THE TEXAS STATE PROGRAM OF AID TO
DEPENDENT CHILDREN, WITH SPECIAL
EMPHASIS UPON ERATH COUNTY

THESIS

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Fulfillment of the Requirements

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MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to determine whether or not the financial grants available under the Texas state program of aid to dependent children are adequate to meet the needs of the persons receiving such grants. In accomplishing this objective, it became necessary to make a survey of the Texas state program of aid to dependent children as administered by the Texas State Department of Public Welfare.

The basis upon which aid is granted, the amount of grants available; and a study of legislation governing the state program of aid to dependent children will be given prominence in this investigation.

Likewise, a somewhat detailed case study of twenty families who are recipients, or who have recently been recipients of aid to dependent children, all located in Erath County, Texas, will be presented as typical representations of such families all over the state of Texas who receive grants of aid for dependent children.

Limitations

Although there are numerous state programs of aid of various types, relating to both children and adults, this present study will be
limited to the Texas state program of aid to dependent children as defined by state legislation and as administered by the personnel of the State Department of Public Welfare. No consideration will be given in this study to court actions or dispositions which sometimes are involved in declaring a child to be dependent, nor will those dependent children cared for in institutions, whether private or public, be included in this study. Likewise, questions of custody of dependent children will not be considered.

Thus, this study is limited to the implications and operation of the Texas state program of aid to those dependent children within the state who are living in their parents' homes or in the homes of such relatives as are legally acceptable in qualifying for grants of aid to dependent children.

Case studies of typical family situations among those receiving grants of aid for dependent children are limited to individuals within Erath County, Texas. The twenty case studies presented in this thesis were selected more or less at random from among the entire list of such cases in that county. The principal basis upon which they were chosen was that they appeared to be representative of typical conditions existing among the families receiving financial assistance under the state program of aid to dependent children.
Sources of Data

The data utilized in this study were both documentary and human. The documents consulted were acts of the Legislature of Texas, publications of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, and case records of the State Department of Public Welfare, particularly those relating to selected families within Erath County who are currently receiving grants of aid to dependent children, or who recently have received such grants.

Human sources were personnel of the state and local offices of the State Department of Public Welfare, who, by means of interviews and conferences, assisted the writer in collecting information needed for this study and imparted information of a verbal nature relating to the selected case studies. Also included among the human sources of data were parents and other family members in families receiving aid to dependent children, with whom interviews were held.

Method of Procedure

The method of procedure was direct and simplified. Publications of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare relating to the state program of aid to dependent children were read and appropriate information for this study was noted. Case records were consulted in both the local and state offices of the State Department of Public Welfare, and digests of the selected cases were written out from the detailed records made available to the writer. From the interviews and conferences
held, certain facts were learned pertaining to the state program and to the particular cases to be discussed in this study.

From the twenty case studies utilized in this report, several simple summary tables were constructed in an effort to indicate certain characteristics of those families in Erath County who are currently receiving grants of aid to dependent children, or who recently have been recipients of such grants.

Finally, conclusions and recommendations appearing to be warranted by the findings of the study were compiled.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I has presented the statement of the problem, the limitations of the study, the sources of data, and the method of procedure.

Chapter II deals with the nature and operation of the Texas state program of aid to dependent children, including such topics as aims, objectives, and philosophy of the state program of aid to dependent children; significant legislation defining and affecting the program; disabilities and other bases upon which the aid is granted; required reports and the nature of the information contained therein; and the adequacy of the records kept on the individual cases.

Chapter III contains case studies of twenty families in Erath County, Texas, receiving aid to dependent children. In this chapter will be discussed the purposes of such a survey of typical cases; the brief case
studies themselves, including such topics as family statistics and status, standards of living, and general health of family members; and summaries, including tabulations, of the data in an attempt to define the conditions under which aid to dependent children is being received.

Chapter IV presents a summary, conclusions, and recommendations growing out of the study.
CHAPTER II

NATURE AND OPERATION OF THE TEXAS STATE PROGRAM OF AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

A study of modern history and an examination of social philosophy reveal the fact that one of the obvious differences between a democratic and a communistic country is the feeling that prevails among the populace concerning the plight of the unfortunate and concerning local and more widespread efforts to alleviate the conditions which exist among some groups of the population. In the United States some type of care and some effort to help is extended toward every group of persons who can be classified among the unfortunate. It is true that the care and effort extended may be dismally inadequate, but at least something is being done on every level—local, state, and national—for those who are in unfortunate circumstances.

On the whole and in the main, the attitude of the American people is one of sympathy and a desire to help, although, of course, there are always some individuals who are in no way concerned about the plight of the unfortunate and will do nothing to help alleviate their condition. Keeping in mind the fact that, for the most part, Americans want to
help those who are in need of help, our local, state, and federal governments endeavor to place themselves in a position in which they can offer whatever assistance is possible.

Looking at the picture from a selfish angle, the state and the nation will benefit from this help given to the unfortunate. Three of the case histories to be presented in this paper will indicate that three parents in these cases are mentally unbalanced because of lack of care and worry over their situation. Also, there are cases of tuberculosis, pellagra, and anemia that might have been prevented had these people had proper care and nourishment. In other words, since the state supports eleemosynary and tuberculosis institutions for the care of its citizens, the sensible action would be to take preventive measures to keep the people out of these state institutions. If they were kept well, mentally and physically, they could continue to produce goods and services for the welfare of society, to earn their own livelihoods, and to care for their own families.

To furnish housing, medicine, clothing, and all other necessities for those confined to institutions for the care of mental and physical health costs the state vast sums of money. For instance, in 1952, a total of $23,560,113.25 was allocated to the mental, eleemosynary, and correctional institutions of Texas. The majority of persons who are classified as unfortunate are deserving individuals who, because of

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circumstances beyond their control, have had bad luck or illness that has denied them their earning power. In 1954, there were 10,737 families in Texas who qualified for payments of aid to dependent children with the major reason for need being loss of employment or decreased earning power because of illness or accident of the parent or the person acting in the parent's place. Such conditions accounted for 42 per cent of all grants of aid to dependent children. At the same time, loss of the wage earner in the family by death or absence accounted for 35 per cent; loss of employment or decreased earnings of other persons in the family, 5 per cent; and loss of contributions from relatives outside of the home, 3 per cent of the cases. When circumstances like these occur, the people involved often have no other recourse except to rely upon public assistance, unless they happen to have relatives or friends who will see them through their period of difficulty, whether it be temporary or permanent.

There can be no hope that these people can attain a higher standard of living if they receive only enough to provide the barest necessities for the maintenance of life. And, in the case records of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, there is more than one instance of citizens of Texas having actually suffered in this great state of plenty, even while receiving some type of aid from welfare funds.

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In fact, there is considerable evidence that in many parts of the country in recent years the standard of living of ADC families left much to be desired, despite the higher levels of payments. The rising cost of living has left some of these families in desperate need.  

The stability of democratic ideals in the United States lies in the establishment of worthy home-life patterns. By their very misfortune, many people are denied the satisfaction of wholesome and worthy home life for themselves and for their children. As a result, there is being established in American society a social class that is without hope of an enriched future. Americans’ predominant purpose as a people should be to uplift and uphold better standards for the next generation. About all that the people who receive grants of aid to dependent children in Texas are able to do is to keep from starving to death—and sometimes even that is impossible with the mere pittances of aid that are being granted at the present time.

The great problem is the provision of available funds to finance the program of state aid to dependent children. The matter of constitutional limitations on annual expenditures raises an important issue, the only solution for which is to adopt, through popular vote, an amendment to the constitution permitting the state to make larger expenditures for this program. Unlike employees in industry, and even civil workers in the government, no attempt has been made in recent years to increase

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the grants of aid to dependent children for the purpose of making them con-
form more adequately to the rising costs of living.

The fundamental, over-all purpose of the state program of aid to
dependent children is to provide the child with enough subsistence to en-
able him to maintain "decency and health" until he approaches maturity. 4

The increased cost of living and the present requirements for holding
jobs which afford livable wages demand at least a high school education
on the part of every youth. This means, then, that the program of aid
should be extended to include all of the high school years.

The present age requirement that a child must be under fourteen
years of age in order to receive grants under the state program of aid to
dependent children is incompatible with the purposes of the program.
The age limit should be extended to cover at least the high school years,
instead of automatically cutting the child off from aid when he reaches
the age of fourteen. If the child prefers, some technical training should
be provided in order to prepare him for earning a livelihood. The Texas
Education Agency is doing a wonderful work through its vocational re-
habilitation program for the physically handicapped. A state counselor
in this program has made the following comments concerning the work
being done:

Although the vocational rehabilitation program is op-
erating short of funds, those of us who work with the program

4 H. B. 611, Sec. 17-6, 17-4.
feel that we are doing a wonderful work because we can see the results of our work. We are in a position to show where our efforts pay. This is done indirectly by taxes collected from those rehabilitated. The ADC program is not so fortunate. It is impossible to show financial gain. What financial gain is accomplished is usually brought about by the rehabilitation of the parent or relative receiving the ADC grant.  

But, in spite of much progress that has been made in the area of vocational rehabilitation, the real need is scarcely being met at all. There is no established procedure for those who are financially unable to obtain training, and if they do not happen to live in a locality having an organized rehabilitation program, it is virtually impossible for them to obtain the training necessary to make them self-sustaining. This is an age when at least a high school education, or some equivalent training, is essential for obtaining almost any type of job. If the child is cut off from aid when he becomes fourteen years of age, and if all public responsibility for him ceases at that age, whether he is prepared to become self-sustaining or not, he may have no alternative but to become a juvenile delinquent and later a criminal.

