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THE DIFFERENCE IN THE OPINIONS OF
NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN SOCIAL
WORKERS TOWARD PUBLIC
ASSISTANCE

by

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A Research Project



Submitted to

The School of Social Work
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THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes of social workers toward public assistance. There are varied opinions about the present public assistance program, many of them being quite negative. Before an attempt is made to improve the program, it seems beneficial to first discover what the present attitudes are among some of the major groups which work with the recipients of public assistance. With this in mind, this paper will be focused on the attitudes of social workers. Social workers operate on the belief in the idea of progress and should serve as a force in improving the lives of these recipients.

Because the sections of our nation differ economically and politically, it seems as if the public assistance programs would also differ. This would indicate the needs of one community would not necessarily be the needs of any other. The comparison will be made in this paper to discover what, if any, are the differences between the attitudes of social workers in Houston, Texas and Lansing, Michigan.

Review of the Literature

From its birth, the public assistance program has had difficulties. When the social security bill was being written, the assistance program was added without much discussion. This indicates that the organizers of the act considered it of little importance, and viewed it as only being temporary. It has now expanded and is considered to have become a permanent part of the act. The major changes in the assistance program--broadening of Aid to Dependent Children, exemption on earned income

for the blind, programs in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and federal grants in Aid to the Blind---have added and improved the program, but there are many proposals which would further improve the program.

The problem has also had difficulties because of the values of our culture. Success or failure in our society is measured in terms of economic status. The public's attitude toward the dependent still tends to range between condescension and contempt. Thus, the individual who come to consider public assistance as a possible solution to his particular situation must live through feelings, anxieties and changes in the economic as well as other relationship aspects of his life.¹ The needy person finds his situation humiliating not only because of community attitudes, but also because of his own feelings of failure.²

Feiner³ feels that social workers have not yet shed lay attitudes toward relief. Like other professionals, they are exposed to community attitudes inasmuch as they work with the community and are dependent upon it for their existence. Social workers tend to reflect biased and unsympathetic attitudes toward relief clients, just as the community does. Whether or not they are biased, most of them do think that the public assistance program should be changed.

¹Pauline Miller, The Experience of the Individual in Public Assistance (University of Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania School of Social Work, 1947), p.24.

²Hilary M. Leyendecker. Problems and Policy in Public Assistance (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 27.

³Regina Feiner, "Personal Attitudes and Relief Practice," Smith Studies in Social Work, XIV (September, 1943-June, 1944), p. 204.

The administration of public assistance provides for the individual states to determine the levels at which they wish to operate the programs.⁴ A comparison of the funds during the second decade of the public assistance program in Michigan and Texas indicates that the levels in these two states varied greatly.

Total State and Local Funds⁵
(in thousands)

	1946	1948	1950	1952	1954	1955
Michigan	34,099	45,629	63,844	58,279	50,338	61,538
Texas	23,123	35,212	36,944	35,655	37,279	38,005

Could this indicate that the attitudes between these states toward public assistance vary greatly? And this, then as Feiner points out, means that the attitudes of social workers would correlate to that of the states?

A further search of the literature indicates that the social work profession has always been concerned with the public assistance programs.⁶

⁴Loula Dunn, "Public Assistance Administration: Why Change Horses in Midstream," State Government, XXX, no.7 (July, 1957) p. 150.

⁵Ellen J. Perkins, State and Local Financing of Public Assistance: 1935-55 (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1956), p. 45.

⁶Grance Abbott, From Relief to Social Security (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941), p.333; Vaughn Davis Bornet, Welfare in America (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p.62.; Helen E. Martz, "The Contribution of Social Work to the Administration of Public Assistance", Social Casework, XXXVII, No. 2 (February, 1956), pp. 55-61; Eunice Minton, "The Effect of the Setting on Casework Practice in Public Assistance", Social Casework, XXXVII, No2 (February, 1956), pp. 61-69; Kermit T. Wiltse, "Social Casework and Public Assistance", Social Service Review (January, 1958), pp.41-50.



The interest shown by social workers has lead them to evaluate the programs and they have proposed changes in them.

In a New York study, Burns,⁷ was unable to find any one major change that might be needed in the program. He found that the leading administrators in public assistance at all levels of government and of outstanding leaders in social welfare revealed unanimity that something is wrong with the program. However, they placed their emphasis at different points.

Many different proposals for change also indicates that the profession has not agreed on the direction of the change. The Family Welfare Association of America has reported that there is great unevenness during families receiving assistance and has suggested several changes.⁸

In proposing his changes, Cohen⁹ emphasizes governmental relationships. He sees the most urgent needs as state-wide standards for direct relief in every state, more adequate state financial participation to the counties, and federal financial aid to the states for this purpose. This should be done with federal standards assuring assistance without regard to residence, citizenship, race, religion, or national origin.

There seems to be a general feeling that attention should be given to the residence requirements. The American Legion made studies which have definitely established that the present residence laws deprive many

⁷Eveline M. Burns, "What's Wrong with Public Welfare?", Social Service Review, XXXVI, No. 2 (June, 1962), pp. 111-22.

⁸Philip Schiff, "Twenty Years of Social Security", Social Casework, XXXVI, No.8, (June, 1955), p.346.

⁹Wilbur Cohen, "Needed Changes in Social Welfare Programs and Objectives", Social Service Review, XXXIII, No. 1 (March, 1959), pp. 30-42.

citizens of adequate protection and benefits.¹⁰ The Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare has been quoted as saying that "a residence requirement doesn't make sense."¹¹ The National Conference of Social Workers has pointed out that residence laws are of declining importance to modern society and for many reasons should be ended.¹²

In his discussion on a better public assistance program Keith-Lucas¹³ has proposed that the whole program should be abolished. In its place would be a program in favor of more equitable and a less individualized program. The major difficulty with this proposal is in finding an alternative.

In proposing their changes, some social workers tend to think that such steps as those proposed by Mr. Mitchell, city manager of Newburgh, New York, are too drastic. Both Norman V. Lourie, president of the National Association of Social Workers, and Ruth Smally, president of the Council of Social Work Education responded to his proposals jointly. They pointed out that "social workers believe the American people will see through the thin tissue of the Newburgh plan and agree that irresponsible efforts to reduce assistance rolls is not the answer there (in Newburgh) or in any other community."¹⁴

¹⁰"Notes and Comments," Social Service Review, XXIII, No.2 (June, 1959), p. 167.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²"Residence Laws and Public Welfare", State Government, XXX, No.3 (March, 1957), p.70.

¹³Alan Keith-Lucas, Decisions About People in Need (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1957), p.254.

¹⁴Notes and Comments, Social Service Review, XXV, No.4 (December, 1961), p.433.

Focus of Study

Opinions have been expressed that social workers are part of their communities and so reflect their community's attitudes. The writer feels that this is applicable in some areas, but does not think this applies to the area of social security. Social workers are generally concerned with strengthening the individual; their training tends to influence their attitudes toward others. Considering this, the hypothesis on which this study is based is: There is little, if any, difference between the opinions of Northern social workers (NSW) and Southern social workers (SSW) toward public assistance.

In this study opinions are defined as consistent responses to the interview schedule. Northern social workers (NSW) were those persons in Lansing, Michigan who are employed as social workers and are members of the National Association of Social Workers. The Southern social workers (SSW) were those persons in Houston, Texas who are employed as social workers and are members of the National Association of Social Workers.

Public Assistance is a portion of the Social Security Act which was passed in 1935. It comprises five categories: old-age assistance, aid to families of dependent children, aid to the blind, aid to the permanently and totally disabled, and general assistance.

Although the terms southern and northern will be used, they are not meant to indicate that the study will be typical of these sections of the country. The findings will only be applicable to the two cities mentioned as of this year.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Method of Securing Data

Data on the social workers was secured through Likert type interviews which lasted approximately fifty minutes.¹ The northern social workers were interviewed during the summer of 1963. They were interviewed for a different, but similar study. The interviewer was an instructor in the School of Social Work, Michigan State University.

