the children. Though sculpture readily impresses children and young people, their response is generally of a superficial nature. But this great artist made a really deep impression by explaining the technique and motifs of his creative work. It is interesting to note that some of the children asked us immediately after their visit to discuss art in its various forms. We tried to form a children's orchestra and cultivate their desire for music, but we did not have much success. The smallest children, those from 3 to 6, formed an orchestra with very simple instruments, such as whistles, triangles, drums and trumpets. Their exercises served to awaken in them a sense of rhythm, an ability to fit into a musical ensemble, and pleasure in harmony. The second orchestra, not far advanced, was supposed to be in the transition orchestra between the kindergartners and the older musicians. This second orchestra instruments capable of two or three notes. The third group-orchestra consisted of children who could actually play an instrument. We much regretted being unable to give the children music lessons, but we did gather a large group of flutists, accordionists and mouth-organists that grew constantly, one child teaching the next.

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Sometimes the oldest children spent their free time working up a program of entertainment for the younger ones, which helped the smaller children get rid of the feelings of always being the little brother or the little sister. The children's council of the homes decided to arrange special afternoons for the youngest children. Once a week we had dancing class for the older children. Rhythm exercises compensated for the many hours which they spent sitting in school, always using and tiring the same muscles.

We loved celebrations with or without occasion. Every birthday – and there was one nearly every day – was a good excuse. A cake with as many candles as the child had years, some sweets, a short speech – then the birthday child was lifted up in the air while the other children sang songs. The birthday child then received little presents from the other children and his counselor; sometimes we also laid the table with packages sent by the parents.

The 14th of July, New Year's Day, Passover, Chanukah and Purim were occasions of special delight. For educational reasons we were very anxious that at these celebrations no particular groups or individuals should overshadow the other. The children and counselors all worked together on the plays they put on, taking turns in the various parts. Different children were chosen for the leading roles each time. In spite of careful rehearsal and preparation and good performances, there was no straining after effect. We judged this kind of work from an educational rather than an artistic point of view.

We have already mentioned the administrative cooperation of our children. There follows a list of the regulations of the Homes. Most of these regulations were edited by the children themselves and reexpressed in their own words. For educational reasons we wanted this editorial work done. It gave us good opportunity to discuss with the children

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the fundamental principles of our Homes and to make them understand that the system was one of co-administration – we did not use the common term “self-government”. The children understand perfectly well that it was impossible to hand over to them the management of our Homes, since the task of an educational institution is, first of all, education. They understood that their education came first and that its requirements necessarily affected the administration and limited the freedom of both adults and children.

Co-operation and co-administration are always the most important links in the chain of educational methods. They cannot, however, led an independent existence, but must dovetail with educational principles. We did not want to give the children the illusion that they possessed unlimited freedom; we sought rather to define with them the limits of this freedom by following principles in which the children acknowledged justice, so that co-administration was not a game but real “business”. Our Home-Rules laid down principles with which we required compliance, but no details were given, since they must change constantly.

The Constitution of the Children’s Homes of the OSE Union:

All the children and adults who lived in the children’s homes of the OSE Union formed a community which directed the life of the homes by democratic administrative cooperation. This community was one part of the great community of all human beings; it was proud to live among the French and was conscious of belonging to the Union OSE, agency of assistance to Jews.

The democratic rights, as well as the duties, of the members of our small community were the same as those in communities in which we were contained. The liberties and rights of our members were limited by vol-

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untary subordination to our duties to all other human beings, to the Nation in which we lived and the association to which we belonged.

The Rules of the Constitution:

- I. Only children over 8 years have an active and passive right to vote. A child can be selected while absent.
- II. The elections shall be secret, unless there is unanimous decision to the contrary.

- III. a) Delegates: Each room has a delegate, who shall live in that room. The task of these delegates is to inspire a spirit of comradeship and encourage respect for tidiness and the property in the room. They have a right to remind their roommates to attend to their duties. b) Group Committee: This consists of 3–5 children, elected by the group. Counselors responsible for their own group participate without being elected, however. The Group Committee can act without appealing to the Group Meeting, but it must afterwards obtain its consent. The group meets each week with the Group Counselor in the chair. Extra meetings may be called with the consent of the Group Committee.
- IV. Home Committee: is elected by the members of the house. It consists of 5 children, the head of the home and one counselor, who is elected by the other counselors. Among the five children there should be, if possible, two younger children.