Those who receive grants under the state program of aid to dependent children are, for the most part, unable to supplement their incomes through their own efforts. Their physical condition or their care of the dependent children in the family make it impossible, in most cases, for them to engage in remunerative employment. For this reason,  

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5O. P. Douglas, state counselor, Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Fort Worth, Texas, in personal interview with the writer.
the grants should be sufficient in amount to enable the recipients to maintain a decent standard of living. This should be possible without the help of other agencies, for when local agencies are called upon to render assistance, the plight of the people becomes public knowledge, and they may lose their self-respect through knowing that their situation has become common knowledge in the community. This knowledge on their part certainly is damaging to the morale of both adults and children. And it prevents them from sharing in that democratic virtue called equality.

J. J. Brown, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation, Texas Education Agency, who has worked closely with the state program of aid to dependent children for a number of years, has said to the writer:

We are only touching the hem of the garment. The greatest contribution the people of Texas could make toward a greater Texas would be to increase the ADC grants. This would give those hope, who have no hope. It would be a great investment in our future generations. 6

Reference has previously been made to the difficulty of obtaining additional money for these grants because of constitutional limitations.

It is worthy of note that

Under the present state Constitution, the Legislature cannot appropriate the additional state funds needed. In 1945, the Constitution was amended to provide that the total amount of money expended out of state funds for assistance to the needy aged, needy blind, and needy children cannot exceed $35,000,000 per year. . . . The deficit in state

6J. J. Brown, Austin, Texas, in interview with the writer.
funds for the year ending August 31, 1950, was $1,957,555.59 for all three programs combined. . . . Of the three programs, the heaviest proration in 1950 was necessary in the ADC program. . . . If increased proration is to be averted, it is evident that one of two things must happen. The present eligibility laws must be changed so that less people can qualify for assistance; or the state Constitution must be amended so that the Legislature can make available sufficient state funds to pay grants of assistance in full as authorized under the Public Welfare Act of 1941.

Increased proration causes suffering and hardships among those totally without income or resources. The cost of living is moving out of reach of them. Even when grants are paid in full, the average assistance payment in Texas is small, substantially less than the national average. 7

A second, and vastly more important criterion consists of the specific requirements and definitions set forth in Texas state laws (H. B. 611, Sec. 18), limiting the program of aid to dependent children. These requirements will be discussed at some length later in this chapter. At this point, it will only be mentioned that the Texas law that established the ADC program was peculiar in one respect—the dependent child must be a citizen in order to receive assistance under the program (H. B. 611, Sec. 17-1). Texas is the only state in the Union having this requirement of citizenship for its recipients of aid to dependent children.

In this connection, Burns has written:

Only one state (Texas) now requires citizenship as a condition of eligibility for ADC. . . . Only two (Missouri and Texas) limit payments to children under 14, although the former accepts children of 14 and 15 if regularly attending school. 8

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8 Burns, op. cit., p. 10.
Interestingly enough, the matter of citizenship is not even mentioned in the federal act authorizing the federal government to cooperate with the state governments in providing aid to dependent children. This federal act stipulates that,

For the purpose of enabling each state to furnish financial assistance, as far as practicable under the conditions in each State, to needy dependent children, there is authorized to be appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1936, the sum of $24,750,000, and there is authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year thereafter a sum sufficient to carry out the purposes of this subchapter.9

The citizenship requirement mentioned above "is due, for the most part, to the prevailing and widespread prejudice toward Mexicans which is characteristic of much of Texas and of many Texans."10 In fact,

The requirement that dependent children must be citizens is seldom applicable except in case of Mexicans. Very few children of Anglo-American parents are denied. ... Relatively few Mexican families actually feel the need for ADC grants. This is due to several factors: their low standard of living, the families' migratory living habits, and the fact that children of relatives or friends are always welcome to share in the earnings of others than parents. An additional child or two is not considered so great a financial burden as in Anglo-American homes.11

While there are no actual figures available, it is the opinion of Herbert Wilson, Assistant Director of the Texas State Department of


11 Herbert Wilson, Assistant Director of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, in interview with the writer.
Public Welfare, and of other staff members that the number of children who are actually denied aid because of this requirement of citizenship is almost negligible. Whether this be true or not, the stipulation of citizenship is an undesirable prerequisite, and is not in keeping with democratic ideals and principles. The program of aid should be looked upon as an investment in the future welfare of the state and nation, and should be available, in adequate amounts, to all persons living within the bounds of the state who are in need of a helping hand in their time of misfortune.

"Numerous and positive, for more than a century now, have been the statutory and judicial dicta that the welfare of the child should be the first consideration..."¹² This philosophy pertains to education and to all other services having to do with children, and is the fundamental consideration of the Texas state program of aid to dependent children, which is of comparatively recent origin. The quotation cited above refers not only to welfare work but also to all social, educational, and governmental services. The welfare of the child is to be the first consideration—whether in allowing aid to dependent children, or in the appointment of guardians, or in commitment to foster homes, or in institutional care, or in any of the other services available for children who, for one reason or another, are denied normal family life or proper care.

The child is considered so important because he is the citizen, the worker, the leader of tomorrow. In fact, he is the shape of tomorrow within himself. Whatever he becomes, that will tomorrow become when he grows up to assume his position as an adult in American society.

The underlying principle in the state program of aid to dependent children, aside from the importance placed upon the child, is that of enabling the needy family to maintain a standard of living which will be compatible with "health and decency" (H. B. 611, Sec. 17-6). Once a child has been declared and accepted as a dependent child by the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, the department has the legal responsibility for the care and protection of such children, deriving this authority from the common-law doctrine of parens patriae. This means that the natural parent may assume their rights and responsibilities for the care and protection of their children as long as they can meet their needs. Agency services emphasize case work with the child's own parents rather than with others, believing that such a policy will preserve and strengthen the child's own home and family life and increase his sense of security.

As has been mentioned previously, and as will be emphasized later in this paper, the amount of the grants allowed is not sufficient to fulfill the purpose of enabling the child to maintain "health and decency." Burns

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has pointed out that,

Except in the unlikely event that the recipients possess substantial resources besides, it is evident that in the vast majority of states the standard of living permitted the average ADC family is unlikely to approach the maintenance, or even the emergency, level of living. . . . When allowance is made for the intervening rise in cost of living, it can be seen that the average annual payment was evidently far below this standard. When account is taken of the further fact that the family payment would often also have to meet the needs of at least one adult, the inadequacy of the payments is even more pronounced. In the terms of labor it is a "starvation wage."14

All the grants can do, because of their smallness, is to keep a family from starving, and sometimes even that objective is not attained. The ideal which was originally a motivating factor in the state program of aid to dependent children, when it was first established, was that the grants should afford the unfortunate family enough income to enable the children to continue in school until at least the age of fourteen. In actuality, however, many of the children whose families are receiving aid to dependent children have to quit school to go to work, earning what they can to add to their family's meager income. If they are forced to quit school before attaining graduation from high school or before learning a trade at which they can earn a livelihood, their prospects for future economic independence are not at all bright.

In theory, the goal of the aid-to-dependent-children program is not to keep people from starving, but to help them over a period of misfortune

until they are able to meet their own needs again. The grants, however, are so small that it is difficult for a family receiving aid to maintain its self-respect and its morale because of the dire poverty under which it often is forced to exist. Of course, no program of aid should be designed to support its recipients in a state of luxury, but at least the program should be adequate to make possible the enjoyment of the common decencies and necessities of human life.

A comparatively new phase of the program which is now receiving considerable emphasis in some sections of the state, and which should be incorporated into the program everywhere, is that of vocational rehabilitation, wherever possible. In many of the families receiving ADC grants, there actually is no one capable of earning a living for the family. Because of death or illness or mental condition, the family breadwinners have been incapacitated to care for their family's needs. This is where the program of rehabilitation comes in. With modern methods of training and with new techniques of producing salable merchandise, even many of the crippled and the ill can be taught to earn at least a portion of what is required to maintain themselves and their families. In addition to this rehabilitation effort for the incapacitated adults in the family, there is also a training program for the children. The children in ADC families are being given special training along vocational lines in order that they can supplement their family income in their spare time, and in order that they will be equipped to earn a
livelihood, either when they are forced to quit school because of economic pressures, or when they have graduated from high school.

In 1954, 11 per cent of the ADC units of work were aimed at either partial or complete rehabilitation.

For example, there was the tenant farmer, age 45, with a wife and six children, ages 1-13 years, to support, who lost the use of his left arm. Medical diagnosis and months of treatment under the guiding hand of physicians with field worker co-operation restored the man's physical ability to resume farming and increased the farmer's confidence in his ability to resume farming operations. He is now supporting his family without the ADC grant which assisted him and his family in living through the trying rehabilitation period. 15

Such programs of rehabilitation are not yet state-wide in scope, but wherever they have been tried out on an experimental basis, they have more than proved their worth and certainly have been the means of raising many a needy family back into the ranks of producers of goods and services which can be exchanged for income. Thus, through this program of rehabilitation, the aid granted to dependent children becomes a means of sustaining and holding the family together until it can resume its own self-support and maintain its self-respect in society. This is, indeed, a worth-while objective.

In any welfare program, there are likely to be "chislers" who attempt to get their names placed on the grant rolls even if they do not need the aid thus supplied. Their purpose, of course, is to have their

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income increased without effort on their part. These are unscrupulous, conscienceless individuals who are willing to deprive the truly needy of aid if only they themselves can receive benefit. The objective in the ADC program is to strive to grant aid to every truly needy case and to weed out, in so far as is possible, the chiselers and grafters who do not need but who seek diligently to have their names placed on the rolls for receiving aid. Case workers have noted that, in most instances, those who are in real need are embarrassed in making their application for grants, while those who do not need help come brazenly to make their applications, with no sense of humility or embarrassment. The worthy cases wish that they did not have to make application for aid, whereas the unworthy cases appear to find pleading for assistance.

