

The End of The DP Program By Katharine Boyd

Last week, the Displaced Persons Commission came to an end. The war-time agency that handled the refugee problem for this country turned over its books to the State Department for final liquidation.

The news was carried by most papers on an inside page; the write-up was of less than column length. It was a sad indication, one might say, of the way this nation has looked upon the whole matter of these lost and forlorn, whose numbers run into the millions.

The problem has been treated with negligence, not to say selfishness. In the midst of our great plenty we have had little time

or little thought to give to these unfortunates.

"Out of sight, out of mind" is a saying that applies to most of us, and, to most, the problem of the refugees has been purely a matter of statistics published in the back pages of the paper. Except for an occasional tirade by some senator condemning the sum of money, small as it was, allotted to the Commission, or crying out against the entrance of "dangerous aliens" into the country, or the criticisms occasionally heard of some DP family who has not made good, we haven't heard much about them. But to those of us who may have had a direct

look at the DP problem, last week's story of the end of the DP Commission brought a real shock.

I had such a first-hand look, both on the receiving end and on the problem at its source. I met a DP family that arrived by mistake in Southern Pines and spent a few hours with them, and last summer when I was in Italy I spent a day at the big refugee camp at Bagnoli outside of Naples. Both experiences will remain vividly before me, I think, for both, in a certain way, illustrate the times in which we live and this country's relation to them.

Our DPs

We have had several DPs and their families in our area and most of us have heard about them; some have had direct contact with them. The experience occurred to me the way things do sometimes occur to anyone mixed up with a newspaper: When people don't know quite who to turn to here, they call The Pilot. So when the Welfare Department was notified that a DP family was about to arrive in Southern Pines, with no one to take care of them, they called me. It appeared that the people who had applied for the family had cancelled their application several months before, on learning that the family could not arrive in time to help with the spring farming, but something had happened; the cancellation had not reached the right office so the family arrived.

By luck I was at the station when they came. I found them already ensconced in a taxi, just about to take off for the farm whose owner had left for the rest of the summer. I got them out, looking utterly bewildered, and took them to my house. They were six: father, mother, two little girls and a little boy, all under six, and a tiny baby of a few months. Never had I seen people so exhausted and so woe-begone; never had I seen children so thin, so white, so anxious-eyed. But, since then, since my visit to the camp in Italy, I have seen many such.

The family was Polish, and spoke only Polish and German; I spoke neither, beyond saying: "good," and "thanks," and "pretty," and "bread and milk." But those words were just about what was needed. To make a long story short, the food I and the neighbors provided and the feeling of affection and consideration that we all felt for them and that, I am sure, the DPs must have understood, did the trick. Eventually we found someone who could speak German and could explain what had happened and, as they had come over through the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the Sisters of St. Joseph's took them out there and gave them the rest and food and care they needed. A home was found for them and, as far as I know, they have gotten along pretty well. There is little doubt, however, that due to the poor arrangements made for the reception of DPs in this country, the period of adjustment, of what we really should call: rehabilitation, is very long and very hard. And that thought leads me into my experience in Italy, because it was there that I saw the background of the refugee problem and began to understand its significance to our times, and, more directly, one of the big reasons why the adjustment of the DPs to their new lives and jobs was often slow and fraught with difficulties both for them and for their employers.

Where They Came From

The refugee camp at Bagnoli is, or was, last summer, the largest in Italy and one of the four or five big camps in Europe. It was situated on a hillside in the outskirts of Naples, housed in the buildings of what had been one of Mussolini's Youth Camps.

Great brownish concrete barracks, three stories high, were spaced along the sides of the sloping ground and across the top. The big bare expanse in the center, dotted with a few straggling flower beds, was crisscrossed with paths. As we drove up I could see people, here and there, wandering along the paths, leaning up against the walls, sitting on the curb or the steps of the buildings. They seemed to be waiting; yet without any feeling of expectancy: just waiting.

"There were cues in front of the doors of some of the buildings and as I got out of the car, the sound of a loud speaker came squawking through the air. First in Italian, then in two or three languages unintelligible to me, then in French, the speaker said: "TB tests now being given at the clinic." There followed a string of names of those who were supposed to report for their tests and, from the people wandering about, a few turned and walked toward a small building at the corner.

I went inside with my friend and was taken to meet the heads and workers of some of the American agencies whose offices were in the center buildings. These

were the agencies who were directly responsible for bringing the DPs to this country. It may be recalled that our DP program, while headed by the government commission, was actually handled by a group of church and welfare organizations. Each had its office at Bagnoli: perhaps two or three small rooms, and a staff of seldom more than four or five workers. The inadequacy of the means of handling the problem was overwhelmingly evident at Bagnoli but so was the earnestness and conscientious, desperately hard-working energy of these workers, doing what they could with the small funds they had to work with; always haunted by their realization of how great was the need and how little they could do. Words could not possibly do justice to the selfless devotion of the agency people.

