

ROTARY GOLDEN ROUND TABLE
"Youth - Yesterday and Today"
(Juvenile Delinquency)

ANNCR: The Rotary Club of (Name of City), in cooperation with Radio Station _____ brings you a projection of the drama you have just heard--a discussion by local community leaders of the community problems dramatized in Rotary Golden Theatre. Does (Name of City) have any youth problem? What are we doing about it and what should we do? Rotary Golden Round Table, a local contribution to the world-wide observance of Rotary International's Fiftieth Anniversary, feels that discussion is the start toward accomplishment. So, for the next 15 minutes, let's think about the Youth of Tomorrow!

VOICE: (OFF, CALLING) Children are too pampered. They expect you to do too much for them. In my day, we made our own amusements and solved our own problems.

SECOND VOICE: (OFF, CALLING) These modern young people think they know it all. You can't tell them anything. No respect for their elders!

FIRST VOICE: (OFF, CALLING) They're wild and head-strong--too hard.

SECOND VOICE: (OFF, CALLING) They're weak and soft, physically. They need a harder and simpler life.

FIRST VOICE: (OFF, CALLING) They've got too much education and not enough brains.

SECOND VOICE: (OFF, CALLING) Our taxes are already too high. What with schools and community centers and paid youth leaders, children are costing us too much.

ANNCR: That's enough. Maybe some of those criticisms are fair--maybe not. But wherever and whenever older people get together, someone will eventually start to criticize the coming generation. Our Golden Round Table members are prepared to discuss some of those criticisms. Members of today's discussion group are:

Mr. A _____, (Identification) _____;

Mr. B _____, (Identification) _____; and

Mr. C _____, (Identification) _____.

Mr. A, before we enter into any discussion of local youth problems, one of our critics complained about the cost of any good youth program. If it

ANNCR: (CONT.) costs more than we can afford to spend, there's not much point in even thinking about it. What do you have to say about that?

MR. A: First, what does a good youth program cost a community? The only sensible answer I can give to the question of what a good youth program costs is-- it costs as much as it needs to. Whatever the amount, the public gets a bargain.

MR. B: What's your reasoning on that, A?

MR. A: This, B. Organized crime is estimated to cost the United States somewhere in the neighborhood of ten billion dollars a year, (SUBSTITUTE FIGURES FOR OTHER COUNTRIES) not including the cost of law enforcement. All that money is diverted from honest channels, where it could add to the welfare and well-being of people generally. We all know that the support of penal institutions runs into astronomical figures.

MR. C: Are you saying, then, A, that a good youth program can eliminate crime and criminals?

MR. A: No, C, I'm not that optimistic. But records show that a very small percentage of "repeater" criminals had their first conflict with the law after they were 21 years old.

MR. C: That's true.

MR. A: Court records make it pretty clear that if we get our boys and girls started on the right path, they will probably stay there. Every youngster we keep from going bad is worth thousands of dollars in savings to taxpayers. The first problem isn't money, as I see it, but to decide what's needed-- and that means learning what makes youngsters go wrong, so that we can correct the evil.

MR. B: There's no one certain answer to that, A. The causes of juvenile delinquency here in (Name of City) may be vastly different from what they are some place else. The extent of the problem varies from city to city, and so does the form. When I first became interested in juvenile delinquency prevention, I learned one thing in short order--that there is no formula to follow in correcting the problem.

MR. C: That's right, B. Working with various civic groups has given us some understanding of the local problem, but we have had to face the fact that boys and girls differ just as much as adults--and that you can't make a set of rules to correct their faults. Handling youth is a human problem, so it

MR. C: (CONT.) requires plenty of individual attention. The answers in the cases of two problem children may be similar, but the right treatments will seldom be identical. That's why our Rotary Club has tried so hard to get individual members to become sponsors of boys and girls who need help.

ANNCR: And that's a mighty fine program, Mr. C. Does the (Name of City) Rotary Club have any specific projects in youth work?