It speaks well for the state program of aid to dependent children that administrators and case workers in the regional areas of the state are of the opinion that most of the people who apply for aid are actually in need of assistance, and that most of those who are approved for assistance have been proved worthy of aid, beyond any question of doubt. Very few have been found to be unscrupulous individuals or chiselers who desire to profit from the program of aid, even though they do not need it. 16

16 These opinions were freely expressed in personal interviews with the writer by Rayford O. Young, Area Supervisor, Stephenville; Mrs. W. R. Brommlace, case worker, Dublin; Herbert Wilson, Assistant Director of the State Department of Public Welfare; Morris O. Gantt, case worker, Denton; and Sue Rucker, field worker, Austin.
There are, too, of course, some cases in which the adults in the family decline to work, even though able to do so, as long as they can receive a grant of aid to dependent children. The case of Mr. H, in Erath County, cited in Chapter III, illustrates this point. But the number of such persons in the ADC program appears to be almost negligible in comparison with the large number of cases dealt with. As the Texas Social Welfare Association has said: "We know that public aid for the able-bodied man or woman is not wanted in the place of jobs—but only in the absence of jobs to keep people fit for jobs." Most of the cases receiving help through the ADC program are happy to report that they no longer need assistance when they become able to hold a job or when they find employment after a period of unemployment. Most of the adults in these families feel that they possess much more self-respect and have a higher morale when they are able to maintain themselves and their families without public assistance; and for this reason they take real pride in announcing that they no longer require aid.

An area supervisor for the Texas State Department of Public Welfare has said:

Although no definite statistics are available, from twenty-three years of experience in the work with the State Welfare Department and having worked with the ADC program since its present setup in 1941, I am convinced that the majority of those applying for and receiving grants are from the lowest income

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17 Texas Social Welfare Association, Need (Austin, 1940), p. 27.
and economic brackets. They have been in the limited income bracket for some time. Any misfortune in the home or temporary loss of work puts them in need of assistance. 18

It is characteristic of most of these people receiving help through the ADC funds that they have been accustomed for years to existing on a marginal income, as is indicated in the above quotation. Then, when misfortune has struck, they have no financial resources upon which to rely to see them through their difficulty. Their situation becomes desperate when they no longer have the meager income on which they and their families have been existing, and the only source of help for them is to apply for some type of welfare aid. These people may live in shacks or in tumble-down houses or in hovels beneath viaducts; they may experience early death brought on by diseases caused by perennial hunger and malnutrition; they have high infant mortality rates because of improper food and care for their children; their children are likely to become juvenile delinquents because of their unwholesome and inadequate home environment; they experience severe degradation of the body and of the spirit. As the Texas Social Welfare Association has said, these are "the men, women, and children whom we keep alive but to whom we deny an opportunity to live." 19

18 Rayford O. Young, area supervisor for Comanche, Erath, Hamilton, and Somervell Counties, Stephenville, Texas, in personal interview with the writer.

When consideration is given to the social and economic problems which confront the families from whom come the dependent and neglected children of Texas, it becomes apparent immediately that a whole vast complex of problems is involved—problems of poverty, bad housing, inadequate sanitation, unprotected food and water supplies, faulty mental hygiene practices and the mental states which spring from them, inadequacies in educational programs, the existence of tragic child labor which denies educational opportunities to the children, and failure to provide adequate recreational outlets. In short, every major social and economic ill known to mankind is involved in the problem.

In the socio-economic realm, Texas presents some striking contrasts and paradoxes, some of which have been summarized as follows by the Texas Social Welfare Association:

Texas is richer in natural resources than any other state in the union. Yet while wealth pours from the earth and while our growing industries thrive, our people as a whole are poor. With greater natural wealth than that of any other state, the per capita income of Texas is 25% less than the national average.

While Texas produces about one-fourth of the cotton of the nation, more than one out of six of our people are inadequately clothed.

Though we raise a tenth of the cattle and a seventh of the sheep of the nation, more than 80,000 Texas families face a hungry winter...

With 39% of the nation's oil production, and more natural gas than the combined output of all other states, a large part of Texas' 80,000 needy families will go through the winter with insufficient fuel.

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20 Texas Child Welfare Society, op. cit., p. 82.
The 1930 United States Census revealed that in percentage of children attending school, Texas ranked fourth from the bottom of the list of the 48 states, with 52,000 children between the ages of 10 and 15 years working for a living. Even with Texas's educational progress during the past 10 years, the problem of children out of school continues to perplex school and welfare authorities, while a quarter of a million Texans of voting age are illiterate. 21

With all of these problems in existence, it is apparent that the various welfare programs cannot cure the social and economic ills that are so prevalent in our society. The best they can hope to do is to help the unfortunate through their periods of difficulty until they can become, at least in a measure, self-sustaining and self-supporting. This is the primary objective of the state program of aid to dependent children.

"Aid to Dependent Children" (ADC) is the official name given to the program which provides regular money grants of assistance for children who are in need and meet other eligibility requirements.

The over-all purpose of this program is to provide needy children who meet eligibility requirements with money for the basic necessities while they live at home among family and friends. 22

Nearly twenty years ago, the Federal Social Security Act provided for some federal assistance to state programs of aid to dependent children.


children. The federal amount to be made available for child welfare services in the states varies from year to year, depending upon federal appropriations. Likewise, the proportion of the total funds available for these services furnished by the federal government varies from state to state, depending largely upon the number of needy cases in the state and upon the state's ability to maintain an adequate program of assistance of its own. The participation of the federal government in these welfare services implies that the nation as a whole is interested in and concerned with the social welfare problems of the states and of local communities. The allotments to the respective states are agreed upon co-operatively by the state and federal administrators of welfare services, and supposedly are based upon the number of cases involved, the population of the state, and the state's ability to care for the needs of its own people. 23

As recently as 1940, even though the federal plan of assistance in providing aid to dependent children had been set up several years before that date, Texas had never made any provisions for aid to dependent children. In April of that year, when the forty-three other states having programs of aid to dependent children averaged a monthly grant of $32.41 for each family case, Texas provided nothing in this category. In the

same year, five other states in the same population bracket as Texas (four to seven millions) were making grants of aid to dependent children, as follows, the amounts listed referring to the average monthly grant per family case:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Grant Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>$45.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>58.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>39.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>30.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>38.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since then, through the so-called Texas Public Welfare Act, Texas has recognized the existence of dependent children within the state, and also the need for providing some degree of assistance in these situations. The state's Public Welfare Act, enacted in 1941 and as amended through 1953, defines dependent children as follows:

... "Dependent child" is any individual:
(1) Who is a citizen of the United States; and
(2) Who has resided in this State for a period of at least one (1) year immediately preceding the date of the application for assistance; or was born within the State one (1) year immediately preceding the date of application, and whose mother has resided in the State for a period of at least one (1) year immediately preceding the birth of such child; and
(3) Who is under the age of fourteen (14) years; and
(4) Who has been deprived of parental support or care by reason of the death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity of a parent; and
(5) Who is living with his father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, stepfather, stepmother,

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24 Ibid., pp. 17-18.
stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, or aunt, in a place of residence maintained by one or more of such relatives as their own home; and

(6) Who has not sufficient income or other resources to provide a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health.25

Article 2330 of the Texas Statutes defines dependent and neglected children in a similar manner, as follows:

The term "dependent child" or "neglected child" includes any child under sixteen years of age who is dependent upon the public for support or who is destitute, homeless, or abandoned; or who has not proper parental care or guardianship, or who habitually begs or receives alms, or who is found living in any house of ill fame with any vicious or disreputable person, or whose home, by reason of neglect, cruelty, or depravity on the part of its parents, guardian, or other person in whose care it may be, is an unfit place for such child; or any such child whose parents or guardian permit it to use intoxicating liquor except for medicinal purposes or to become addicted to the use of such liquors, or permits it in or about any place where intoxicating liquors are sold.26

The Texas Statutes, as quoted above, appear to consider dependent and neglected children as virtually synonymous. The reader may note a discrepancy, however, in one instance in the two above quotations. This occurs with respect to the age limitation placed upon dependent children. Article 2330 of the Texas Statutes, enacted in 1907, defines a dependent or neglected child as one under sixteen years of age who conforms to the other requirements stipulated; whereas the Texas Public Welfare Act, passed by the Legislature in 1941 and as amended through 1953, defines a dependent child as one under fourteen years of age who

25Ibid., pp. 24-25.  
26Ibid., p. 34.
meets certain other requirements as enumerated. This is an unfortunate lowering of the age limit, for if aid were continued until the child has graduated from high school, he would then be prepared to earn his own way in society; but when aid is withdrawn at the age of fourteen, the child is left without support and is not, at that early age, equipped to become a self-supporting citizen.

Eligibility requirements under which aid to dependent children may be granted are substantially the same as those stipulated above in defining a dependent child in terms of the Texas Public Welfare Act, but perhaps these eligibility requirements may be repeated here for emphasis:

For a child to be eligible for an Aid to Dependent Children grant,

1. A child must be a citizen of the United States;
2. A child must have resided in this State at least one year preceding date of application; or, if under one year of age, the parents or other relative with whom the child is living must have lived in the State at least one year preceding either the birth of the child or the date of application.
3. A child must be under fourteen (14) years of age;
4. A child must be deprived of parental support or care by reason of:
   a. Death of parent,
   b. Continued absence from the home,
   c. Physical or mental incapacity.
5. A child must be living with father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, or aunt; and a child must be living with one of the above relatives in a place of residence maintained by one or more of such relatives as his or their own home;
6. A child must not have sufficient income or other resources to provide a reasonable subsistence compatible with health and decency;
(7) If deprivation of parental support is on the basis of desertion or abandonment, prompt notice to appropriate law enforcement officials of the approval of a grant is a prerequisite to the receipt of assistance.\textsuperscript{27}

In addition to the above requirements for eligibility to receive ADC grants, any child born out of wedlock who is deprived of parental care, is in need, and otherwise meets the provisions and requirements of the law, is eligible for grants under the Texas program of aid to dependent children.\textsuperscript{28}

It may have been noted in the above quotation (item 6), as well as in the previous reference to the provisions of the Texas Public Welfare Act, that "a child must not have sufficient income or other resources to provide a reasonable subsistence compatible with health and decency" in order to be eligible for an ADC grant. In this connection, a "resource" is interpreted as anything or anybody upon which or whom an individual child has a claim that can be counted upon to meet or reduce the individual child's need. A child is considered to be in need when he does not have ways and means to provide the necessities of life sufficient for health and wholesome living conditions. The law provides penalties of fines up to $100 or imprisonment ranging from six months to two years, or both, when it is found through legal process and conviction that a

\textsuperscript{27}Texas State Department of Public Welfare, Questions and Answers Concerning Assistance from the State of Texas—Aid to Dependent Children, pp. 12-13.