Those of us who sent food or clothes or money to Europe through our churches: Presbyterian, Catholic, Jewish, Unitarian, Lutheran and so on, may feel completely satisfied that what we sent was stretched as far as it could possibly go, and used wisely and well. And I was impressed, too, with the friendliness and confidence with which the agencies cooperated with one another.

Bagnoli was what was called a "processing camp," one of those depressing terms that are applied so glibly to human beings these days. It meant, in this case, that Bagnoli was supposedly the last stage on the journey to a new life for the inhabitants. It had been planned that refugees would come to Bagnoli, only after they had passed most of the necessary qualifications for emigration. So it had been thought that the average stay at Bagnoli would be a matter of weeks. That happy plan had lasted not much more than the few weeks envisaged. Because the International Refugee Organization did not have funds to establish an adequately staffed system of screening, or of housing for the millions under their charge, refugees were moved on before they could be "processed," in the preliminary stages; or, as happened in the Venezia Giulia region, near Trieste, epidemics began to break out, under the terrible housing conditions that existed, and it was imperative that the people be moved out, anywhere, in any way. They were put wherever there was room.

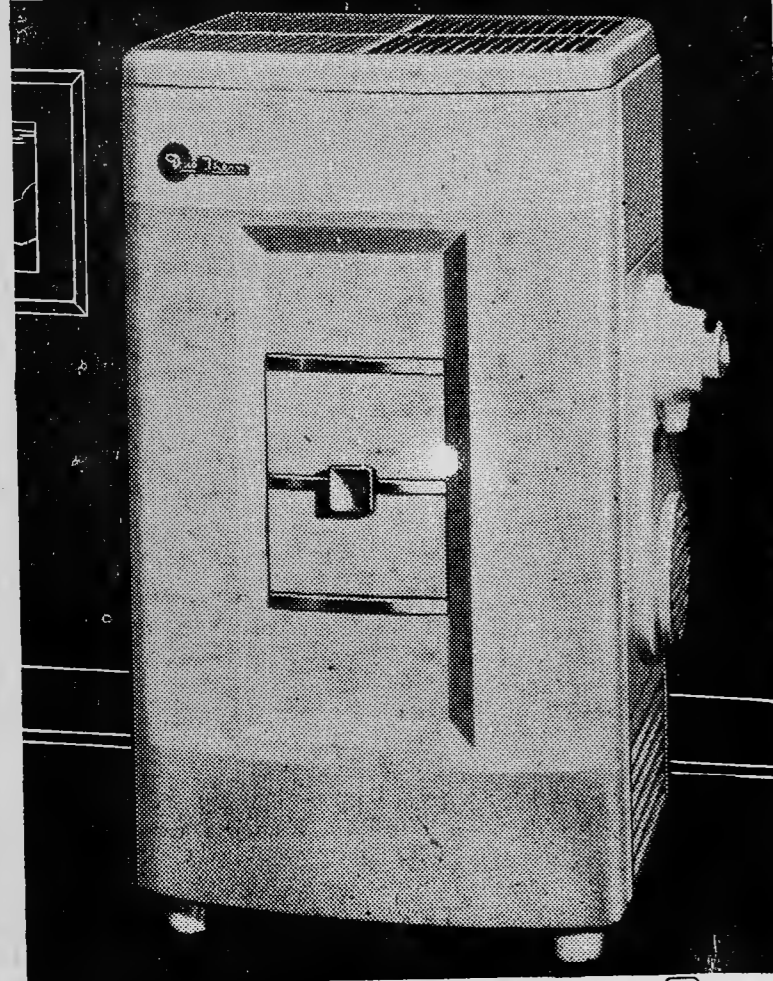
On the other end of things, the "processing" began to jam from the start. The load on doctors, nurses and office workers at Bagnoli was so great that the wheels turned more and more slowly, as more and more refugees poured into the camp. And heartbreaking

delays would constantly occur. If one member of a family became ill or failed to pass a test, for instance, the whole family had to wait. Many of the families had

aged parents or grandparents with them, who frequently broke down in health or mentally, thus delaying the departure of the whole family, as the rule was that fam-

ilies must go together. The anguish adding to the crowded condition of living, caused by such disappointments, was only equal (Continued on Page 7)

It's New! It's Here!
DUO-THERM IMPERIAL
OIL HOME HEATER
in Beautiful Platinum Finish