MR. C: (GIVES BRIEF MENTION OF LOCAL YOUTH PROJECTS IN WHICH ROTARIANS ARE PARTICIPATING)

ANNCR: You read in the newspapers about considerable vandalism that is charged to youth. What would you say is behind a youngster's desire to destroy property?

MR. C: I think the answer is rather obvious. Breaking windows in vacant houses, smearing paint on walls, tearing down plaster and carving initials into furniture aren't really fun for anybody. Youngsters who do such things must suffer from a lack of anything constructive or pleasant to do with their spare time.

ANNCR: Then (Name of City) shouldn't be plagued with vandalism. We have good movies and a considerable number of recreation facilities, I'd say.

MR. A: That isn't the whole answer. Much recreation costs money, a thing that not all youngsters have. Find a boy or girl who lacks constructive interests and lacks money, and you have a potential delinquent.

MR. B: It should be the parents' responsibility to provide children with constructive interests and a reasonable amount of spending money. Unfortunately, the records of social service, welfare and relief people make it pretty plain that, regardless of what parents' responsibilities may be, some of them don't accept or even acknowledge their responsibilities. We know that a high percentage of the children who get into trouble come from broken homes or a discouraging home environment.

MR. C: And don't you think, B, that children living in an unstable home are greatly confused about life in general?

MR. B: In all fairness, anyone would have to say that all of today's youth has a right to be confused. Our boys and girls have lived in a world of war, dissension and unrest. They were born during the aftermath of a world-wide depression. And they've seen irresponsible leaders in some countries make a mockery of justice and human rights.

- MR. A: It gets closer to home than the world picture, too, B. Educational facilities in most growing communities are badly strained. Parental influence has been weakened and moral standards aren't always what they should be. Even the most privileged of today's youngsters need help and guidance. They're looking for it--but they ask some difficult questions and expect mighty realistic answers.
- MR. B: What if we can't come up with the right answers?
- MR. A: We better do our best. We're all agreed that our world today could stand plenty of improvement--and much improvement will have to come from today's boys and girls. Everything we do for these youngsters should be aimed at training them to make the world a better place in which to live.
- MR. C: Many Rotary Clubs have sponsored school citizenship programs as a step in the right direction, awarding points for good citizenship traits and selecting a "best citizen" in each school. (DESCRIBE LOCAL GOOD CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM)
- MR. A: An important part of a good citizenship program for youngsters is that it benefits all of them--not just the most promising or the most difficult to handle. Some people think of youth programs in terms of juvenile delinquency prevention--which doesn't go nearly far enough. I once had a man try to tell me that the Boy Scout movement is wasteful because most of the boys who enjoy its benefits aren't potential delinquents. He thought money should be spent only on children who showed signs of becoming problems. C, how would you answer an argument like that?
- MR. C: First, A, I'd like to assume that very, very few of the young people who participate in (Name of City) youth activities are potential delinquents. Rather, I prefer to think of all of them as potential community leaders--the future great men and women of our country--at least, the leaders in our own city. And we certainly improve their chances for greatness when we give them the proper encouragement and guidance in their formative years. Rotary Clubs that maintain student loan and scholarship funds certainly don't do it to prevent juvenile delinquency. Their purpose is to help deserving boys and girls to get the education they want. And that's certainly a good, sound investment in the future.
- MR. B: Public education is one of the best investments in the world. The better educated a population we have, the less we will have to spend on unemployment and similar problems. More important, we will build a better community, a better nation and a better world. What better investment could there be?

