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Problems of Homeless Children in Yenisseyskaya Province in the Context of the Commission for the Improvement of Children's Lives. Year 1921

Abstract

Early years of the Soviet regime were a period of implementation of the ideological doctrine that stated that children welfare should be the exclusive remit of the State. The study of the entire range of solutions for the so called children's problem in early Soviet state requires involvement of multiple kinds of sources. The object of our interest was the report of Robert Krishyanovich Lepsis (1896–1942), a representative of Yenisseyskii Provincial Executive Committee on the Improvement of Children's Lives, about the condition of childcare facilities by July 1921. The report was prepared for the Commission for the Improvement of Children's Lives under the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. The document included into the publication was identified as part of Fund P-93 "Department of National Education of the Yenisseyskii Provincial Executive Committee" in State Archive of Krasnoyarsk Territory. The document is reliable and informative; it provides details of geographical location and regional aspects of formation and activities of Soviet machinery during its establishment. The document also gives an idea of searching for humane mechanisms to eliminate juvenile homelessness. We failed to find papers that would highlight organization and initial steps of the Commission for the Improvement of Children's Lives in Yenisseyskaya Province. The published document the data on the condition and supply of orphanages and shelters in Yenisseyskaya Province; it evaluates the activities of the representatives for the improvement of children's lives and mechanisms of solution for the problem of juvenile homelessness. The author of the report does not hide the fact that the problems of homeless and neglected children are not a priority in the activities of all the Soviet institutions or administrative organizations. However, due to his being at the same time a Chairman of the Provincial Extraordinary Commission, he manages to solve some urgent issues

of childcare facilities. We applied diachronic method to analyze information from the source. As a result we came to a conclusion that they did not manage to change the situation with children's homelessness in Yenisseyskaya Province radically by July 1921. But a process of introduction of newly formed Soviet institutions into the solution of the above mentioned problem started. Due to the lack of financial and material resources, as well as poor staffing, orphanages and shelters were in poverty. They did not properly solve the educational tasks assigned to them, but at least they served as feeding stations where one could survive in the midst of destruction and famine. The information from the source may be of interest to those who study Soviet society, forms and practical activities of addressing the problems of children's homelessness.

Keywords

Historical sources, homelessness of minors, orphanage, Yenisei province, authorized to improve the lives of children.

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