Data on the southern social workers was secured through the same interview. The interviewers identified themselves exactly as the interviewer of the northern social workers did; however, they were second year graduate social work students.²

Several items were omitted in the schedule before it was used with the SSW because they were of no use in this study. Many items, which were included, will serve only to lengthen the interview so that the length for both groups did not vary greatly. Questions at the end of the schedule will be of importance, and it is believed that the length of the interviews may influence the responses.

It is anticipated that the change of interviewers may affect the responses. One group was interviewed by a white male doctoral candidate and the other was interviewed by Negro female students with one year of graduate training. It is hoped that this was controlled by the similarities between the way the interviews were conducted.

¹See Appendix for interview schedule.

²The interviewers were Miss Nelda R. Conner and the writer.

Selection and Description of Sample

The SSW were randomly chosen from the 1962-64 Membership Directory of the San Jacinto Chapter, Houston, Texas of the National Association of Social Workers. All of these persons either have a masters degree in social work or were included in the membership of the organization on October 1, 1955 when it was established. Because San Jacinto Chapter includes persons in four other cities, the population in this study was defined as those working within the city limits of Houston. This means that there were 249 persons in 43 agencies. The three private practitioners and the 31 non-agency members are not included in the 249. One twelfth of the population will provide an adequate sample.

The NSW were 35 persons in Lansing, Michigan who held positions in social agencies as social workers during the summer of 1963.

Method of Analysis

The interviews were divided into five major areas: (1) opinions on welfare questions, (2) opinions on the use of professional casework, (3) opinions on specific public assistance policies, (4) opinions on why people are on relief, (5) opinions concerning the Newburgh proposals. There are from three to six statements from the interview schedule in each area.

All the statements are expressed in percents and are shown graphically. The graphs are in color and each category of responses are separated by an uncolored column.

The numbers 1 to 6 on the graphs corresponds with the number of the responses on the interview schedule. For discussion purposes, these responses are divided into several areas, which will be interchanged with the responses in the schedule throughout the paper. The positive responses includes the first two response categories--the first being very positive and the second moderately positive. Categories four and five are considered as the negative responses--category four being moderately negative and category five very negative. The other two response categories, three and six will be viewed only in regards to the comments on the schedule.

CHAPTER III

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WELFARE QUESTIONS

An analysis of the responses given to welfare questions will be the focus of this chapter. Five statements from the interview schedule have been chosen for examination.

The present role that the respondents felt the government performs was obtained from this statement:

Some people think the national government should do more in trying to deal with such problems as unemployment, education, housing and so on. Others think the government is doing too much. On the whole, would you say that the government has done: ___ about right; ___ too much; ___ not enough.

Graph 1.1 shows how the responses were distributed by the groups. The greatest percent (40 %, NSW--70%, SSW) of the responses shows that most of the workers felt that the government is doing about right. The next greatest percent (33%, NSW--20%, SSW) of the responses shows that the workers felt that the government has done too much. The least (22%, N.W--10%, SSW) felt that more should be done by the government.

There is a much smaller difference within the responses of the NSW. Almost three-fourths of the SSW, on the other hand felt that the government is doing about right. This would indicate that the NSW have no one outstanding opinion about the role of the national government. The majority of SSW are content with the government's role.



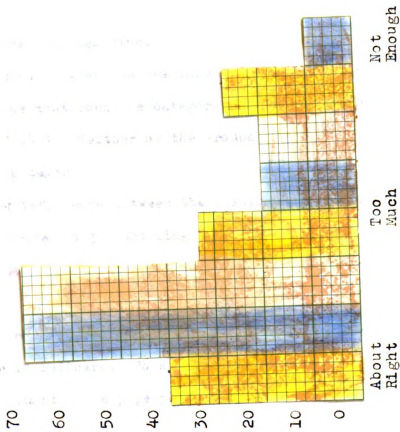
GRAPH 1.1

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WELFARE QUESTIONS

Some people think the national government should do more in trying to deal with such problems as unemployment, education, housing and so on. Others think the government is doing too much. On the whole, would you say that the government has done: about right; too much; not enough.

Northern Social Workers

Southern Social Workers



The responses to the following statement was analyzed to find the opinions of the workers on job guarantee:

The government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who wants to work can find a job.

The distribution of responses by both groups is shown in Graph 1.2. These responses were wildly distributed.

The SSW were more positive than the NSW; however, the greatest percent of responses to the most positive category was present in the responses of the NSW. There was a sizable percent of responses in both groups (23%, NSW--25%, SSW) which indicate that some of the workers were not sure about the government guaranteeing jobs. The NSW expressed more negative opinions, the greater number of which were very negative.

There was a sharp division between the responses of the NSW. The percent of responses in both the most positive category and the most negative category were identical (25.5%). Neither of the groups had a majority of their responses in any one category.

There was no outstanding difference between the opinions of the two groups toward the government's role in guaranteeing jobs; however, the SSW were slightly more in agreement.

The respondents were asked to give their opinions regarding a statement on the government's role in medicare. This statement was:

The government ought to help people get doctor and hospital care at low cost.

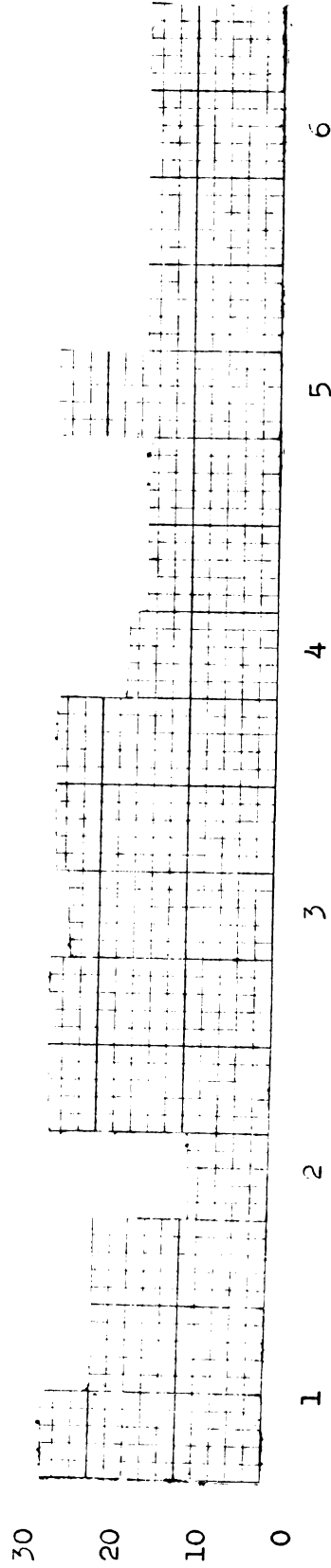
An analysis of their responses shows that most of the workers expressed positive feelings. The distribution of the responses for both

GRAPH 1.2
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WELFARE QUESTIONS

The government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who wants to work can find a job.

Northern Social Workers

Southern Social Workers



groups is shown in Graph 1.3

The majority of the responses expressed by the NSW (15%) were very positive. A little less than a fourth of the NSW believed that this role was dependent on other factors. The least percent (21%) of these respondents felt negative about the government intervening in medical expenses; the majority of which were moderately negative.

The SSW's responses regarding this proposition were also positive. The greatest percent of them felt very positive; whereas, none of them expressed very negative opinions. Three times as many SSW favored such a role for the government as those who were against it.

Slightly more NSW were positive in agreeing with this statement. More SSW expressed negative opinions about the government having a role in medicare; however, all of them were moderately negative. This proposition was positively agreeable with both groups.

The statement analyzed to obtain the workers opinion of the government's role in civil rights was directly after the first three statements in this area. It read:

If Negroes are not getting fair treatment in jobs and housing, the government in Washington should see to it that they do.

