Congress appropriated $10,000,000 for immediate aid. Of that, $4,000,000 was used to scour the West for a most rundown, dilapidated, inadequate collection of used trailers. Along the railroad tracks, near the oil tanks, at the foot of Portland’s lovely hills, is this “DP” camp.

The trailers are so small that the adults of a family use one and the kids another. The rent is $28 a month. There are community toilet facilities. Many are Negro families.

No more can Portland boast, as she used to do proudly, of “a city without slums.” This trailer camp, housing hundreds, is worse.

There are no night lights, and when it rains, as it does so much in Portland, it must be bleak and dreary beyond description.

Downtown, offices of the Housing Authority and Equitable Insurance Co. are in the most modern, beautiful, all-glass, air conditioned building I have ever seen. Up on “Snob Hill,” as the refugees sarcastically call it, new houses are built. Prices for new small houses and rents for old ones have skyrocketed since the disaster. Three rooms, formerly $85, are now $115.

The demands made by the stricken tenants were reasonable:
1. To investigate the flood and fix the blame; 2. to take over auto courts and hotels for the Van Porters; 3. city rent control; 4. building of prefabricated houses with the $6,000,000 left.

None has been carried out.

Demonstrations were held before City Hall with a picket line with banners down Broadway. “Billions for Greece and Turkey; nothing for Americans,” one read. They were attacked as Communists. Now they call themselves “the Van Port Reds.”

White and Negro hands joined in a human chain to rescue drowning people. A 20-foot rush of water swept away all differences.

They live together now in close kinship of anger and rebellion against their fate, their homes of yesterday today’s monument to greed. Like a gaping wound is this DP camp in the heart of the City of Roses, Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

WHY LET THE KIDS SWELTER IN THE CITIES?

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

August 27, 1947.

One of the worst features of the unbearable heat waves that periodically engulf our communities during mid-summer is the fact that the children have to sweat through them in our stifling cities. This is all quite needless. There are hundreds of thousands of acres of nearby cool farm country and forest land beckoning to the youngsters to come out and be happy there.

What ought to be done is to organize things so that during the hot months of July and August the whole mass of city children should be moved out into the country and to the beaches. This should be done not only in the case of New York, where the kids fry during the two hot months, but also in the many other big cities in the humid belt.

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It's about time the workers in their unions should insist that their children, from infancy on up through
the school ages, get a break in the summertime. They should not merely have a week or so in the country, but the whole summer. This would be of incalculable benefit to the kids, not to speak of relief to their heat-harassed parents. Long summer vacations would vastly improve the children's health, would give them a much-needed acquaintance with country life, and would be a real blow against the appalling present-day juvenile delinquency.

It is intolerable that the workers should permit their children to sweat out the summers in the hot and filthy cities. The whole atmosphere of the cities in the summertime is detrimental to child life, not to mention child happiness. Besides the unpleasantness and unhealthfulness of the steaming weather, the playground facilities in all cities are utterly inadequate. Often they are so bureaucratically managed that actually fewer kids can use the organized playing fields than formerly played there when they were just vacated.

As things now stand, in the New York area, only relatively a few people are able to pay the fabulous prices demanded for country cottages and can keep their children there during the hot months. Other children, also comparatively a fortunate handful, may get a week or so in the country from some organization or other, or may have an occasional boat trip on the Hudson. But all this is merely a drop in the bucket. The great mass of children hardly leave the city at all in the summer.

What is needed is to send all the city's kids to the country, and for the whole summer. And this should be done, not as a matter of charity or as an advertising stunt by a Hearst paper, but as the natural right of children to two months of the year in the green fields and woods or on the ocean beaches. To many kids today, a week in the country would seem like a week in paradise if they could but get it. In this matter the writer speaks from his own experience as a slum-raised youngster.

Of course it would cost some money to move the armies of kids of New York and other great cities out into the country for the summer. At that, however, the cost per kid would be little. But what of the expense? This country is lousy with money, with so much money in fact that it soon will be choking upon it in an economic crisis. Actually, the mass movement of the kids to the country in summer would be a stabilizing influence in our insane economic system.

The trade unions in the cities should take up this matter and put an end to the shame of their kids sweltering in the cities while the children of the well-to-do enjoy themselves in the country. If the unions will display a dime's worth of activity, their children also can go to the country.

LINCOLN STEFFENS—MUCKRAKER

BY SENDER CARLIN

August 9, 1940.

The great truth that slowly dawned upon Lincoln Steffens, America's greatest exposé journalist, in the later years of his life was that you cannot moralize corruption or injustice out of existence. And when he died on August 9, 1936, Steffens was convinced that only a fundamental reorganization of society, such as he had personally witnessed in the Soviet Union, could cure those ills against which he had fought so valiantly and vainly for so many years in America.

Lincoln Steffens saw more of corruption, chicanery, and outright thievery on the part of the American ruling class than perhaps any other American publicist of his time. And yet, as Upton Sinclair once reminded him, he seldom drew the logical political conclusions from his observations. For nearly 50 years Steffens roamed the land, exposing the monstrous crimes of the capitalist class and its political hirelings. He studied the sores and leprousies of civilization in our America, but he was long in arriving at the only diagnosis: that all these were symptoms of a disease which is inherent in a capitalist society.

Until the twilight of his life Steffens made a virtue of detachment; to him wrongs and injustices were a result of a lack of "understanding" between oppressors and oppressed.

But if Steffens learned slowly, he learned well. Inevitably the lessons of the World War, the Versailles Treaty, the Russian Revolution and events at home commenced to form in his mind those convictions which he was so eager that John Reed avoid in order that he might "play with life."

For Steffens, who for years was a reporter with a great narrative gift, could no longer rest with mere reporting, and he determined to try to change the things he found evil. In 1934 he wrote a letter which carried that glowing salutation, "Dear Comrades." It follows in part: "When the panic came in 1929, I struck the trail again to see and listen to some of the big bosses of this big business, the men who had jeered at us muckrakers and—I found that they did not know what had happened to them and to us, they did not know what was wrong, what to do about it! They DID not know, they do not know. Our rulers and masters do not understand the machinery of their business or of our civilization; nor what to do about it; and our schools and colleges—our culture does not know what else to do than to go on and rise and collapse again, and again, and again...."

"Now, all this lifetime of mine when they jeered at me and my colleagues of the muckrake—these makers of the muck in high jest bade me report to them if I came to the end of my trail when, if ever, I found a