Rights and the Duties of the Home Committee:

It has the right to take part in organizing occupational activities, free hours and celebrations; it can express desires and propose modifications. The Home Committee controls the activity of the Group Committees. The President of the Home Committee is the child who receives a majority vote at the Home elections.

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- V. Home Council: This is made up of all Home Committees and the General Manager. The Homes Council is the central organ of cooperation in all the homes. It supervises the activities of the other committees. It meets every two months or, under extraordinary circumstances, when a Home Committee, 1/3 of the Home Council, or the General Manager requests a meeting. This Homes Council is presided over and represented by the Presidents of the Homes and the General Manager.
- VI. The Disciplinary Council: An accusation or complaint against a child shall be considered from the point of view of justice as long as it does not involve educational or administrative questions. Penalties shall be submitted for approval to the General Director of the Head of the Home. In doubtful cases, the President of the committee discusses the question with the General Director. A member of the Disciplinary Council cannot assume any other duties.
- VII. The Court of Appeals: Consists of the Presidents of the Homes Committees.

## VIII. Term of office:

a) Delegates	6 weeks
b) Group Committee Members	3 months
c) The Home Committee	6 months
d) Homes Council	6 months
e) Disciplinary Council	5 months

We had the best experience with our co-administration and the disciplinary council. The children approached the problems of co-administration with much dignity and earnestness. Of course, much time had to be given to explaining the necessity of handling with such disciplinary

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case with justice and making the children understand that certain acts must be censored or punished in certain ways. This time was not wasted. In our opinion, real educational benefits can be attained only if the children comprehend the necessity of working and submitting voluntarily to certain restrictions. The poor animal tamer can easily do without the co-operation and co-administration of the children, but the true teacher cannot. Our children were willing to make decision and to do the work we thought necessary and to execute justified punishment. As a matter of fact, we had to prevent the children from overdoing punishment in their youthful eagerness. When we were compelled to interfere we always made sure that the guilty child understood his offense. We explained to him the cause of his bad behavior. It was often painful to see how unhappy the child was and how frightened at his "crime." The effect of this educational work was lasting. Punishment by the grown-ups in most cases created in the child a sense of being terrorized and an inner resistance; he felt himself unjustifiably punished and therefore excused himself and minimized his offense. The hearings before the Disciplinary Council worked remarkably well in eliminating that reaction. The defendant's opportunity to talk and explain his act and the circumstances under which it occurred made the child forget to sulk. He understood his mistake.

In most cases a simple warning settled the matter. It is such more agreeable to recognize and praise merit than to admonish, but we refrained from too much praise in order not to diminish its effect. Simply giving encouragement when necessary.

It is chiefly the relationship between the children and the adults that creates the atmosphere of an educational institution. The children

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had confidence in our acts and in our promises, but we had to win this confidence, for their initial distrust was great. When we first announced that some event would

take place on a certain Thursday, the children busily whispered to each other all through Tuesday, Wednesday and even Thursday morning: "It's not really going to happen." At first when we said "yes" they retorted: "You, you always say yes." When the doctor first promised that this or that would not hurt, nobody believed her, and when we first said no exceptions would be made for anyone in a certain connection, all the children were convinced that the others would be preferred. But we kept our word and explained the reasons when we were unable to do so – and the children's confidence came readily. We never concealed our own insufficiencies, we were the first to acknowledge them and in that way we escaped the mockeries and the mischief of the children. What was more, our frankness won their respect and awakened in them a chivalrous attitude toward weaknesses, which we should never have been able to hide anyway. Very seldom, only in the beginning, did the familiar form of address lead to impudent and arrogance. We had to make very little effort to stop these indiscretions, for the other children considered it extremely unfair to abuse our good fellowship, and they themselves put a prompt stop to the "freshness" of any youngster. Despite our comradeship with the children, we never lowered us to their level. That would have made us ridiculous. We always insisted on the right to lead our personal lives. It was a community of children and grown-ups; every individual had his right to individual life, joining with the others to build a well-loved community.