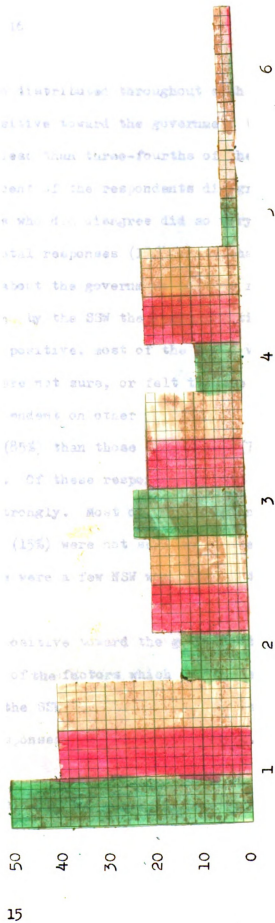
The distribution of responses by both groups was more or less centrally located. Most of the workers in both groups expressed very positive opinions regarding this statement, (50% NSW--65%, SSW).



GRAPH 1.3
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WELFARE QUESTIONS

The government ought to help people get doctors and hospital care at low cost.

Northern Social Workers
Southern Social Workers



The responses by the NSW were distributed throughout each category. The greatest percent (73%) felt positive toward the government taking a role in civil rights. A little less than three-fourths of these workers felt very positive. Only nine percent of the respondents disagreed with this proposal. Half of the workers who did disagree did so very strongly. The third largest percent of the total responses (18%) shows that about a fifth of the NSW were ambivalent about the government in this role.

There were no responses given by the SSW that were negative. The greatest percent of responses were positive, most of the being very positive. The lowest percent, (15%) were not sure, or felt that the government's role in civil rights was dependent on other factors.

More of the SSW's responses (85%) than those of the NSW (73%) were in agreement with this proposition. Of these respondents, most of them (50%, NSW—65%, SSW) agreed very strongly. Most of the remaining NSW (18%) and all of the remaining SSW (15%) were not sure about the government's role in civil rights. There were a few NSW who expressed negative opinions regarding this statement.

Generally the SSW were more positive toward the government having a role in civil rights. Could one of the factors which influenced these responses be due to the fact that the SSW were interviewed by Negroes?

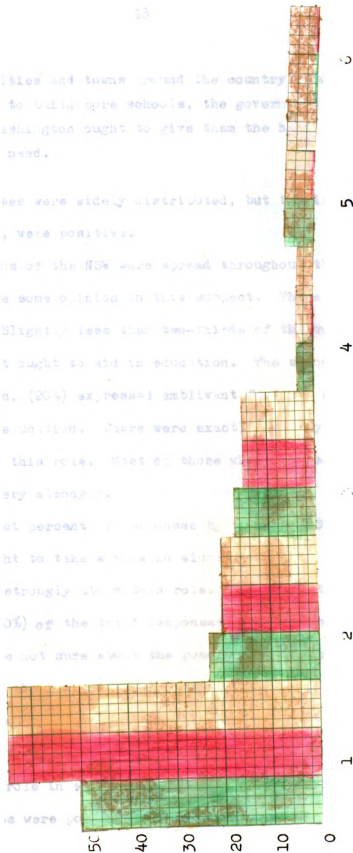
The distribution of these responses are shown in Graph 1.4.

The workers' opinions about having the federal government play a role in education was also expressed in the interview. The following statement was analyzed to show the opinions given:

GRAPH 1.4
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WELFARE QUESTIONS

If Negroes are not getting fair treatment in jobs and housing, the government in Washington should see to it that they do.

Northern Social Workers
Southern Social Workers



If cities and towns around the country need help to build more schools, the government in Washington ought to give them the help they need.

The responses were widely distributed, but the largest percent as shown in Graph 1.5, were positive.

The opinions of the NSW were spread throughout the five categories which indicate some opinion on this subject. There were no responses in category six. Slightly less than two-thirds of the workers agreed that the government ought to aid in education. The second highest percent of the workers, (20%) expressed ambivalent feelings about having the government aid in education. There were exactly as many workers (20%) who disagreed with this role. Most of those who disagreed with this statement did so very strongly.

The greatest percent of responses by the SSW (50%) agreed that the government ought to take a role in education. Over half of these workers felt very strongly about this role. The one category with the highest percent (40%) of the total responses indicate that almost half of the workers were not sure about the government's role in education. A small percent of the respondents expressed moderately negative opinions regarding this role.

The majority of the responses by both groups concerning the federal government's role in education were positive. A greater percent of the NSW's responses were positive. Also, more of these workers' responses were negative, most of them being very negative.

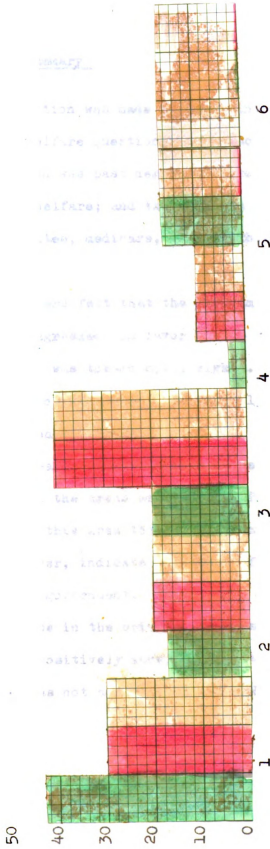
GRAPH 1.5

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WELFARE QUESTIONS

If cities and towns around the country need help to build more schools, the government in Washington ought to give them the help they need.

Northern Social Workers

Southern Social Workers



Summary

In this chapter an examination was made of the opinions expressed by the social workers regarding welfare questions on the schedule. The specific issues under consideration was past degree of involvement of the federal government in public welfare; and the role the government should take in terms of job guarantee, medicare, civil rights and federal aid to education.

Both groups of social workers felt that the government should be active in these areas. The most agreement in favor of the government being involved in the areas explored was toward civil rights. Medicare received the second highest percent of responses, but had only a few more than federal aid to education which was third.

The opinions expressed toward the government's role in job guarantee was the least clear-cut of all the areas examined. The workers expressed more negative opinions in this area than in the other areas. The largest number of responses, however, indicate that most of the workers felt this should be a role of the government.

There was little difference in the opinions expressed by the two groups. All the statements were positively accepted by the SSW. Only one proposition, job guarantee, was not accepted by the NSW.

CHAPTER IV

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINIONS ON THE USE OF PROFESSIONAL CASEWORK

One of the goals of this investigation is to explore the opinions of the respondents toward public assistance. This would aid in helping to develop a program that social workers might find profitable to work with and thus help the recipients on public assistance more. With this in mind, five questions asked during the interviews were concerned with these workers opinions on the usefulness of casework. The responses to these questions will be discussed in this chapter.

The first question asked was:

People on public assistance provide such a variety of problems that the assistance department should be staffed by skilled and professionally trained workers.

The distribution of responses by both groups is shown in Graph.

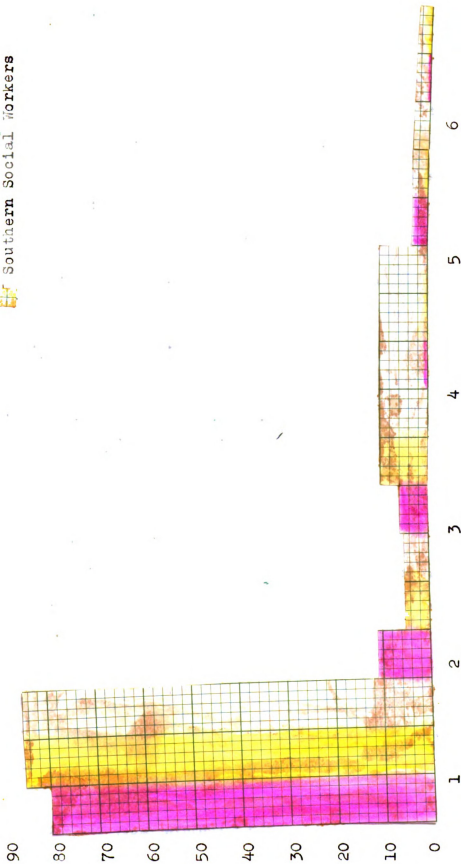
2.1. There is no significant difference between the opinions of the groups. Both groups were extremely positive.