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p. 14.
person has obtained, or helped another to obtain, aid through fraudulent representations or through concealment or falsification of his true financial circumstances. 29

All income and resources not specifically exempted are taken into account in determining need. A reserve of $300 in cash or property may be retained by the ADC family group. Personal property necessary to a person, such as household effects, is exempted from consideration. Otherwise, any cash or money which may be made available by the sale of property or possessions must be considered in determining need. Insurance policies sufficient to provide $1,000 upon death are exempt from consideration in determining whether a grant should be recommended for the family. The cash value of insurance beyond this amount must be taken into consideration in making the grant or denying it. 30

A person may own his home and still be eligible to receive assistance through the ADC program in Texas. However, the money which can be made available to the family through the sale of any property other than a home must be considered in determining eligibility for a grant. At the same time, any income which may be derived from the home, as from the sale of crops raised or from the renting of rooms, is to be considered the same as income from any other source and figures in determining whether or not a grant shall be recommended. 31

29 Ibid., pp. 8-9, 5. 30 Ibid., p. 8. 31 Ibid., p. 9.
The amount of assistance to be granted to any needy dependent child is to be determined by the State Department of Public Welfare through its district or county offices or agencies within the district or county in which the dependent child resides. Due consideration shall always be given to the income and other resources of such a child, in making the allotment, in order, if possible, to guarantee that no one shall be recommended for assistance who, in reality, does not need it. "The amount of assistance given shall provide such dependent child with a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health, within the limitations and provisions of the Constitution of Texas as are now provided, or may hereafter be provided."32 When it has been ascertained through careful investigation that the child in question is a needy dependent child as defined by law, and that the child is living, or will live, with one or more of the relatives specified in the legislation, assistance may be allowed for the support of such a child if other necessary requirements have been met, or will be met.33

Regular monthly checks are mailed to each person certified as eligible for aid under the state program of aid to dependent children. Funds for this purpose are provided co-operatively by the federal and state governments. The amount of the grant depends upon the number of


33Ibid.
children in the family and upon whether or not there is a caretaker, guardian, or parent who assumes responsibility for the child. Maximum monthly ADC allotments in force at present are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Certified Children</th>
<th>Maximum Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without Caretaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All applicants do not receive maximum grants, but may be given as little as five dollars, according to individual needs. The question is often asked, Why doesn't every person or family receive the maximum grant? The answer is that the maximum grant permitted is not the amount that every person needs. Circumstances and needs vary from person to person, and the maximum is merely the most that can be paid under the state law. Texas statutes, in conformity with the federal Social Security Act, require that the amount of each grant be determined on the basis of each person's needs and the needs of the family.
In many instances, however, the maximum amount permitted is far from adequate to meet the needs of the individual or group being aided.

On September 1, 1954, ADC payments to Texas families totaled $1,248,620, ranging from a minimum of five dollars to a maximum of eighty-six dollars per family for an average payment per month of $59.60 per family among the 20,951 families receiving such aid on behalf of 61,105 children who had been declared dependent. Total ADC payments in Texas for the year amounted to $14,447,739.86. Of this amount, 22 per cent was allocated from state funds, whereas 78 per cent came from federal funds. Thus, the federal government was paying more than three fourths of the ADC bill for 1954.

The state's Department of Public Welfare has a local office in every county, usually at the county seat, with the exception of a few thinly populated counties which are served by workers from nearby counties. Assigned to each county are field workers and case workers who accept, investigate, and recommend action on all applications for grants under the state program of aid to dependent children.

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34 Texas State Department of Public Welfare, Questions and Answers Concerning Assistance from the State of Texas—Aid to Dependent Children, pp. 3-4.

The field worker assists the applicant in compiling evidence to prove that the applicant meets all eligibility requirements; and the field worker is required by law to place such evidence on file with the Department as proof that provisions of the law have been met.

The local field worker must record proofs of eligibility, calculate the degree of need on the basis of legal provisions and limitations, and recommend appropriate action by the Department. If appeals are made on the basis of the final decision, the Appeal Board within the State Department of Public Welfare hears the appeal and passes upon the merits of any point producing dissatisfaction. The state office of the Department does not have any voice in determining eligibility for assistance, except when cases are appealed. 36

Applications for aid under the program of assistance to dependent children totaled 22,219 in 1954—an increase of 3,929, or 21 per cent, over the number for 1953. Of this number, there were 10,737 families who qualified for ADC payments. The major reasons mentioned as responsible for need were loss of employment or decreased earnings of the parent or of the person acting in the parent’s place (42 per cent); and loss of wage earner in the home through death or absence, for one reason or another (35 per cent). The loss of employment or decreased

36 Texas State Department of Public Welfare, Questions and Answers Concerning Assistance from the State of Texas—Aid to Dependent Children, pp. 1-2.
earnings on the part of persons in the home other than parents accounted for 5 per cent; whereas the discontinuance of gifts or contributions from relatives outside the home was reported by 3 per cent as a reason for making application for aid. 37

The year 1954 saw a substantial increase in the total ADC case-load for Texas—an average per month of 290 families and 871 children under fourteen years of age, making a total increase for the year of 3,480 families and 10,455 children, compared with an increase in 1953 of 2,193 families and 6,196 children. These figures represent an increase in 1954 over 1953 of 19 per cent in the number of families and of 17 per cent in the number of children receiving grants under the provisions of the state program of aid to dependent children. 38

The fact that health is an important factor in the cases receiving ADC grants is indicated by the finding that 35 per cent of all ADC cases handled in 1954 reported impaired health of the income earners in the family as a factor in determining their need for assistance. 39 Thus it appears that if the health of the people could be maintained and preserved, much of the caseload of the ADC program would be lessened—perhaps by as much as a third. Many of the health problems reported were those which might have been the direct result of malnutrition, poor housing,

37 Texas State Department of Public Welfare, Service to Texans, p. 2.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid., p. 10.
lack of medical care, poor sanitation, and other evidences of sub-standard living. Thus, the prevention of illness, in so far as is possible, within this class of unfortunate people is pointed out as a consideration which should be given primary emphasis. In the long run, medical services extended to these people without cost would likely be more economical than the granting of assistance after illness and death have already taken their toll in instances which could have been prevented had proper care been available. Efforts to improve the health standards of these people, then, become a significant social and economic problem.

On September 1, 1954, over half (52 per cent) of the children who were receiving aid from the Texas State Department of Public Welfare were living in their own homes; 12 per cent were with relatives other than parents; 27 per cent were receiving care in foster homes, as follows: 18 per cent in boarding homes, 7 per cent in adoptive homes, and 2 per cent in free, work, or wage homes; 8 per cent were living in institutions; and 1 per cent were residing under other types of living arrangements. 40

In 1954, a total of 11 per cent of all grants made in Texas from the funds set aside as aid to dependent children were allocated with the specific purpose in mind of helping individuals or families to rehabilitate themselves to the extent that they might soon be in a position to care for

40 Ibid., p. 16.
their own needs and no longer require the grants of assistance. Case workers often go far beyond their call of duty in their rehabilitation efforts. They offer suggestions for improving the family situation, enlist the co-operation and interest of local agencies and individuals, arrange for medical care, train the handicapped in various types of work that they can do in spite of their condition, procure employment for the handicapped, and perform many other services in an effort to make individuals and families self-supporting and self-respecting members of society. Often, the only thing needed for a "come-back" after illness or accident is encouragement, and some one who can convince an employer that even the handicapped can perform worth-while and profitable labor. 41 Much of the truly worth-while work being sponsored by the ADC program is to be found in the efforts at rehabilitation, for every rehabilitated individual means a family group that is no longer dependent upon public assistance for its existence, but one that can once more take its rightful place in society as a self-supporting unit worthy of self-respect and of the respect of others.

Case workers and field workers who are employed by the Texas State Department of Public Welfare as personnel in charge of the program of aid to dependent children are required and expected to provide both their local office and the state headquarters of the Department with complete and detailed records of all ADC cases under their supervision.

41 Ibid., pp. 12-13.
There are records and forms which the worker must fill in when application is made for an ADC grant, on which the local office makes its recommendation as to whether or not the request for assistance appears to be warranted and needed, and whether it therefore should be granted or denied. In addition to these forms which the case workers are responsible for filling in completely and accurately, there are also narrative accounts to be written of each case placed upon the ADC rolls. In these narrative records the worker gives the true situation with relation to the family being assisted, and tells about all of the factors which may have been influential in bringing about the present plight of the family. In other words, these are case histories, and are kept up to date by the worker so as to present a true picture of the case at all times. The case worker makes periodic visits to the family and notes progress being made, or lack of it. The case worker may recommend continuation of the grant, or its cessation, its increase or its decrease, depending upon conditions as they exist in the family group being assisted.