One small fact is interesting from an educational point of view. The walls of our house were never disfigured with pencil marks; there were no designs or drawing, even in the lavatories, though we never mentioned the subject.

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At the beginning of the war, eleven of our male counselors left us. Some of them had to enter the army, some the camps set up for all foreigners. Their departure coincided with the opening of a new home, "La Tourelles." New children arrived. New houses was not ready. The workmen were also called to the army. The first air-raid alarm in France came, and we had to transform our cellars into shelters. During these days the women members of our staff, despite their personal wartime anxieties, did remarkable work. For a while we had only one cook and one chairwoman in Toremelles. The children offered their help and it was so efficient that we were able to maintain our old standard of living and even make improvements. During the first two months of the war, Mrs. Papanek took over the General Director's work, in addition to regular duties. Within a few weeks after war started, 53 evacuated children were taken into our Homes for a limited period. They were later sent to other homes.

After the outbreak of war three of our children were placed with families. 27 others were transferred to the Southern French OSE Homes in the Department

de la Creuse; 8 emigrated to the United States and 4 others to South America. One child went to Africa and another to Yugoslavia. One deaf and mute girl who spent some time with us working with the others in our workshops and attending classes, we later placed in the Home for the Deaf and Mutes. She apparently had been very happy with us. She could speak a few words – “merci,” and “au revoir” by the end of her stay.

Divergent Jewish views did not disturb the internal affairs of our Homes. Only educational consideration played a decisive role. We could not raise Zionists, Nationalists, Assimilationists, or Orthodox Jews. Their parents entrusted their children to us, and we sought to develop them into healthy people, sound in body and in mind, to encourage

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their talents, to prepare them as we could for the struggle of life, and to guide them to an independent, honest, and sincere way of life. When they returned to their parents, or were thrown on their own resources, they could follow their own beliefs. This does not mean that our educational work was done in a vacuum. It strove towards the noble goals mentioned in the preamble of the Home Constitution: respect for human freedom and dignity and constructive living in the nation which had received us so generously.

The children were aware of the differing ideals of their instructors and comrades. There were representatives of nearly all opinions among us – we asked them no questions, respecting their honest convictions.

Our understanding and respectful approach made it possible for us to conduct a Home of orthodox children in accordance with their customs. The children of this Home, “La Chesnaie” did, however, go to school with the other children. They took part in all the games and recreational activities and made friends with the non-orthodox children of the other Homes. The educational, economic and administrative direction of the Homes was in the hands of the General Director and we thus succeeded in coordinating the three phases of our work. All economic and administrative problems were subordinated to the educational, although the former were carefully considered.

Funds were secured and administered by the OSE’s Children-Committee, whose Chairman was Baroness Pierre de Gounzbourg. Nearly a quarter of the funds spent for one year were given by the American Joint Distribution Committee. We founded the institution to sponsor refugee children, which also helped us obtain funds; the principles of this institution was enclosed. A reading will make clear that we sought to avoid any humiliation to either the sponsored child or his comrades.

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The annual expenses for one child amounted to 5.600 francs before the war, 6.500 francs during the war. By our methods of collecting funds, centralizing administration, applying our educational ideas and organizing the Homes, we sought to raise our work from the level of private charity to that of social welfare.

We hoped that when our own children left the Homes of the OSE Union they would not have the oppressive sense of being reared in a charitable institution. We hoped that they would grow up as free men and women who were assisted and instructed by an organization which was happy to have been able to give them the help they needed to prepare them in some measure to make their way courageously to a new future.

## 14 They were Not Expendable

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### O.S.E. Children's Homes

For the children's whose first encounter with war we are reporting here if was not the first encounter with danger and death. Most of them had seen their parents and relatives beaten, dragged away from their homes and families, some of them were themselves beaten, had also been in concentration camps, had gone through persecution and terror of Nazism a few of them had gone through the personal tragedies of the Spanish Civil War. All of them were separated from their loved ones, had lost home and land of birth; they had seen the worst of their fellow man, were perturbed, mixed-up, afraid, only a few had a wage hope for a better future – any future when they came to the OSE Children's Homes and around Montmorency.