A larger percent of SSW (85%) than NSW (80%) expressed very positive opinions regarding this statement. The negative responses of the NSW were less than any other category of responses for either group. They were also the only negative responses. A small percent of the

GRAPH 2.1
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON USE OF PROFESSIONAL CASEWORK

People on public assistance provide such a variety of problems that the assistance department should be staffed by skilled and professionally trained workers.

■ Northern Social Workers
■ Southern Social Workers



respondents of each group felt ambivalent about this statement.

Both groups expressed positive opinions about having the staff of the assistance department skilled and professional. The least number of the total responses were negative. These negative responses were only present in the NSW interviewed.

The interview schedule provided somewhat of a check on the above question. Two questions later the respondents were asked to give their opinions on the following statement:

The expansion of social insurance means a reduction of public assistance. It is likely that the case loads will be increasingly dominated by people with personal problems who require intensive and skilled help.

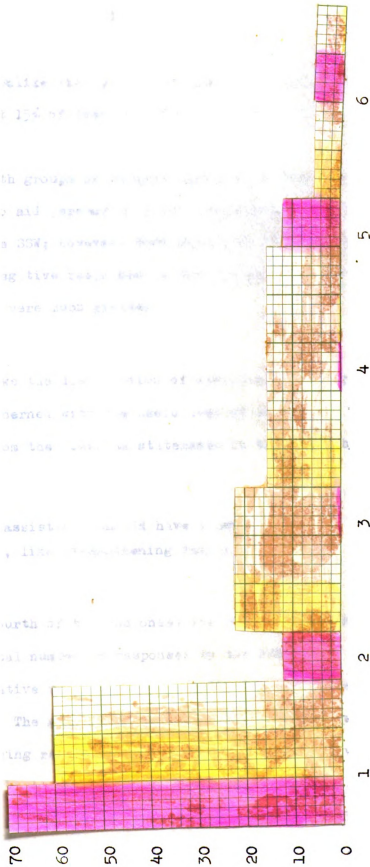
Graph 2.2 shows that the responses to this statement were also very positive. Almost a third of the responses by the NSW agreed strongly that the persons who seek public assistance will require the kind of help. There was a small number of the NSW (6%) who had no opinions on the subject. Twice as many of the Lansing workers felt very negative about this statement. The highest percentage of the responses by the NSW was very positive. The percent of the responses to the moderately positive and very positive categories were identical.

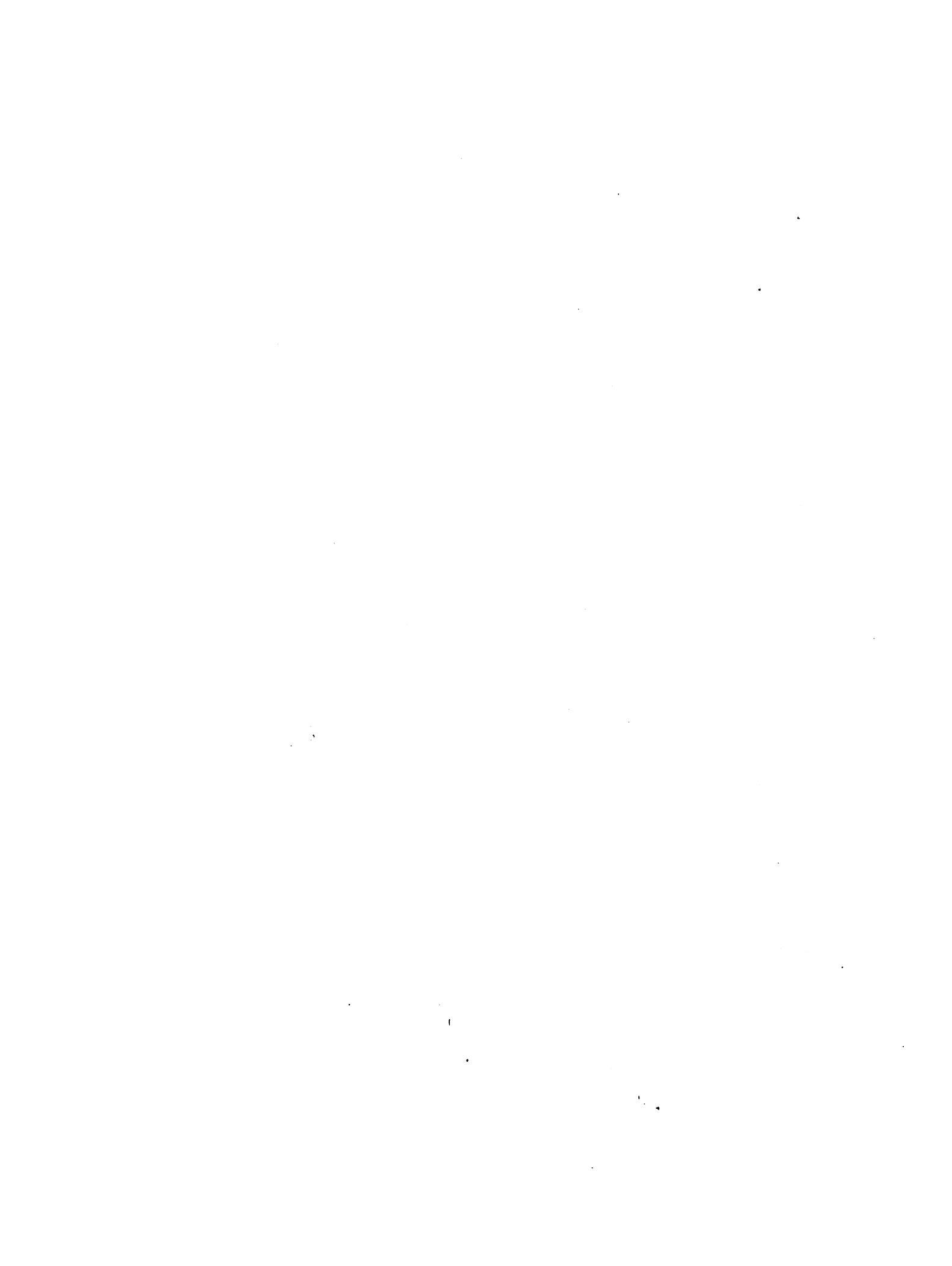
Over half of the SSW (60%) expressed very positive opinions regarding this statement. The lowest percentage of the total responses

GRAPH 22 OF PROFESSIONAL CASEWORK
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON USE

The expansion of social insurance means a reduction of public assistance. It is likely that the case loads will be increasingly dominated by people with personal problems who require intensive and skilled help.

Northern Social Workers
 Southern Social Workers





were very negative. Unlike the NSW, all the SSW had a definite opinion on this statement, but 15% of them said that this would depend on other factors.

Generally, both groups of workers agreed that intensive and skilled help will be needed to aid persons on public assistance. The NSW were more positive than the SSW; however, they were also slightly more negative. There were negative responses in both groups, but the percent of positive responses were much greater.

Graph 2.3 shows the distribution of opinions by both groups to another statement concerned with the usefulness of casework. This statement was separated from the previous statements in this area by three pages. It read:

Public assistance should have a broad purpose, like strengthening family life.