- ANNCR: Now, just a second, fellows. I have a question of my own. I'm sold on the idea that we need a better world and that today's young people will be the ones to build it. And I want to help them--but what can a radio announcer or any one person do to help youth toward a better tomorrow?
- MR. A: There is something for everyone to do. Rotary Clubs aren't alone in this work, and they don't want to be alone, here in (Name of City) or anywhere else in the world. The field of youth work is big enough to need help from every possible source--and many, many adult organizations are giving that help. (CITE A FEW LOCAL EXAMPLES OF CLUBS OR CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE DOING A GOOD JOB) As for individuals like yourself, money and personal services are both needed and welcome. Strong adult leadership is always in such demand in every youth activity that everybody can find a job.
- MR. C: Perhaps we should give people some idea of the places where they can serve, A. In athletics, the field is wide open. Rotary Clubs are sponsoring everything from Little Athletic Leagues to big high school tournaments. They are entertaining school athletic teams and providing trophies for team and individual competition. Some clubs sponsor inter-city athletic tournaments; others furnish proper medical supervision for athletic teams.
- MR. A: All school activities are important and need encouragement. Some Rotary Clubs sponsor school orchestras, help to support drum/^{and} bugle corps, and even sponsor group musical instruction. Better school lighting has been a fine project for some clubs--and many Rotary Clubs entertain high school seniors as club guests. Rotary Clubs also have public-speaking and debating teams from the local schools appear occasionally on their club programs.
- MR. B: Providing milk, dental care, glasses, hearing aids and similar needs for underprivileged children is another project in which Rotary Clubs all over the world have interested themselves.
- MR. C: The list is too lengthy to refer to here, B. Many Rotary Clubs have a Boys and Girls Week observance, working on the theory that a good community needs youth projects to reach all the children, not just a few problem youngsters.
- MR. A: Career conferences for high school students are a good example of that idea, C. Boys and girls need to know about the work to be done in the world--and they're entitled to expert advice from people already in a particular field.

MR. B: No Rotary Club or any other service organization can do all the youth work in a community--and few Rotary Clubs have exactly the same program, because needs differ so much from city to city. In an agricultural area, rural youth work may be the most important and most-needed project. In an industrial community, summer camps may lead everything else in importance. Sponsoring good citizenship is important in nearly every locality. Encouragement of Boy and Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and similar groups can keep a club busy.

MR. C: Busy, yes--and happy, too. There's no more satisfying job in the world than working with youngsters. When I became a Rotarian, I was a little reluctant to serve on youth committees, because I felt I didn't understand children. Now, you couldn't keep me out of youth work.

MR. A: And nobody can help feeling a certain pride when he sees his work taking effect. I don't know of a business or profession where results come as quickly or are as noticeable as the results you get in youth work.

ANNCR: What would you say, Mr. A, is the most important age group in youth work?

MR. A: They are all important. One of the biggest, most important jobs Rotary is doing is with young people of college age. But whatever the age group, you get eager co-operation and quick results.

MR. B: The way youngsters enter into all these youth projects definitely proves something that we have all hoped was true--that the youth of today is ready to make the most of its opportunities--that today's youth wants a better tomorrow as much as we do--and is willing to work to achieve that goal. I think there's real hope for the world, in spite of all its present ailments.

MR. C: Certainly, there's hope, B--but it's up to us to give boys and girls the opportunities--all the opportunities we can offer. If we do our job, they will do theirs. That's been proven. We are in a partnership with today's youth--and our stake is the future.

ANNCR: Thank you, gentlemen--and from what I've heard during the past fifteen minutes, I'd say that the future looks considerably brighter than the present. I would also say that the young people of (Name of City) are fortunate to have you--and other people like you--on their side. I'm impressed to know that you men who have worked with local young people have such high respect for youth's abilities and potentialities. As long as we have adults to channel youth's ability in the right direction, we

ANNCR: (CONT.) should head steadily toward a better tomorrow. And that just about winds up this session of Rotary Golden Round Table. Next week, Rotary Golden Theatre will present a drama built around another problem that affects all of us. And then, immediately following, as a local observance of Rotary's fiftieth anniversary, Rotary Golden Round Table will present a discussion of that problem as it applies to (Name of City). Our panel next week will consist of: (NAMES AND IDENTIFICATIONS OF LOCAL PANEL MEMBERS)--all well qualified to discuss the subject to be presented. Be sure to be with us next week for another program presented by the Rotary Club of (Name of City) and Station _____ as a public service--in your interest.