In the summer of 1938, I was approached by OSE.<sup>284</sup>

When Hitler came to power in Germany, the OSE was forced to move its headquarters once again, this time to Paris. Einstein became the chairman but, to this point OSE had been run exclusively by doctors and had

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been dealing exclusively with sick or undernourished children. In France OSE became the Oeuvres pour le Sante et l'Educaion or the Organisation de Sante et de l'Education.

to become director of its convalescent home for 24 children in Montmorency, outside Paris. At the time, my wife and two sons and I were just about to leave for the United States. My family had escaped from Austria only a few

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**284** The OSE Union (called "The Osay") was founded in 1912 by a group of Jewish doctors in St. Petersburg. The initials I was told stand for Obszczestvo Sdravochraneniya Evryeyev, which translates to Society for the Protection and the Health of the Jewish Population. After World War 1, it had moved its headquarters to Berlin and extended its activities throughout Europe. When Children were dying like flies in the hospitals of Kkiev, OSE set up hygiene stations of its own [EP].

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**Note:** In this version of the text, Papanek relies heavily on his work "Refugee Children in War-time" for the first ten pages, why these have not been included here. The text is also different from a piece published with a similar title later: Ernst Papanek, "They are not Expendable: The Homeless and Refugee Children in Germany," *Social Service Review* 20, no. 3 (1946): 312–319.

months earlier. Mrs. Papanek, a doctor, had been in quite some danger, because of my underground political activities.

When I first saw the ramshackle condition of the Home, I turned the job down. It was only when the OSE officials told me I would have complete freedom in building the place up, and hinted that they would consider plans to provide shelters for refugee children from Hitler Europe, that I agreed to take over as director for six months. Many of us saw that our political work was more and more becoming impossible, war was inevitable: now we were looking for a chance to save at least the children since we could not help the parents.

Within four months after I took over at Montmorency, the first group of children came in from Austria and Germany. Three other old castles were eventually bought within a 3-mile radius of each other in Montmorency, in great part with money supplied by Baroness Rierre de Ginsbourg, whose husband was a refugee Russian garment manufacturer. Madame de Ginsbourg started by declaring she would make only one gift and ended as chairman on the Board.

The first group were young children who had been completely terrorized. In outlining the first day's schedule to them, I told them that after lunch they would go out into the spacious grounds around the villa and play. I was met by a bewildered silence. One little girl, about 8 years

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old, finally looked up timorously and asked "Are Jewish children really allowed to go into the park?" For weeks, they did not too much during their play period. They had to be taught how to play.

## 15 Untitled First Draft Dictated on the Maladjusted Child

The well-integrated individual feels able to orient himself in the chaos of life when he finds a certain security through effort and socially useful activity. The maladjusted individual develops inferiority, [more and more intense, EP] feelings the more he feels himself incapable of making a useful contribution to society.

These children never contributed anything useful to their community; their contribution was destructive, useful only to their enemies, harmful to their own society. No wonder they feel not only inferior but even guilty and ashamed that they could not stand up courageously against the pressure which forced them to this sort of social activity.

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Inferiority feelings, Alfred Adler teaches, can be the motivating power behind the striving for achievement. There is a lot of inferiority feeling in these children; there is enough motivating power for striving for achievement. But to harness this power to constructive goals we must develop this inferiority feeling into a social feeling. The ideal of perfection for mankind, for the nation, for a party, for the gang, are such constructive goals.

These children have suffered so much through injustice that only justice in its purest form can satisfy them. They have suffered so much cruelty that only the fullest kind of humanity and brotherhood will satisfy them. They have seen so much ugliness in the fighting of every one to save his own hide that nothing but the truest and completest community spirit will satisfy them, and if they don't get it, they will seek revenge and will themselves become unjust, cruel and self-seeking toward those dependent on them.

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While the well-adjusted individual finds satisfaction in the rewards of socially useful work, rewards for these children's efforts came only when they had done something socially destructive. In addition to the work to which they were forced by the enemy, they did antisocial work on their own, hoping the better to survive thereby. They became informers against others in their group; they stole from their friends. Some of them, stronger in character, developed a kind of social organism by building gangs out of the material of the concentration camps. Their socially useful activity was useful only for their own small gang, not for a larger community. Nevertheless they got all the satisfaction out of it

and now that the pressure has been removed, they continue to work for their gang in the same way. But now the larger community around them is no longer a hostile community, it is the society to which they must adjust if they are to avoid becoming

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outcasts, neurotic solitaries, or dangerous outlaws.