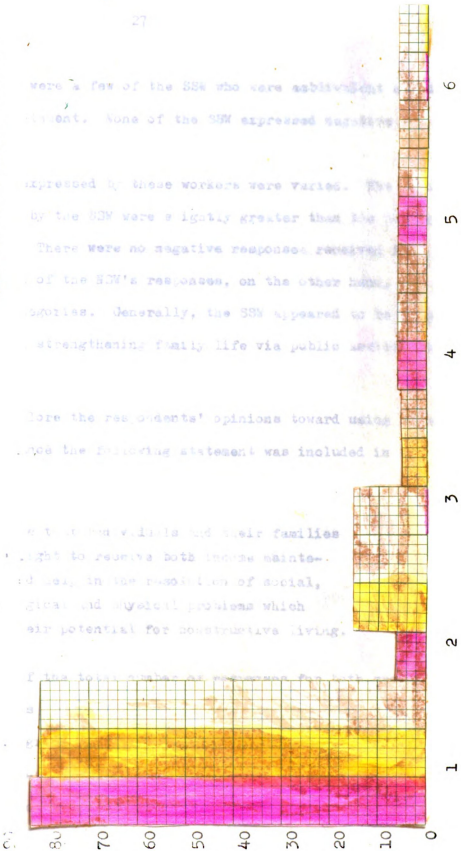
Over three-fourth of the responses for both groups were very positive. Of the total number of responses by the NSW 12% of them were negative. These negative responses were equally divided between the two negative categories. The greatest number of responses (82%) were very positive. The remaining responses of the NSW were equally divided between the moderately positive and the two negative categories.

Of the total percent of responses given by the SSW 95% were positive. A large percent of these responses (30%) were very positive.

GRAPH 2.3
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON USE OF PROFESSIONAL CASEWORK

Public Assistance should have a broad purpose,
 like strengthening family life.

■ Northern Social Workers
 ■ Southern Social Workers



Unlike the NSW, there were a few of the SSW who were ambivalent about agreeing with this statement. None of the SSW expressed negative opinions.

The opinions expressed by these workers were varied. The percent of positive responses by the SSW were slightly greater than the percent expressed by the NSW. There were no negative responses received from the SSW. The distribution of the NSW's responses, on the other hand, did include the negative categories. Generally, the SSW appeared to be slightly more in agreement with strengthening family life via public assistance.

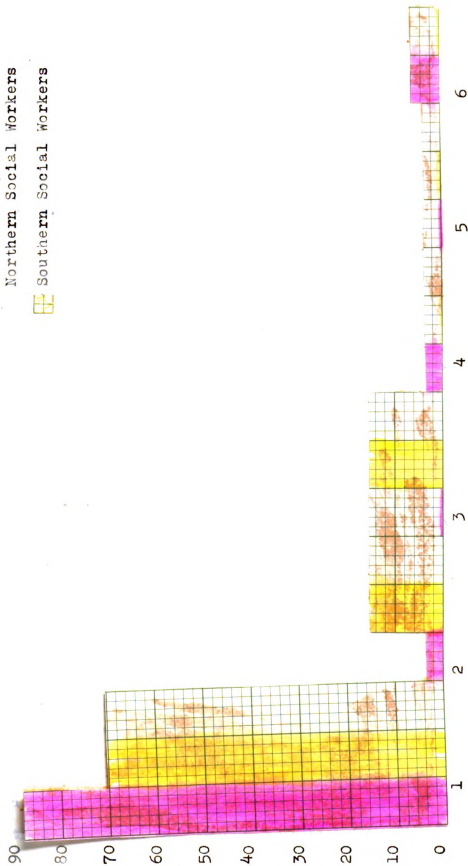
To further explore the respondents' opinions toward using case-work in public assistance the following statement was included in the interview:

I believe that individuals and their families have a right to receive both income maintenance and help in the resolution of social, psychological and physical problems which limit their potential for constructive living.

The majority of the total number of responses for both groups (83%, NSW--70%,SSW), as shown in Graph 2.4 were very positive. Again the NSW were the only group that expressed any negative opinions, all of which were moderately negative. A small percent of the NSW had no opinion on the rights of individual along this line.

GRAPH 2.4
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON USE OF PROFESSIONAL CASEWORK

I believe that individuals and their families have a right to receive both income maintenance and help in the resolution of social, psychological and physical problems which limit their potential for constructive living.



A little less than three-fourth (70%) of the SSW's responses were very positive. Over half of the remaining responses (15%) were in the moderatley positive category. The other half of these responses was classified as not sure, it depends.

Generally, the largest percent of total responses was positive and was made by the SSW. The largest percent of NSW responses were very positive but the remaining opinions were spread throughout three other categories. A small percent of NSW were moderately negative toward this statement. There were no negative responses among the SSW. Some of the SSW, on the other hand, felt that agreement with the nature of the rights of individuals depended on other factors.

In addition to exploring the opinions of the workers about the usefulness of casework with public assistance recipients, it was also felt important to know whether they thought there would be any financial gains by using casework. To investigate this, the respondents were asked to give their opinions on the following statement:

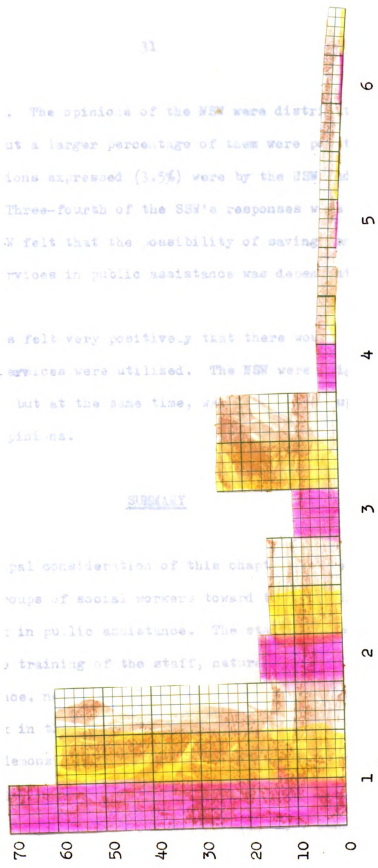
Development of casework services in the public assistance program, while initally costing more in the long run, will save a great deal of money.

Graph 2.5 which shows the distribution of opinions on this statement, demonstrates that more than half of the responses for both groups

GRAPH 2.5
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON USE OF PROFESSIONAL CASEWORK

Development of casework services in the public assistance program while initially costing more, in the long run will save us a great deal of money.

■ Northern Social Workers
 ■ Southern Social Workers



were very positive. The opinions of the NSW were distributed among more categories, but a larger percentage of them were positive. The only negative opinions expressed (3.5%) were by the NSW and were moderately negative. Three-fourth of the SSW's responses were positive. The other third SSW felt that the possibility of saving money via developing casework services in public assistance was dependent on other factors.

Both groups felt very positively that there would be a financial gain if casework services were utilized. The NSW were slightly more positive than the SSW, but at the same time, was the only group that expressed any negative opinions.

SUMMARY

The principal consideration of this chapter was to explore the opinions of the groups of social workers toward the usefulness of professional casework in public assistance. The statements examined were concerned with the training of the staff, nature of case loads, purpose of public assistance, needs of relief families, and financial gains of utilizing casework in this area.

The data demonstrated that both groups expressed very positive opinions regarding all five statements. The few negative responses given were almost entirely made by the NSW. A larger percent of SSW,

on the other hand, were unable to express either positive or negative opinions but felt that these statements depended on other factors.

Generally, the percent of responses by the NSW were slightly more positive. The distribution of opinions by this group was also more diversified.

CHAPTER V

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINIONS ON SPECIFIC PUBLIC ASSISTANCE POLICIES

In the discussion of the focus of this study it was stated that the aim of this investigation was to examine the opinions of the two groups toward public assistance. Several statements in the interview schedule dealt with specific public assistance policies. The focus of this chapter will be to examine the distribution of responses to these statements.

Three of the statements under consideration dealt with the nature of keeping the names of public assistance recipients confidential.

There was a unanimous response given to this statement:

Names of relief recipients should be published in the newspaper to cut down on cheating.