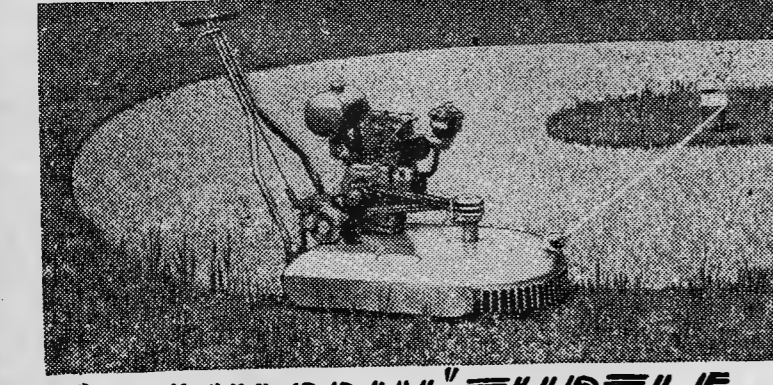


- OPTIONAL THERMOSTAT** for set-it and forget-it comfort! (with or without electricity)
- OPTIONAL AUTOMATIC** Power-Air Blower turns itself on and off!
- DUAL CHAMBER BURNER** gets more heat from every drop of oil!
- PLUS MANY OTHER COMFORT-INSURING FEATURES**

Model 622 41,500 BTU *Choose from two Deluxe Models* Model 722 53,000 BTU

BURNEY HARDWARE CO.
Aberdeen, N. C.

DUO-THERM Always the Leader
LOOK... NO HANDS!!
CUTS BY ITSELF—JUST STAKE OUT!

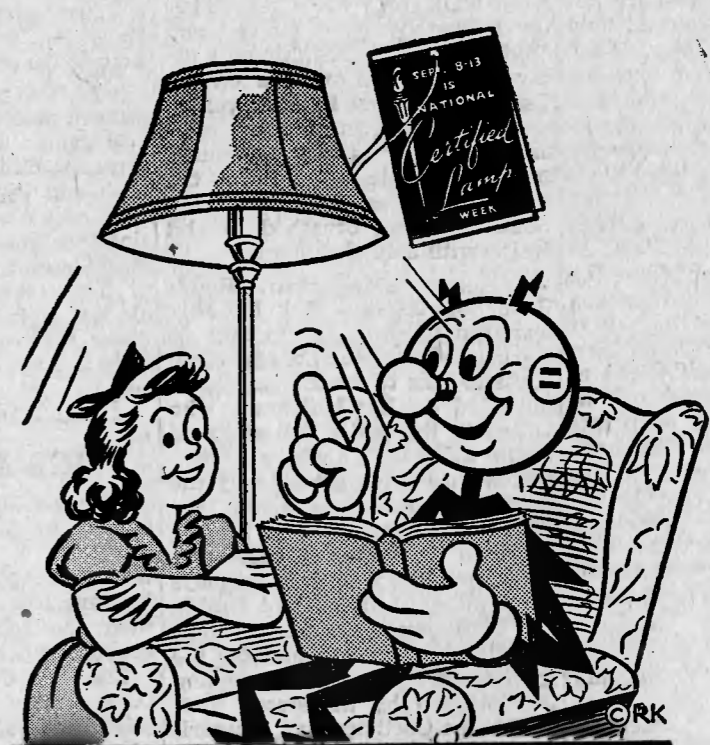


SNAPPIN' TURTLE
THE SELF-PROPELLED Rotary LAWN MOWER

Here is the lawn mower that cuts by itself, while you rest... just stake it out on your lawn. It has no wheels, but glides on traction rollers and skidpan. It's self-propelled. Fingertip start, stop and reverse. No pushing—just guide it, or stake it out. Climbs steep banks, cuts all kinds of grass, pulverizes clippings and mulches your lawn. No raking. Be sure to see this new idea in lawnmowers before you buy any more.

Several Sizes to Choose From
IDEAL FOR SCHOOLS
Contact Dealer In Your Community Or Communicate With the N. C. Distributor . . .

E. F. CRAVEN CO.
"THE ROAD MACHINERY MEN—FOR 52 YEARS"
PHONE 3-5521 P. O. BOX 538
FOOT OF EUGENE STREET AT SOUTHERN RAILROAD
GREENSBORO, N. C.



USE LIGHT THAT'S RIGHT FOR BETTER SIGHT

Good advice Reddy! . . . and with school days here again it's doubly important to make sure that your youngster is provided with proper lighting for study.

Young eyes are easily injured from glare, inadequate or improper lighting . . . in fact, permanent damage can be done if this situation is allowed to go unchecked.

Some of the symptoms of eye strain caused by improper lighting are nervousness and headaches. Prevent damage to young eyes . . . check the lighting in your home before school starts!

HELPING TO BUILD
A Finer Carolina
CAROLINA POWER & LIGHT COMPANY

There's
NO value
like **Chevrolet**
value!

...the lowest-priced line in its field!

Measure value by what you get for what you pay . . . and it's easy to see why more people buy Chevrolets than any other car.

For you get more with Chevrolet . . . fine quality features found in no other low-priced car. And yet you pay less . . . for Chevrolet is the lowest-priced line in the low-price field.

Today more and more people are looking for greater value in everything they buy. Come in and let us show you all the reasons why—in automobiles—there's no value like Chevrolet value.

(Continuation of standard equipment and trim illustrated is dependent on availability of material.)
MORE PEOPLE BUY CHEVROLETS THAN ANY OTHER CARS!



MID - SOUTH MOTORS, Inc.
Aberdeen, N. C.