

[Dugan WWII file]

December 31, 1942

Mr. E. E. Black, Director
Office of Civilian Defense
Honolulu, T. H.

Dear Mr. Black:

Because of the very great need for additional workers in the local community, a strenuous effort is being extended to establish appropriate day care centers for children of working or potentially working mothers.

Palama Preschool Unit

As a part of its neighborhood center program, Palama has recently opened a small preschool unit. It has been possible for us to make available one of our buildings for this purpose which has been renovated and satisfactorily equipped. We have also been fortunate in obtaining the services of several experienced teachers, including Miss Cecile Robbins, a graduate of Columbia University, as director. The services of our Palama medical and dental departments have been fully utilized. The medical department supplies the medical examination to all children at the opening of the term and continues to supply daily nursing care in order that the spread of communicable diseases may be eliminated. Our dental department has made a complete inspection of all children's teeth and is performing the necessary dental work on those who are eligible for our service. The children who are ineligible are referred to their family dentists for treatment.

Because of the well trained teaching personnel and available nursing, medical and dental services, those who are working with the day care program are utilizing Palama facilities as a teacher training and demonstration center. Because of our limited space, however, only twenty-five children are being cared for at the present time. Our program has been visited on two occasions by Benjamin O. Wist, Dean of the Teachers College, University of Hawaii, and Chairman of the Day Care Committee. After his last visit to Palama we are in receipt of a letter from him from which we quote in part.

"-----let me state-----that the Day Care Committee of the Council of Social Agencies is more than pleased with the fact that Palama Settlement has established a preschool center and that

all evidence points to a high standard of work being maintained. It would, however, be splendid if you could expand and extend your services-----. You do not, in my opinion, serve as large a proportion of preschool age children in your vicinity as you should-----. You are furthermore restricting your potential services for not caring for two year old children-----. A six days a week with school from 8 A. M. to 5 P. M. would be most desirable and I am certain would greatly help supply needed women workers."

Additional Buildings Needed

The above quotation not only indicates the quality of work conducted at Palama but indicates as well the important community need for more child care centers. Palama is prepared to expand these services in every respect but one. We do not have adequate indoor space to house additional children. Even if our budget would allow construction for this purpose it would likely be impossible for a civilian organization to purchase the necessary materials and supplies.

May we respectfully request that the Office of Civilian Defense erect a building on the Palama grounds adjacent to the present preschool unit which would allow the expansion of the Palama preschool and day care program. Such a building could well do double duty, we believe, by becoming an evacuation or a lost children's center in case of an emergency. The present preschool building has a well equipped kitchen and could provide feeding facilities for large numbers of evacuees in case of an emergency. Palama also keeps a stock of emergency food on hand at all times for such purposes.

Palama would be prepared to supply all other facilities except the building for the daycare center. We would responsible for providing the teachers, cooks and attendance, as well as the necessary equipment.

We believe the additional building would provide not only additional day care facilities for this community but would also add to the existing emergency facilities in this district.

Attached is a tentative plan for the proposed Palama preschool unit which has been approved by the building committee of Palama Settlement and the Honolulu City and County Building Department.

Sincerely yours,

Theodore R. Rhea
Director