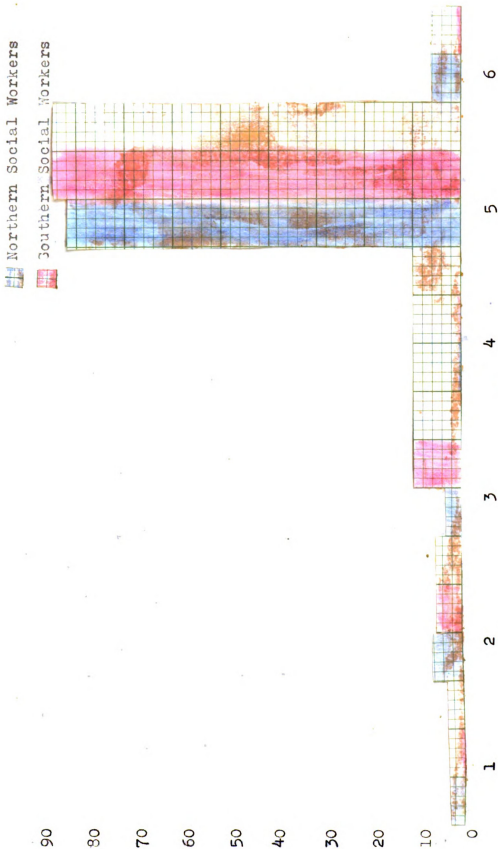
All the social workers interviewed were strongly against this proposal. The SSW readily spoke out against publishing recipients names and it is speculated by the author that the NSW's responses were just as strongly made.

Graph 3.1 shows the distribution of opinions by both groups to the second statement in this general area. This statement was:



GRAPH 3.1
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON SPECIFIC PUBLIC ASSISTANCE POLICY

Names of relief recipients should be made available
in the court house to interested parties.



Names of relief recipients should be made available in the court house to interested parties.

Unlike the conformity of responses to publishing names, there were varied opinions expressed toward making the names available. The greatest percent of the total response (82%, NSW—85%,SSW) were strongly against this statement.

A small percent of both groups felt positive about using the court house as the source from which recipients' names could be found. A larger percent of these respondents, and the only ones to feel very positive toward this statement, were NSW.

Both groups were in favor of keeping the recipients' names away from the public's eyes. More of the NSW, but a small percent of the total responses, were in favor of this proposal. More of the SSW were ambivalent about expressing either positive or negative opinions.

The third statement which was concerned with the confidentiality of the recipients' names was:

Names of relief recipients should be kept strictly confidential.

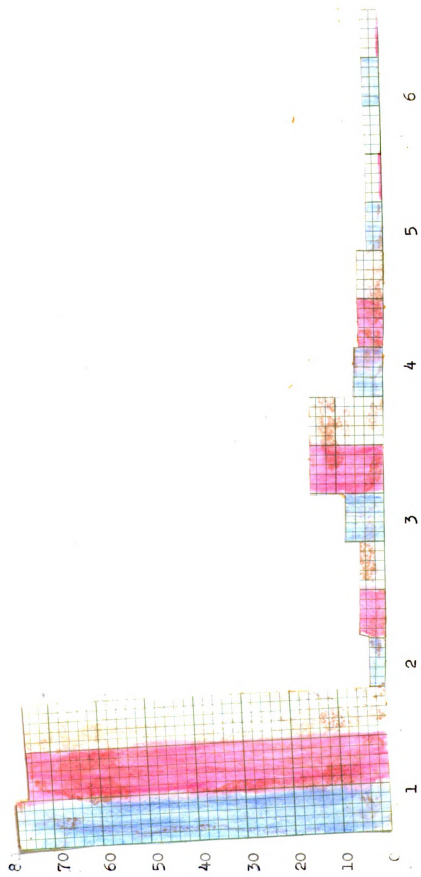
The distribution of opinions expressed by both groups varied, but at least three-fourth of the responses from both the NSW and the SSW were very positive. These responses are shown in Graph 3.2.

A small percent of both groups felt negative about this statement; however, only the NSW were very negative. A larger percent of the

GRAPH 3.2
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON SPECIFIC PUBLIC ASSISTANCE POLICY

Names of relief recipients should be kept strictly confidential.

Northern Social Workers
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SSW felt the confidentiality of the names was dependent on other factors. A few of the NSW had no opinion on this statement.

The percent of positive responses for both groups were identical; however, the NSW expressed more negative opinions toward keeping the names strictly confidential.

The usefulness of making application for public assistance difficult was included among the public assistance policies which were investigated. The statement examined for this was:

Social workers should make the application of Public Assistance a process which is difficult and uncomfortable in order to encourage people to get along on their own.

The majority of responses from both groups were very negative toward this policy. Graph 3.3, which shows the distribution of opinions on this statement, indicates that a small percent of the responses were very positive. There were more positive responses from the SSW.

Both groups definitely felt that public assistance application should not be made a difficult process, but a larger percent of NSW responded in this category.

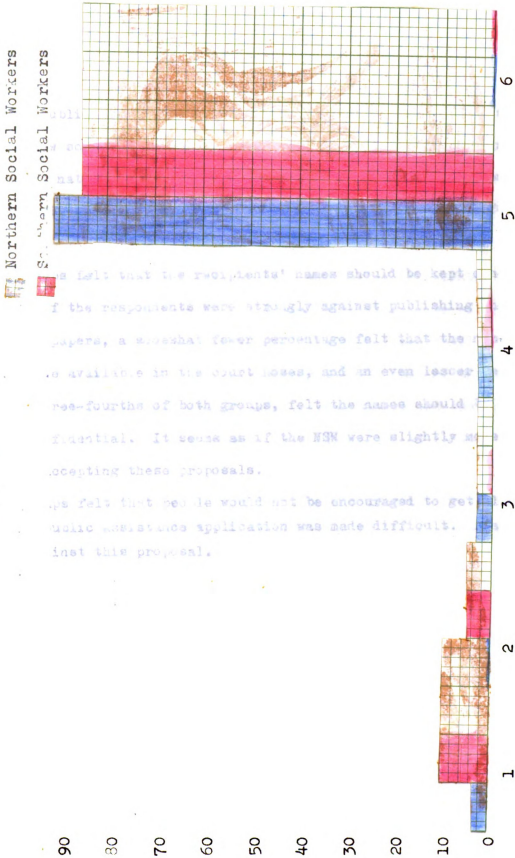
Summary

This chapter has been concerned with the opinions of these groups



GRAPH 3.3
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON SPECIFIC PUBLIC ASSISTANCE POLICY

Social workers should make the application of Public Assistance a process which is difficult and uncomfortable in order to encourage people to get along on their own.



toward specific public assistance policies. There were four statements from the interview schedule analyzed. These statements were divided into two areas: (1) nature of confidentiality of names of relief recipients and (2) the benefit of making the application of public assistance difficult.

Both groups felt that the recipients' names should be kept confidential. All of the respondents were strongly against publishing the names in the newspapers, a somewhat fewer percentage felt that the names should not be made available in the court houses, and an even lesser percent, but over three-fourths of both groups, felt the names should be kept strictly confidential. It seems as if the NSW were slightly more negative toward accepting these proposals.

Both groups felt that people would not be encouraged to get along on their own if public assistance application was made difficult. Again, more NSW were against this proposal.

CHAPTER VI

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINIONS OF WHY PEOPLE ARE ON RELIEF

This investigation is aimed at understanding what social workers think of the present public assistance program. This would make it possible to know about the kind of program the social work profession thinks would yield rewarding results and help the relief recipients most. In order to help these persons, it seems profitable to be enlightened on the reasons they are on relief. The causative factors will, in turn, effect the treatment of these persons and the attitude of the workers toward them. The focus of this chapter will be to explore the opinions of these groups of workers concerning why people are on relief.

A question asked in the last section of the interview schedule gave the respondents an opportunity to express some of their possible beliefs about why people are on relief. This statement was:

Sometimes people don't have any money and can't care for themselves. In general what do you think is the single biggest reason for this: weak morally, have a personality problem, dislocation in the economy, didn't have proper upbringing, PA makes them lazy so they don't try.