It may be found from an examination of the records that case workers, for the most part, are very careful in their preparation of their case histories, and feel a real sense of responsibility in this part of their work, as in all others. There are, of course, wide variations among individual case workers, and there are some who provide only fragmentary records, whereas others prepare their case histories in great detail and exactness. The printed forms which are used in the
record-keeping on all ADC families appear to be quite adequate and sufficient to afford the Texas State Department of Public Welfare all the information which it may desire concerning any case receiving a grant through the ADC program. Also, most of the case histories, written in narrative form by the field workers, provide full accounts on all grant-receiving families. Together, the printed forms and the case histories afford a complete picture of conditions as they exist in the case families, and note any changes in status as the field worker makes periodic visits into the homes of those receiving grants of aid to dependent children. These records relate some tragic socio-economic and health problems, and portray in grim detail the breakdown of family life which has brought about the misfortune in the family circles. They indicate, also, the pitifully small efforts, sometimes, that are being made to assist these families. The redeeming feature of the entire program is that the records also contain numerous instances of complete or partial rehabilitation of individuals and families, thus enabling them to return to a position of self-respect and economic productivity in society. When this can be done, the ADC program has been highly successful.

In this chapter have been discussed briefly the aims, purposes, and philosophy of the state program of aid to dependent children; significant legislation defining and determining the scope and functions of the ADC program; and mention of the system of record-keeping required of case workers. In the succeeding chapter, case histories will be presented
relating to twenty families in Erath County, Texas, who receive grants of aid to dependent children, or who have recently received such grants; and summary tables will be included to indicate some typical characteristics of these families.
CHAPTER III

CASE STUDIES OF TWENTY FAMILIES IN ERATH COUNTY, TEXAS, RECEIVING AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

In this chapter is presented a series of twenty narrative case histories taken from among those families in Erath County, Texas, who are receiving at the present time or recently have received grants from the state funds for aid to dependent children. The purpose in including these case histories in this paper is to indicate more clearly the bases upon which such grants are allocated; the social and economic conditions of the families receiving the grants; the health status of the families, especially of the bread winners; certain pertinent family statistics; and other living standards and characteristics which pertain to the families receiving ADC grants in Erath County.

These case histories, which had been compiled by the case workers of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, were selected from Erath County because the writer, as a volunteer case worker under the ADC program, is personally familiar with all ADC cases in the county, and had the official records of these cases readily accessible. Permission to utilize these records in this study was obtained from Herbert
Wilson, Assistant Director of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare. Only with this official permission could the writer examine the records of the cases, since all such information is held strictly confidential.

Although the writer knows the cases personally, she has relied upon the official records for most of the information presented herein. These records are prepared with care by the case and field workers of the local office and are kept on file in the county seat of the county in which the cases reside. The records prepared on each case receiving aid to dependent children are of two forms: (1) printed forms which are filled in in detail by the case workers in conferences with the families applying for or receiving aid, and (2) narrative accounts of progress or lack of progress and of new developments within the families receiving aid. All records are kept up to date and have additions made to them after each periodic visit which the case worker makes to the families under consideration.

In the case histories to follow, an attempt has been made to include in the description all factors and influences which appeared to enter into the cases as authorized by the legislation setting up the state program of aid to dependent children. Cases are identified only by letter and sex, so as to maintain complete anonymity. The letters used do not necessarily have any relationship whatsoever to the actual names of the cases.
Following the presentation of the case histories, a series of several tables will be included in the form of a summary, to indicate certain information pertaining to standards of living, family status, factors affecting employment, and other items of importance in considering ADC grants. These tables will point out certain traits and characteristics which pertain to the families receiving grants of aid to dependent children in Erath County, Texas. Although the case histories are limited to this particular Texas county, it is widely known and recognized among welfare workers that similar conditions are to be found throughout the nation among those receiving such grants of aid. Thus, the case summaries and the summary tables are included to indicate typical situations among the families who receive funds from the state program of aid to dependent children.

Mr. A

Mr. A. lives with his wife and eleven children in a rented house in town. The shelter is poor and inadequate in size, and does not provide any of the modern conveniences which today are considered essential to an acceptable standard of living. The family does not own an automobile. They possess no real property, and the only personal property is a small life insurance policy. The only income for the family was the employment of Mr. A. The first appeal for aid came in April, 1949.
At that time the eleven children ranged in age from four to twenty years. Mr. A was thirty-eight years of age, and his wife, thirty-seven.

The basis upon which ADC aid was requested for this family was the poor health of Mr. A. This illness was in the nature of a back ailment. One doctor's prognosis was that Mr. A had a dislocated spinal disc and that, in the doctor's opinion, Mr. A was not expected to improve nor ever to recover completely. He suggested the use of a brace to relieve pressure and to reduce pain. The physician also felt that the use of such a brace would enable Mr. A to resume work, either full time or part time. Another doctor who examined Mr. A, however, was very unsympathetic. He stated that Mr. A had exaggerated his ailments, and that continued financial assistance would only encourage Mr. A not to work. Subsequently, the hospital in which Mr. A received diagnosis and some treatment agreed with the first diagnosis, but did maintain that this man was able to do light work. The case worker felt that if Mr. A remained completely unemployed until the youngest child became fourteen years of age, he would never work. Furthermore, if he were paid the maximum grant allowable under the ADC program, he might refuse to work even if he were physically able to do so.

Thinking to improve their situation, Mr. and Mrs. A and their family moved to a small farm. The wife was unhappy in this new situation because she missed her friends in town and her frequent trips downtown
which she had been accustomed to making. The farm venture was not very successful, the total income for the family from the farm averaging about twenty dollars a month. The family returned to town in 1953.

Since Mrs. A had had three children in three years, the case worker suggested that the parents employ some method of birth control. Mrs. A, however, did not appear to be interested in this suggestion.

The children in the family were all healthy, and did not possess any deformities. When the eighteen-year-old boy developed an ear infection, the doctor found that it was caused by the syphilitic condition of the father, since tests revealed that the father had had syphilis since before the birth of this child. Preventive inoculations were given to all of the children at the local hospital.

Mr. A was not interested in vocational rehabilitation, in spite of the frequent urgings by the case worker that he enter such a program that would enable him to support his family in spite of his handicap. He had been trained and had worked as a mechanic, and if he could not do that type of work, he was not interested in doing any other for which he might have the strength. Although she was physically able to work, Mrs. A could not leave her large family of children to seek employment outside of the home. Neither of the parents was equipped with enough education to enable them to do clerical work. Mr. A had gone through the sixth grade in school, and Mrs. A through only the second grade.
This was the only marriage for each of these parents.

The first ADC grant was issued for eighty-one dollars per month. Later, this amount was raised to ninety-six dollars, and continued at this level, the maximum allowable, until 1953, when the oldest daughter went to work. She earned ninety-one dollars per month. At the time of her employment the ADC grant for the family was lowered to fifty-seven dollars per month. The grant was discontinued in 1955 for the reason that the family moved out of the state.

Mrs. B

Mrs. B. lives in the rural area. She is thirty-three years of age. In her family are two sons of her first marriage and a daughter of her second. The sons are eleven and thirteen years of age, whereas the daughter is six. Mrs. B's father lives with her but, being over seventy, he is unable to do very much work. Mrs. B is clean, industrious, and energetic, and does not want financial aid if she can get enough work to enable her to support her family adequately. Both of Mrs. B's marriages ended in divorce. Not liking the two sons of her first marriage, her second husband deserted his wife and daughter. Since then, he has re-married four times. Mrs. B states that he drinks to excess.

Mrs. B owns a one-sixth interest in her father's home, where she and her three children and her father live. This is a fifty-seven-acre farm.
At the time when Mrs. B applied for an ADC grant, she had the following debts: three heifer calves, $300.00; a loan of $40.00; sewing machine, $115.00; and 250 hens valued at $235.00.

Mrs. B has a high school education and has had six months of training in a business college. She is supposed to receive twenty-five dollars per month from her second husband for the support of their daughter, but these payments are usually far in arrears.

Mrs. B received a grant of forty-two dollars a month for one year. At the end of that time, the grant was reduced to twenty-five dollars a month. In February, 1955, the grant was discontinued at her own request. She was then earning enough money to support her family, and requested that no further aid be granted.

Mrs. C

Mrs. C. is a young woman twenty-nine years of age. Her husband is thirty, and is confined to a hospital in Temple, suffering from acute nephritis. His mental stability is deteriorating because of worry over his prolonged illness and his inability to support his family. Members of the family are clean, nice looking, and willing to work, but the father's illness makes employment impossible for him at the present time. Since the two children are only one and three years of age, case workers have advised Mrs. C to remain at home to care for them rather than to seek employment.
Mrs. C and her two children live in a trailer house, which has a debt of eight hundred dollars against it. Their family automobile has been repossessed, so they have no transportation. They use bottled gas for cooking and heating, but have no other conveniences in their trailer home.

An ADC grant of fifty-eight dollars per month was made to Mrs. C, but she found it difficult to make ends meet on this amount which, for a time, represented the family’s sole income. However, as the trailer house was located near a nursery, Mrs. C succeeded in obtaining seasonal work there, earning $154.00 per month for her period of employment, during which time the ADC grant was suspended. At the end of her employment, the grant was resumed, this time for sixty-three dollars per month. This increase was made possible through the federal government’s program allowing nominal additional grants to mothers who take care of children in their home. While she was employed, Mrs. C's mother looked after the children.

Mr. D

Mr. D applied for an ADC grant by appearing personally at the local office of the Texas State Department of Public Welfare. He gave poor health as the reason for his request. Upon examination, he was found to have an enlarged prostate gland. He looked well, and was very active. The application for aid was first made in April, 1954, and the case worker called on Mr. D once a month for the remainder of the year.
Mr. D's family consisted of three members—himself, his wife, and a twelve-year-old son. Two older sons are married and, because of their own family responsibilities, are unable to help their parents. Mr. D was fifty-nine years of age, and his wife was fifty-six. They lived in a rented house in town. They own no real property, and their only personal property consists of a family burial insurance policy.