But the gang spirit is something for us to start with. It has all the emotional and social elements of adjustment to a social organism; it must simply be developed from gang to community spirit. That's all, but it's a lot. The gang was for these children something understandable, something necessary to their survival, something that protected them. They will accept a new and larger community only if it provides them with at least a feeling of belonging and security they found in the gang. We must give them more; we must give them something of which they can be proud, not only something that gives them a relative security. Our experience teaches that they are highly critical. They analyse our social setup carefully and are not satisfied with it. There is a high ideal of perfection and we are certainly far from perfect. There is the longing for a society diametrically different from that in which they lived before. We have to teach them to integrate to an actual society. If we could only give

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(explain why their demands on society are so exacting, why so sensitive to all its imperfections)

them one that approaches their ideal! Failing this, they may withdraw in revenge or their inferiority feelings may be hypercompensated as wishful day-dreams and the weaker and smaller they are, the greater will be the position they achieve in such dreams. They will develop an exaggerated superiority feeling to overcome their deep inferiority complex, a superiority feeling expressed in aggressiveness toward those who are weaker or whom they hate because they hinder them in their struggle for supremacy. All these drives can be developed on an individual basis or on the basis of a gang or a larger community. We should not be surprised to find these children among the terrorists of Palestine.

Another way out of their plight is to take refuge in disease, unhappiness, the pity of others, neuroses (and psychoses).

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Our education must work in the direction of teaching these youngsters how to overcome their inferiority feeling, how to fit into a community life successfully.

With great eagerness they will grab the opportunity to study or learn a trade enabling them to support themselves and no longer be dependent, and more than this, giving them a chance to contribute to the wellbeing and development for others.

They must find their place in the social setup. The pathological way out can be to subordinate the child's drives. He will be as a superior who can use the abilities and eagerness of these young people for something that looks ideal to them. The normal way is to let the child have a place of his own in the democratic society, the possibility to discuss, to participate in decisions, and to help carry them out.

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Every individual is a psychobiological entity. Changes in the one sphere will always bring about alterations in the other. Former hunger have(?) its influence on the psyche and emotions of these children, just as overeating now has its influence. It is not only the physiological change from poor to better nourishment; both being afraid of not getting enough, and being sure of getting enough must influence their development greatly. To give the children security must be one of our first steps. It's nice for a tearjerker to show a child released from concentration camp taking a piece of bread from the table and putting it secretly into his pockets. Emotionally it is a very unhealthy situation, which may jeopardize all of our psychological efforts and minimize the educational influence we hope to exert if the child cannot get rid of the feeling of insecurity manifested in such an act of fear.

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Overeating is another expression of this feeling of insecurity. It might have been all right for first days after liberation to let the children eat at much as is physiologically possible with out harm, but it would be emotionally wrong to permit this to continue. We must make the children aware that the physiological hunger feeling can be satisfied with less food. We must give them the conviction that it is unnecessary for them to stuff everything in that they can get their hands on, they must know that there will always be enough from now on.

We cannot assure them, and we should not assure them, that there will always be enough because they will get it as a gift from society. They must be educated to our world, in which food is not guaranteed to everyone, not even to every child, even under normal conditions. They must know that we must all work for our living. We must instruct them and convince them that they will have an opportunity to prepare

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For earning a living and that until they are ready for that (?) they will receive what they need because of their special situation. We must show them possibility and awaken in them the desire to work for their living, to give society in return for what they receive from society. Only thus can we avoid developing “professional Schnorrers” (professional beggars).

Alfred Adler has taught us that “insufficiency of effectiveness” can be due to the morbid phenomena of the civilisatory conditioning process. Where could this be truer than with these children? Their insufficiency of effectiveness has been to a great extent, provoked by the deadly phenomena of Nazism; their personalities were formed in a childhood whose strongest physical and psychic impressions forced on them a consciousness of their insufficiency; they were doomed to slavery; under purely negative pressure from their slavedrivers, they were forced to develop an effectiveness of no significance for their own development but merely adequate to keep them alive. Thus the children

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ordered to drag dead bodies from the gas chamber to the crematorium derived no kind of personal satisfaction from their work but were simply aware that if they did this work inefficiently they would be killed or brutally beaten.