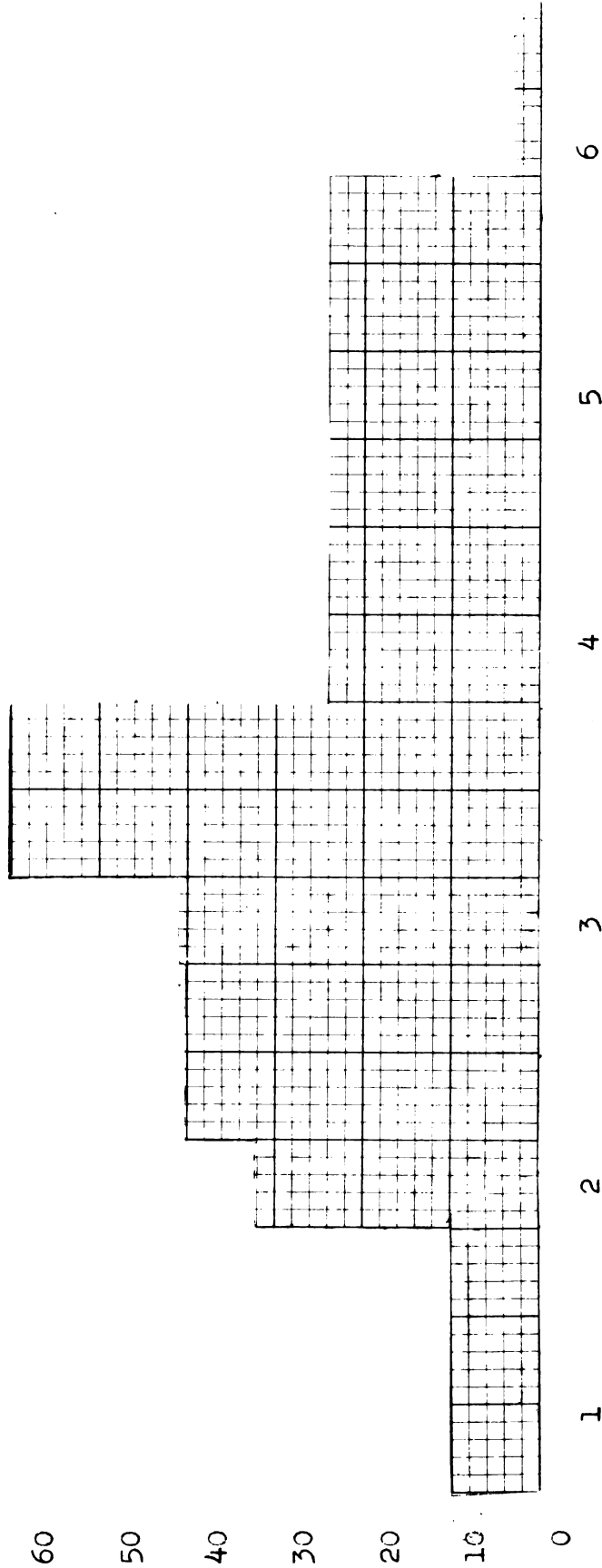
The distribution of responses for both groups is shown in Graph 4.1. The greatest percent in both groups felt that relief

GRAPH 4.1
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WHY PEOPLE ARE ON RELIEF

Sometimes people don't have any money and can't care for themselves. In general what do you think is the single biggest reason for this:
 1) weak morally; 2) have a personality problem; 3) dislocation in the economy; 4) didn't have proper upbringing; 5) PA makes them lazy so they don't try; medical expenses.

■ Northern Social Workers

■ Southern Social Workers





recipients are dislocated in the economy (41%,NSW--61%, SSW). The next greatest percent of the responses for both groups was also directed in the same category--presence of a personality problem.

The NSW's responses were distributed throughout four of the six categories. The percent of the total responses, in descending order, was dislocation in the economy (41%), personality problem (32%), lack of proper upbringing (24%), and medical expenses (3%).

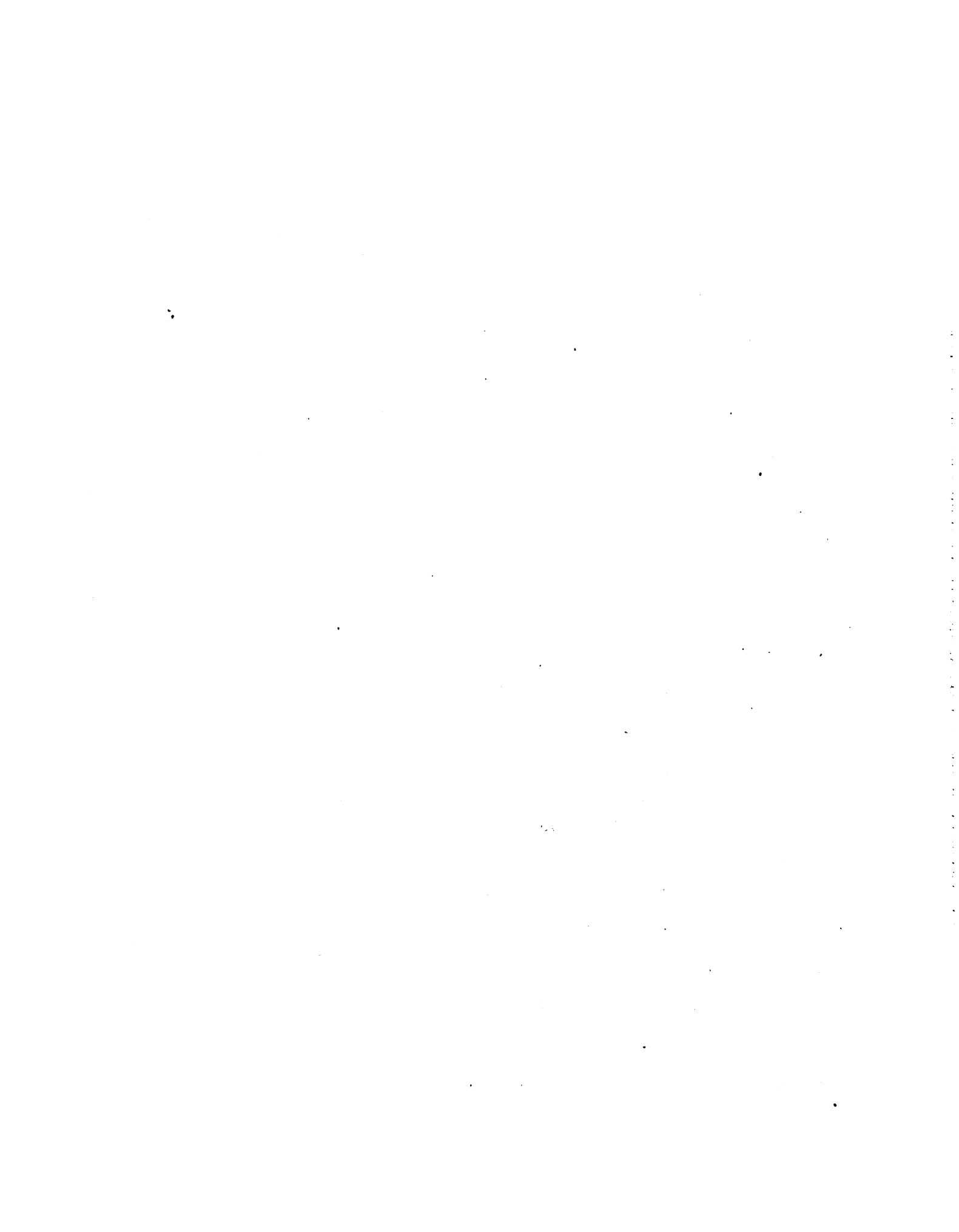
The responses of the SSW, on the other hand were distributed in only two categories. Most of the SSW felt the main reason for these people to be on relief was due to their position in the economy (61%). The remaining felt they had a personality.