Their liabilities consisted of debts for medicine and a loan for $180.00. On the note which secured the loan, one cow, valued at seventy-five dollars, was listed as security. The family owed the hospital fifty-three dollars, and their family doctor, ten dollars.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. D had been married previously.

Mr. D did not desire vocational rehabilitation. He has usually worked as a cook or as a laundry worker. His pay check averaged $23.15 per week.

The agency issued a grant of fifteen dollars per month to pay for needed medicine. The child, as well as his father, needed some medical care, as he had had a mild case of rheumatic fever.

The ADC grant was discontinued on January 10, 1955, because Mr. D's earnings had increased and his physical condition was somewhat improved.
Mrs. E

Mrs. E applied for help in the form of an ADC grant because her husband was in police custody, having been accused of transporting mortgaged property out of the state. Her only resource was the help she was receiving from her family. She has two children who, at the time of application, were two and five years of age.

Mrs. E is clean and nice looking, but very frail. The children are healthy and have had no illness except colds.

Mrs. E and her two children live in a two-room-and-bath upstairs apartment, for which they have to pay thirty-five dollars a month in rent. They own no real or personal property.

Mrs. E has worked as a waitress, but the case worker has recommended that she should remain at home with her children. She went to the tenth grade in school. Vocational rehabilitation was not recommended because of the fact that Mr. E would soon be eligible for parole. He wrote to the family often, and appears to be a devoted family man. The worker expressed the opinion that this family was the victim of its own ignorance.

A grant of sixty-three dollars was allocated. This was discontinued in December, 1954, when Mr. E came home from prison. The grant was dropped at the request of Mrs. E, who expressed appreciation for the help that had been given to her and her family in their time of
need. Mr. E had obtained a job as an oil driller, and the family moved out of the county to the location of his work.

Mrs. F and Mrs. G

Mrs. G is an elderly woman who lives with her daughter, Mrs. F, and Mrs. F's two small children. The two women applied by letter for help. The case worker found Mrs. F badly in need of medical care. Upon examination by a doctor, she was found to have had one kidney removed and therefore cannot eliminate properly. She also has pellagra. Mrs. G was a widow, and she was badly in need of psychiatric treatment.

Mrs. F is divorced from her first husband and separated from her second. She does not know where he is, and receives no help from him.

These two women lived in town in a rented house which is in fair condition. They owned no property, either real or personal. Their only income was what they could earn from occasional employment. They were not in debt, however. They had received some help from their church, and the school was giving free lunches to the children.

Mrs. F was given a grant of fifty-five dollars, whereas Mrs. G received sixty-three dollars per month. Mrs. G, however, died about a year after the grant was allowed. Mrs. F married again, separated again, and is now back on a grant of fifty-four dollars per month.
Efforts at vocational rehabilitation were not accepted by Mrs. F, who had only a fifth-grade education. She does ironing at home and works occasionally as a waitress.

Mr. H applied in person for a grant of aid to dependent children. Upon investigation, the case worker found him to be an arrested tubercular case who was suffering from an ulcerated stomach. Soon after the initial interview was held, the tuberculosis became active again, and the worker succeeded in placing Mr. H in a Jewish hospital in Denver, Colorado, which is a non-profit, non-paying institution. Mr. H remained in this hospital for six months and then returned home, much improved. All efforts at vocational rehabilitation failed, because Mr. H was interested only in very high-salaried jobs, which, in reality, he was incapable of holding, since he has only a seventh-grade education. His wife went to the tenth grade in school.

Mr. and Mrs. H had two sons, aged five and seven years at the time of application for the ADC grant. Their only resource was what Mrs. H was able to earn by traveling 150 miles each day to work in a cafe. This couple owns no property except a small insurance policy. They lived in a rented house that was in good condition. Their existing debts included doctor bills, unpaid rent, and laundry and medical bills.
In April, 1951, Mrs. H and her two sons were discovered to be tubercular and were sent to a state sanitorium for eight months. When they returned home, the family was allocated the maximum grant allowable for two children—fifty-four dollars per month.

In February of 1954, Mr. H sued for divorce, contending that Mrs. H had been unfaithful to him and that her character was not good. In May of 1954, the divorce was granted, not having been contested by the wife. Mr. H received custody of the two boys. Mr. H's mother cared for the boys after the divorce was granted.

Mr. H had a job that required him to work at night. He paid $100.00 for a used car to drive to work. After holding down this job for a period of several months, Mr. H became ill again and was found to have tuberculosis of the vertebrae. He died in November, 1954. The ADC grant which he had received terminated with his death.

Mr. I

Mr. I made his contact with the local welfare office by letter. He lives in the rural area in an old four-room house which does not afford the family any modern conveniences. Mr. I does not own the house which, together with the land on which it is situated, belongs to his son. The family does not own a car. Their only income, before they began to receive ADC aid, was in the form of irregular help from relatives.
At the time he made application for a grant of aid for dependent children, Mr. I was over eighty years of age, and somewhat feeble. He suffered from arthritis and an enlarged prostate gland. Mrs. I was fifty-three years of age, and the couple had an eight-year-old son. They have three grown sons, all of whom insisted that they were unable to help their parents, except that one of the sons permitted his parents to live on his place. Mrs. I had severe stomach trouble, and the boy suffered from chronic bronchitis.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. I had been married previously.

The family's assets were: house value, $650.00; one cow, $150.00; and twenty chickens, $18.00. There was a note in the amount of $110.00 against the house.

The father had gone to high school, but the mother had only completed the fifth grade in school.

Sometimes the welfare office outlines a suggested budget for the family of a client. The following is one outlined for this particular family group of three:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$41.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>7.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedies</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special needs</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gas . . . . . . . . . . $ 4.00
Ice . . . . . . . . . . 3.79
Doctor bills . . . . . . 10.00

Total needs . . . $72.29

An ADC grant was issued to this family in December, 1953, in the amount of thirty-nine dollars per month. An additional twelve dollars was allocated to provide eyeglasses for Mr. I. The grant is now in force at fifty-five dollars per month.

Mrs. J.

When Mrs. J. applied for a grant of aid to dependent children, she gave as her reason the poor health of her husband, which prevented him from working full time. Mr. J's trouble was found to be caused from venereal disease, but fortunately none of the other members of the family had been infected. In addition to this physical affliction, he was also found to be in need of psychiatric treatment.

Besides the parents there were three girls in the family—ages thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen.

The family owned a small house in town, in which they resided. This house was in fair condition. They had an old model electric refrigerator, but one which was still in operating condition. They also had a washing machine and two stoves.
The family carried a burial insurance policy. Their debts included about five hundred dollars, including obligations for groceries and payments on their refrigerator and washing machine.

Although their house is situated in the section of town in which Negroes and whites may live in adjacent houses, the house is kept clean, and the family is fairly well kept.

Both Mr. and Mrs. J have been married twice. Mr. J's first marriage culminated in the death of his wife, whereas Mrs. J's first marriage ended in divorce.

This family has had help from every agency in town which grants aid for the unfortunate, the Community Chest having been especially helpful.

The family had no income except that derived from the sporadic employment of Mr. J when his health permitted him to work. Mrs. J complained of an abnormal sexual desire for her husband. Mr. J, because of his mental condition, became violent at times, but his wife refused to take action to send him to a state mental hospital. The case worker and the doctor were of the opinion that he was not responsible for his actions and that he therefore was dangerous.

The unwholesome home life of the family was a bad influence for the three teen-age girls. The oldest one succeeded in obtaining employment away from home; the second daughter was committed to the State School for Girls at Gainesville for living an unclean and immoral
life, and likes her new home very much; and the thirteen-year-old girl got married.

Mr. J finally became so unmanageable that he was sent to a mental hospital.

Originally, the ADC grant was started at sixty-three dollars per month. It has now been denied because all three of the children are above the age limit for receiving grants, and none of them is living at home.

Mrs. K

Mrs. K applied for an ADC grant by appearing personally at the local welfare office. At that time, she stated that she had been married twice, her first marriage having ended in divorce, the second in desertion by her husband. Mrs. K stated that her husband had deserted her in June, 1946. She has two children. The first, a boy, was born of her first marriage in 1940; the second, a girl, was born in 1945 of the second marriage. She owned no property of any kind, and neither did she have any debts.

Mrs. K, at the time of the first interview in 1947, was twenty-nine years of age. She said that she had gone to the eighth grade in school. She had worked as a waitress in cafes.

Appearing very nervous, Mrs. K was thought to be a possible mental case. Upon investigation, the case worker learned that her
reputation was not good. She was accused of drinking and of running around rather promiscuously with men. She gave the impression of being very weak in character, and it was soon learned that she yielded readily to temptation.

In 1947, a grant was issued in the amount of forty-two dollars a month. At that time, Mrs. K was living with an uncle in a small rural town. Although the case worker visited Mrs. K each month, she failed to notice that the woman became pregnant. Mrs. K managed to conceal this fact from the welfare worker. When the baby was born, Mrs. K gave it away for adoption and refused to disclose the identity of the father. Suspicion pointed to the uncle.

In 1951, the grant was lowered to thirty-eight dollars. In 1952, she returned to town and, since she was living alone, the grant was raised to sixty-three dollars, at which level it now remains.

Mrs. L

Mrs. L applied for ADC aid through the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Mr. L being in a veterans' hospital for treatment. He was receiving a forty-seven dollar service allowance because of asthmatic disability as a result of his participation in World War II. Mr. L wished to establish the fact of his total disability, and appeared to have very little interest in getting well. Whenever doctors informed him that there was not enough wrong with him for them to declare him totally disabled, he
would go into convulsions and hysteria. But, in spite of this situation, the case worker felt that something had to be done for the sake of the children in the home.