Without any of the satisfaction of work well done, without childish or adolescent play without identification and the winning of prestige through the success of parents, relatives or nation, without belonging to anything but a gang forced to unity by common fear and common distress and yet with everyone for himself for the sake of survival – their emotional development was to a very great extent influenced only by negative factors, with no positive outlook (constructive) for the present or for the future. Certainly, there was some hope that one day the Nazis would be beaten; certainly there was some hope that one day they would be liberated.

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And then liberation came. There was enough food now for the first time. A few of them could also go home. They were willing to be led to a constructive future. But nothing was offered them. We missed a tremendous opportunity, and this opportunity will never be ours again. It will be harder now, even under the most favorable circumstances, to put these children on the right road. They were able to keep the emotional effects of being victimized by their enemies the Nazis; but now they were disappointed by their liberators. They were cheated in their expectations and they were cheated even when our intentions were best.

There are the Jewish children. Some of them wanted to live now in a free and democratic world. Some even expected to find it in another democratic Germany, such as they had known before Hitler. Others saw their only hope in a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Nothing of this was granted them. Worst of all, no constructive direction

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was afforded to individual development or the necessary reintegration into a community of some kind. There were cases where the children were offered a highly unrestricted life. A children's camp, for instance, under their own administration, run by self-government, where everyone could do as he liked, where the children could stay away from the camp overnight, could take what they wanted, eat what they wanted, and where those in charge thought this the right new life after their slavery.

We do not believe that even very mature adults would enjoy such a life. These children did not only not enjoy it; they were cheated of their right to get into a stable society again, to be educated to a life where they would not run wild but would belong, where they would not only have rights but also duties – and it is a right to have duties toward a family or a community, and Adolescents especially long for this right to duties.

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The children were longing for a superior environment into which their personalities, now raised to a level higher than it had been in the past, could fit. The emotionally beneficial advantage of this situation has been lost, but it is never too late. We still have a chance to use this desire, slumbering in these children and still very strong in them, for a better development – if we can offer them this superior environment longed for and expected in their dreams, waking and sleeping, while they slaved in Hitler's camps.

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When we get up in the morning after a good night's sleep, our bodies are not the same as the bodies we laid down the night before. When we have worked very hard or given ourselves a workout in a stiff game of tennis, our bodies are changed. Our minds and personalities are not inflexible or unchangeable either; they are as alterable as our bodies. How we change depends partly on outside impressions. Resting or working, eating too much or too little, all these influence our bodies. Environmental impressions, pleasure or pain, fear or security, happiness or unhappiness, excitement or tranquillity all change our minds and personalities.

The children who went through war and persecution went through abnormal bodily development by frequent hunger and frequent overwork, by highly specialized work employing only a limited number of muscles, by lack of sleep. They got no satisfaction out of the work they did for the enemy. For the children in concentration and slave labour camps there was no father, no mother to be proud of their efficiency and their accomplishments. There was no encouragement spurring them to eagerness, only fear and anxiety.

(15)

No doubt months and years of slave labour, months and years of abnormal emotional development, separation from their families, separation from a community appropriate for the child, have greatly influenced the bodies and minds, the emotions and the personalities of the children. The knowledge of this destructive and negative influence, however, should not let us overlook the fact that it also implies the possibility and hope for a change to the better. There are only a few cases where the threshold of flexibility was overstepped. That we must know is in which direction the overemphasis of the former years was laid. Then we can find the compensation.

Alfred Adler has taught us that the disfunction in one or another organ system will be compensated in the cyclical sphere. Hypercompensation takes place where weakness and smallness are to be overcome.

There is one factor situation where these facts are most clearly visible. Hunger and fear of not being fed sufficiently have influenced the growth of the body and provoked anxiety about hunger and insufficient nourishment to the point of determining the personality and emotional development of children. It will be one of the most important tasks to handle this distortion from the first day we get these children out of their abnormal environment.

England – Buchenwald children

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