There are six children in the family, ranging in age from sixteen years to six months. At the time that aid was applied for, in January, 1954, Mr. L was forty-eight years old and his wife forty-four.

Various welfare agencies have helped this family, among these being the local Baptist Church, the American Legion, and the local chapter of Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Mrs. L has never worked outside the home. Vocational rehabilitation was not attempted because she is needed at the home to care for the children.

Mr. L is a carpenter by trade, but for several years had not been able to hold a job for very long at a time because of his asthmatic condition.

An ADC grant was issued for sixty-three dollars per month, and is still in effect.

Mrs. M

Mrs. M came to the local welfare agency in person to apply for aid. Her husband is dead. The family consists of Mrs. M and her four children. There are two boys, ages eight and six at the time of application, and two girls, who were three and eleven years of age.
Mrs. M lived in her own home in town. This shelter was in good condition. She owned no personal property, and the only real property was her homestead.

No suggestion was made for vocational rehabilitation because the case workers felt that the mother should stay in the home with the children. She could do ironing in the home.

At the time when Mrs. M applied for help, she owed grocery and medical bills, and $110.00 on a sewing machine.

The children were all in good health, and the entire family is habitually clean and nice looking. The only health problem in the family concerned Mrs. M herself, who had some trouble with varicose veins.

The only income for the family besides what Mrs. M could earn by doing ironing in her home was a small amount received as social security.

Mrs. M was thirty-eight years of age and had completed the tenth grade in school. She had been married only once.

The case worker recommended that a grant of twenty-five dollars per month should be made in order to help pay the debts. This grant was paid for fourteen months while Mrs. M was employed at a nursery. But in February, 1955, a grant of thirty-four dollars was recommended. Mrs. M now receives $84.60 per month in social security payments. By using both grants to pay living expenses, Mrs. M can remain at home
with her children. She still does ironing in her home in order to earn some additional income.

Mrs. N

Mrs. N applied by letter for assistance under the state program of aid to dependent children. She stated that she had in her home a son eleven years old and her maternal grandfather. Upon investigation, the case worker found that Mrs. N had been married twice, the first marriage ending in divorce, the second in separation. Her husband was contributing nothing toward the support of the family. The only income was derived from the employment of Mrs. N, which consisted of doing ironing, from which she earned about twenty-five dollars a month. As debts, she had grocery and medical bills. The amount was about one hundred dollars for groceries and $174.00 for a hospital bill.

The child proved to be mentally retarded. The special education teacher at school reported his mentality to be about that of a four-year-old child. Her diagnosis stated that he was unable to retain information.

The grandfather had difficulty in hearing, the doctor's report stating that he possessed about 25 per cent of normal hearing ability.

Mrs. N, her son, and her grandfather lived in town in a rented house. Although the house was not of the best type, it appeared to be adequate for the family's needs. It was a two-bedroom house of frame
construction, without bath or other modern conveniences. Mrs. N owned no real or personal property.

An ADC grant was established for forty-eight dollars, and is still in force at this time.

Mrs. O

Mrs. O applied for an ADC grant in January, 1955. She came personally to the office to request aid. When the case worker had begun the usual investigation, she found that Mrs. O's in-laws were certain that the cause of Mrs. O's trouble with her husband was all Mrs. O's fault. They charged that the husband had been forced to go elsewhere to obtain work and that his wife, Mrs. O, had refused to go with him. This accusation proved to be untrue. The true cause for their separation was deliberate desertion of his family on the part of Mr. O. He not only deserted them, but also refused support. The only income received by Mrs. O and her two children was derived from her part-time employment at the hospital.

The family unit consisted of Mrs. O and two children, a daughter one year of age and a son two years old. They lived with Mrs. O's mother and stepfather. The stepfather did what work he could, but he was not in good health. Mrs. O's health had been bad since the birth of her second child. Although she is a licensed nurse, she weighs around two hundred pounds and is too heavy to stand on her feet for long periods.
However, no other vocational rehabilitation was recommended, since she was adequately trained in this work, and almost any other employment available to her would have involved the same problem—that of her excessive overweight, which prevented long periods of standing on her feet. Mrs. O's education was only through the tenth grade.

At the time when Mrs. O applied for a grant, she owned no real or personal property. She lived in a rented house in town which was occupied also by her mother and stepfather, in addition to herself and her two small children. The shelter was in fair condition, and contained a bath. There were no other modern conveniences, however. The family did not own a car.

Mrs. O had been married only one time. She was twenty-nine years of age when she first asked for assistance. She seemed to be a very nice person. She was clean and well-kept, and so were both children.

Mrs. O was in debt for the following items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital bill</td>
<td>$114.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug store bill</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist bill</td>
<td>55.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowed</td>
<td>170.00 plus interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$379.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mrs. O received a grant of sixty-three dollars a month. This was the maximum grant allowable for two children. In addition, the federal government allowed her eleven dollars a month to act as caretaker for her children in her home. This grant is still in effect.

Mr. P

Mr. P came to the local welfare office to get help for his grandchild. Mr. P is fifty-nine years old and his wife fifty-five. Mrs. P had been married before, but her first marriage ended in divorce. She has three grown children by her first marriage. Mr. and Mrs. P have a daughter twenty-four years of age, but with the mind of a twelve-year-old. The child in the case is hers. Although illegitimate, the child is good looking, healthy, and bright.

The mother stated that the child was attacked by a Mr. S, and she asked help of the sheriff. The sheriff stated that he arrested Mr. S, but the girl failed to identify him. Because of this, there was no evidence to substantiate the pressing of charges. However, the sheriff is of the opinion that one of the half-brothers is the father of the child. Upon being questioned, Mrs. P admitted that she knew of intimate relations between the girl and her half-brother.

At the time of the inquiry the family lived in a very poor shelter. It was a frame house, containing four rooms and a bath, which they rented. Mr. P stated that he had never owned any property and that he
considered it more economical to rent than to own a home. The family does not own a car, a refrigerator, or other conveniences. Their debts at the time of application consisted of eighty dollars for groceries and two hundred dollars for hospital bills.

Mr. P had gone only through the second grade in school, while Mrs. P had gone through the fourth grade. The retarded mother of the child is unable to read or write intelligibly.

A grant of twenty-six dollars per month was awarded in May, 1955.

Mr. Q

Mr. Q applied for help by letter. The case worker found him to be fifty years old, and his wife forty-five. They had one child, a ten-year-old daughter. This family lived in the rural area. They owned a small farm and lived in an old frame farmhouse. They were unable to finance farming, which was their only source of income. The land was very poor, and the house almost uninhabitable.

The father had very poor vision, was extremely nervous, and was crippled.

They owned a 1935 Chevrolet car, in very bad condition. A small life insurance policy was their only personal property. The debts of the family were: groceries, $150.00; the preceding year's taxes; and a loan of $600.00, plus interest. This money had been borrowed to make a crop.
This is the only marriage for both Mr. and Mrs. Q. Mr. Q finished the fifth grade in school, whereas Mrs. Q completed the ninth grade.

The case worker recommended a grant of forty-six dollars per month. This grant went into effect in February, 1955, and is still active.

Mr. R

Mr. R is a physically handicapped person. He has been blind since 1945, due to optic atrophy. Doctors say that nothing can be done to restore vision. Mr. R has taken advantage of vocational rehabilitation. He is trained as a refrigeration engineer and salesman, but, because of his handicap, cannot get a job. Business people have refused to become interested in him. He is very discouraged and despondent as a result of his inability to find work to enable him to support his family. The need of Mr. R and his family is very great.

The family consists of the husband and wife and five children, ranging in age from three to fourteen years. They live in a frame house which is in fair condition. It has four rooms and a bath. The family owns the house. They also have a small insurance policy. Their only income, in addition to the ADC grant, is a contribution of twenty-five dollars a month from the Masonic Lodge.

Both Mr. and Mrs. R are graduates of accredited high schools. This is the only marriage for both of them.
The case worker found the family to be somewhat in debt. They owed $300.00 for groceries, $105.00 for a loan at the bank, and $220.00 borrowed from various friends and relatives.

Mr. R was forty one and his wife thirty-six at the time they first applied for aid in September, 1953.

The first grant was made in the amount of sixty-three dollars per month, but it was increased in January, 1955, to ninety-six dollars. It is still being issued monthly in that amount, which is the maximum grant allowable.

Mrs. S

Mrs. S first applied for aid under the ADC program in 1953. At that time she had a child only two weeks old. Her husband was in the terminal stages of cancer. The family lived in a small house in town furnished them by Mrs. S's grandparents.

The family was entirely without resources. After some consideration, Mr. S was moved to his parents' home for care. Mrs. S's health had been very poor since the birth of her child, and she was physically unable to care for her husband in an adequate manner.

The family owned no real or personal property.

The local Baptist Church has furnished food, clothing, medical care, and money for this needy family.
An ADC grant of forty-six dollars a month was issued. This was lowered to twenty-four dollars in March, 1955, because Mrs. S was then receiving social security. Her husband had died in September, 1954, leaving Mrs. S with an indebtedness for his funeral expenses. She received some help on this debt from the church.

The present ADC grant, together with her social security payments, will enable Mrs. S to remain at home to care for her child.

The preceding case histories of twenty families in Erath County, Texas, who recently have received or are now receiving help from the state program of aid to dependent children have indicated the existence of numerous problems within these families. These problems are largely socio-economic in nature, although some are problems involving morality and health and mental retardation. In the five tables which follow, an attempt will be made to summarize some of the outstanding traits and characteristics which have been noted in the individual case histories.

Table I indicates the marital status of the parents in twenty families in Erath County, Texas, receiving or having recently received grants of aid to dependent children.

This table reveals in a somewhat startling manner the obvious instability of the family life of the ADC family groups in Erath County, which are known to be typical of families throughout the state and nation
who are receiving grants of aid to dependent children. In only eight of the twenty family groups studied in Erath County were both parents living together. Five of the families had been broken by divorce, four by separation, and five by the death of one parent.

**TABLE I**

MARITAL STATUS OF TWENTY FAMILIES RECEIVING GRANTS OF AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents living together</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents divorced</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents separated</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent deceased</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents having one marriage (the present one)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers having more than one marriage</td>
<td>5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers having more than one marriage</td>
<td>6**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Four fathers had been married twice; one, five times.
**Each of these six mothers had been married twice.

Eight pairs of parents had contracted only one marriage on the part of either parent—their present one. On the other hand, five fathers had been married more than once—one five times—and six mothers had entered into two marriages each. Most of the original marriages of these parents who had been married more than once had ended in divorce.
Thus, the family stability of these ADC units was extremely weak. Perhaps the unhappiness and instability of the family groups were factors in the socio-economic deterioration of these families to the point at which they had to apply for aid.

Table II presents information concerning the types and quality of residences or living conditions of the twenty case families in Erath County included in this study.

As shown in this table, twelve of the twenty ADC families in the study lived in an urban environment, whereas only eight families lived in the country. Only three families occupied living quarters which could be classified as good. Six families lived in poor quarters, whereas eleven occupied livable quarters. On the whole, modern conveniences were scarce among this group of families, only five of the twenty families having baths and only two owning electric refrigerators.

Nine of the families were renting their living quarters, whereas seven owned their homes. Four families were living with relatives or in shelter made available to them through the generosity of relatives. Sixteen of the twenty families lived in one-family houses, three occupied apartments, and one lived in a trailer house which was in poor condition with no conveniences.

It may be seen from this brief survey that the living quarters of these ADC families left much to be desired. On the whole, their places of residence were poor and inadequate, and lacking in most of the modern
### TABLE II

**STATISTICS CONCERNING RESIDENCES OF TWENTY FAMILIES RECEIVING GRANTS OF AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts Concerning Residence</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Condition of residence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livable</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modern conveniences available in the home:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baths</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric refrigerators</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rent or own home:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living with relatives or in shelter furnished by relatives</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living in house</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living in apartment</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other living quarters</strong></td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This was a trailer house in poor condition, with no conveniences.*

Conveniences which now are considered essential to an acceptable standard of living. Perhaps the only word of commendation that can be voiced concerning the living quarters of these families is that 80 per cent of them lived in one-family houses, even though those houses might be in poor condition and inadequate as to space.
Table III indicates certain factors concerning the family composition of the twenty ADC families in Erath County, Texas, who were included in this study.

TABLE III

FACTORS CONCERNING FAMILY COMPOSITION OF TWENTY FAMILIES RECEIVING GRANTS OF AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average age of fathers</td>
<td>48.5 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age of mothers</td>
<td>38.5 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of children in the families</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of fathers applying for ADC grants</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of mothers applying for ADC grants</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of children aided in the twenty families</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table, the fathers in the ADC families included in this study were an average of ten years older than were the mothers, the average ages for both parents being 48.5 and 38.5 years, respectively, for fathers and mothers. There was an average of 2.95 children in each family unit included in the study. Most often, the mother applied for a grant of aid to dependent children, with twelve of the mothers making such application, and only eight of the fathers. This may be accounted for by the fact that the mothers were present in all of
the family units, but all but eight of the fathers were absent from the home because of divorce, desertion, or death. A total of fifty-nine children under fourteen years of age, living in the twenty family units, were assisted with grants of aid to dependent children.

In Table IV are presented data relating to certain factors influencing the employment of the parents in the twenty ADC families in Erath County, Texas, who were included in this study.

**TABLE IV**

**FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYMENT OF PARENTS IN TWENTY FAMILIES RECEIVING GRANTS OF AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average education of the parents</td>
<td>8th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of parents accepting and benefiting from vocational rehabilitation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of parents doing odd jobs or serving as day laborers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of professional or semi-professional workers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farmers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of fathers having physical disability</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of mothers having physical disability</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of mental cases</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As has been made obvious in the case histories presented earlier in this chapter, the educational attainments of the parents in these twenty families were low. Only two parents were high school graduates, and none had gone to college, although one mother had had a brief period of training in a business school. Table IV, above, indicates that the average educational attainment of the parents was the eighth-grade level.

Only five of the parents had accepted and/or benefited from vocational rehabilitation efforts. Eight of the men in the families did odd jobs or worked as day laborers, and three were farmers. Only two of the parents were capable of doing work which was even semi-professional in nature. Nine men in the twenty families suffered from some type of physical disability or illness, whereas four mothers had physical disabilities. Three parents were mental cases.

It becomes apparent from these findings that the possible employment level for this group of parents was seriously limited by the lack of education. Even if all of the parents had been physically able to work at their trades or occupations, their earnings would not have been large, since they were accustomed to doing work which does not afford adequate remuneration. When it is recalled that 80 per cent of the parents suffered from some type or types of physical disability or illness which prevented them from enjoying their full earning powers, if indeed they
were able to work at all, the socio-economic position of these families becomes even darker. Doubtless, the physical and mental conditions which impaired or completely destroyed these parents' earning power were largely responsible for their unfortunate situations.

Table V indicates other agencies besides the state ADC program which provided help for the twenty families in Erath County, Texas, who are included in this study as receiving grants of aid to dependent children.

**TABLE V**

**OTHER AGENCIES PROVIDING HELP TO TWENTY FAMILIES RECEIVING GRANTS OF AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Agencies Assisting</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lions Club</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonic Lodge</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security payments</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Chest</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Legion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheriff's office</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free lunches at school</td>
<td>15 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free medical services by doctors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial help from relatives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free hospitalization for war veterans</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above tabulation indicates that various service clubs, churches, and miscellaneous organizations and individuals were willing to serve the needy in their community by offering help to the unfortunate ones in their midst. Fifteen, or approximately one fourth, of the children classified as dependent and included in this study received free lunches at school. All of this help was given in addition to whatever grants might be allowed through the program of aid to dependent children, and may have been received before such grants became operative, or else may have been received concurrently with those grants.

In this chapter a series of twenty case histories has been presented, dealing with twenty families who currently are receiving or have recently received assistance through the state program of aid to dependent children. All of these twenty families are, or were, residents of Erath County, Texas. After these case studies were presented, a series of five tables was designed to indicate certain traits and characteristics of these families who were receiving aid.

In the succeeding chapter, a brief summary of the study and conclusions and recommendations will be offered.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study has been undertaken for the purpose of determining the nature and operation of the Texas state program of aid to dependent children, with special emphasis upon Erath County. In the first chapter, the problem has been stated, the limitations have been set forth, and the sources of data and the method of procedure outlined. Also, the proposed organization of the study has been included.

In Chapter II, the aims, objectives, and philosophy of the ADC program have been discussed, along with significant state legislation which has authorized and defined the program of aid to dependent children. The nature and operation of the ADC program have been discussed at some length, based upon the legislation which authorized this phase of the state's welfare service and governs its operation.

In Chapter III, a series of twenty case histories of typical families in Erath County, Texas, receiving aid to dependent children has been presented for the purpose of pointing out the socio-economic, moral, health, and other traits and characteristics of typical families receiving
aid through this program of welfare and aid. Then these case studies were summarized by a series of five tabulations which served to point out certain of these characteristics which appeared to be typical of these ADC families.

**Conclusions**

The following conclusions appear to be justified by the findings of this study:

1. The program of aid to dependent children, as administered by the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, is performing a worthy and essential service to many of the unfortunate and needy families of the state.

2. However, the grants allocated to cases under the terms of the state law are often inadequate and are insufficient for meeting even the requirements for the bare necessities of life.

3. The legislation which authorized and which now guides the ADC program in Texas is very explicit in defining who is eligible to receive grants under this program.

4. Poor health and physical and mental disability appeared to be significant factors in most of the case units which received help from ADC grants. In other words, poor health and the consequent inability to support the family were responsible for most requests for grants.

5. The socio-economic status and general living standards of these families were very low.
6. The high degree of family instability, as evidenced through divorce, desertion, and separation, was definitely a determining factor in many of the ADC case families.

7. Poor housing, lacking modern conveniences, was characteristic of the families included in the study.

8. The limitations placed upon the ADC program do not permit it to function as long as it should in a given case in order to make sure that the child or children are trained in such a way that they can become self-supporting citizens of the community when they leave school.

9. Vocational rehabilitation is a highly significant phase of the over-all ADC program. The purposes of this phase of the program are aimed at making it possible for the physically handicapped to learn to earn a livelihood for themselves and their families through adjustments to their difficulties and through new lines of work compatible with their physical abilities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations appear to be warranted by the findings of this study:

1. Present statutory limitations upon the program of aid to dependent children should be raised so that the grants allocated may be sufficient in amount to enable the family to maintain its self-respect and to live in such a way as to enjoy the common decencies which are essential to personal and public welfare.
2. Maximum grants allowable under law should be raised, and should be made flexible so as to be adjusted to the individual case needs. Perhaps, instead of basing the maximum allowable grants upon the number of children in the family under fourteen years of age, as does the present law, a more equitable plan would be to make the maximum grants flexible, so that they can be adjusted to meet the needs of the total family group, with its individual problems and difficulties.

3. The statutory limitation which now states that children over fourteen years of age shall not be eligible for grants of aid to dependent children should be revised so as to allow these grants to be continued at least until the child has completed high school. Such a plan would enable the child to receive a high school education and to be prepared to earn his livelihood as a self-supporting, self-respecting citizen of his community.
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