A more specific question will also provide some of the opinions of these workers toward the reasons why some people are receiving relief. This statement follows:

The failure of an individual to provide
for his own financial need is usually
the result of poor management.

Most of the responses by both groups, as shown in Graph 4.2, were very negative. The responses were, however, spread throughout most of the possible categories.

The percent of positive responses by the NSW was slightly less than that by the SSW. The NSW, on the other hand, was the only group that expressed very positive feelings. There was a small percent in

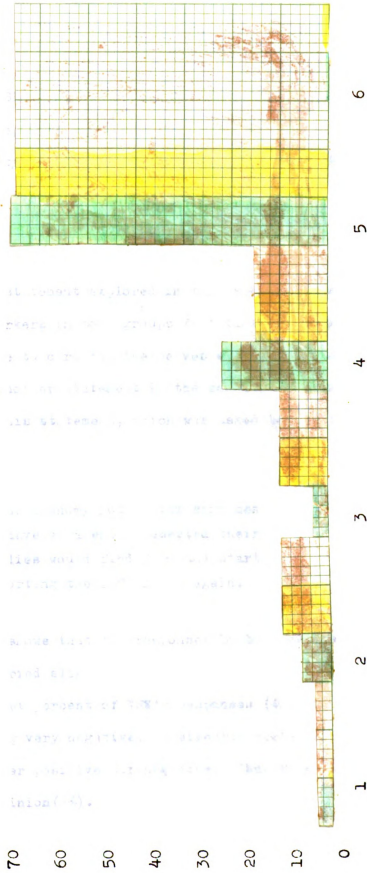


GRAPH 4.2
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WHY PEOPLE ARE ON RELIEF

The failure of an individual to provide for his own financial need is usually the result of poor management.

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both groups, more SSW than NSW, who were undecided about the statement and felt that it depended on other factors.

The majority of the respondents (38% NSW--80% SSW) felt that the inability of a person to care for himself is not due to poor management.

The first statement explored in this chapter showed that the majority of the workers in both groups felt that the major reason for people being unable to care for themselves was due to their dislocation in the economy. Another statement in the schedule can serve to check these opinions. This statement, which was asked before the latter one, was:

If the economy got better many men who have apparently deserted their families would find jobs and start supporting their families again.

Graph 4.3 shows that the responses by both groups were widely distributed and varied slightly.

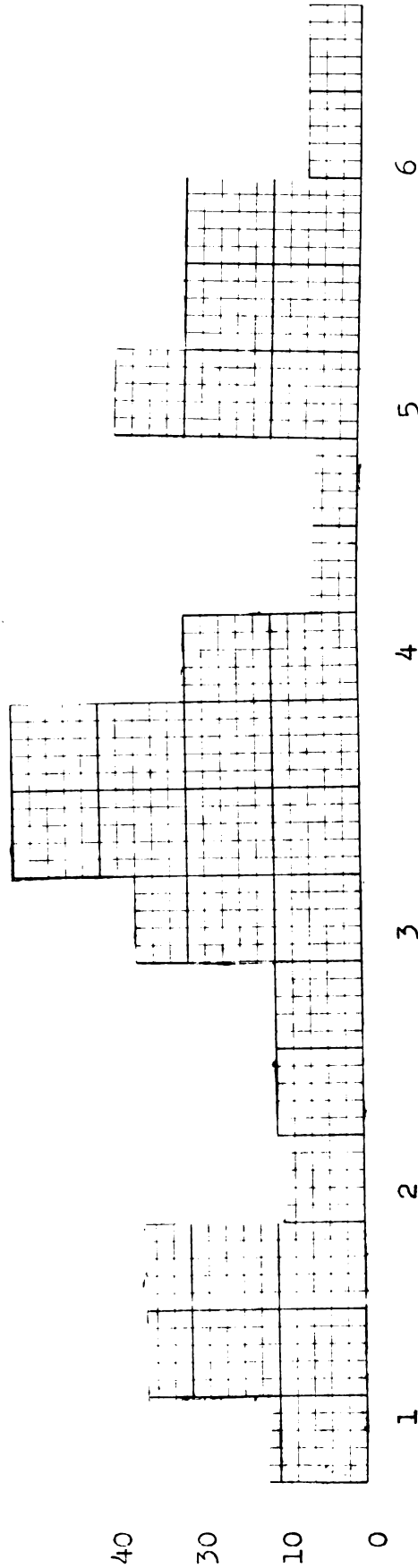
The greatest percent of NSW's responses (48%) were negative, half of these being very negative. A sizeable number of the NSW's responses were neither positive nor negative. They were either not sure (26%) or had no opinion (6%).

Almost half of the responses by the SSW (40%) were expressing

GRAPH 4.3
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WHY PEOPLE ARE ON RELIEF

If the economy got better many men who have apparently deserted their families would find jobs and start supporting their families again.

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 ■ Southern Social Workers



ambivalent opinions about this statement. The next greatest number felt positive, most of them very positively, that men would return home. The other fourth of the responses were negative.

Most of the workers in both groups felt that whether or not a man returned home to support his family depended on more than improvement in the economy. There were more positive responses by the SSW-- a fourth of the total SSW's responses were very positive.

The effect of our economy on the conditions of the poor was further explored in this study. The following question was analyzed to gain more of the workers' opinions in this area:

Anybody in America who really wants to work can, if he tries, find a job that will pay enough money for him to care decently for his family.

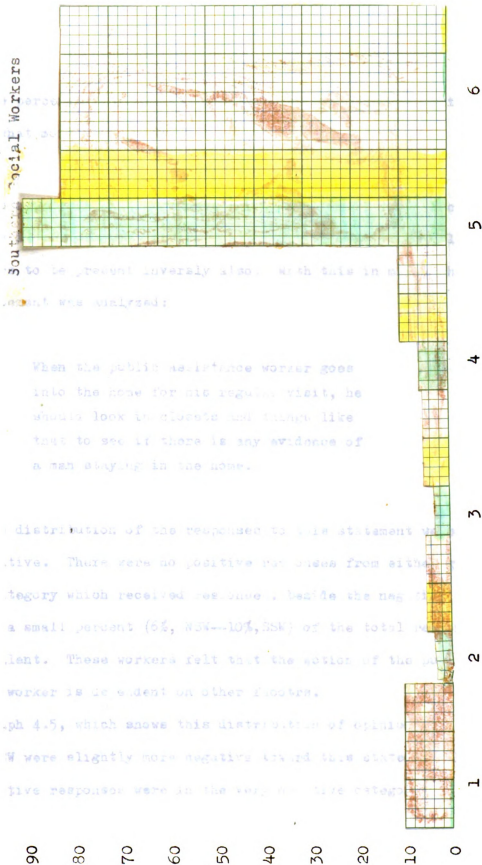
Graph 4.4 shows the distribution of opinions on this statement. The majority of the total responses for both groups were very negative. A slightly greater percent of NSW expressed very negative feelings about our economy being about to afford every person the opportunity to care decently for his family. The SSW expressed more positive responses than the NSW, but neither group felt very positive about the statement.

GRAPH 4.4

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WHY PEOPLE ARE ON RELIEF

Anybody in America who really wants to work can, if he tries, find a job that will pay enough money for him to care decently for his family.

Northern Social Workers
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The percent of responses were definitely negative with the NSW's being somewhat more negative.

The attitude that a worker has about the reasons why a client is in need may influence his behavior toward that client. This relationship appears to be present inversely also. With this in mind, the following statement was analyzed:

When the public assistance worker goes into the home for his regular visit, he should look in closets and things like that to see if there is any evidence of a man staying in the home.

The distribution of the responses to this statement were definitely negative. There were no positive responses from either group. The only category which received responses, beside the negative ones, shows that a small percent (6%, NSW—10%, SSW) of the total responses were ambivalent. These workers felt that the action of the public assistance worker is dependent on other factors.

Graph 4.5, which shows this distribution of opinions, illustrates that the NSW were slightly more negative toward this statement. Most of the negative responses were in the very negative category.

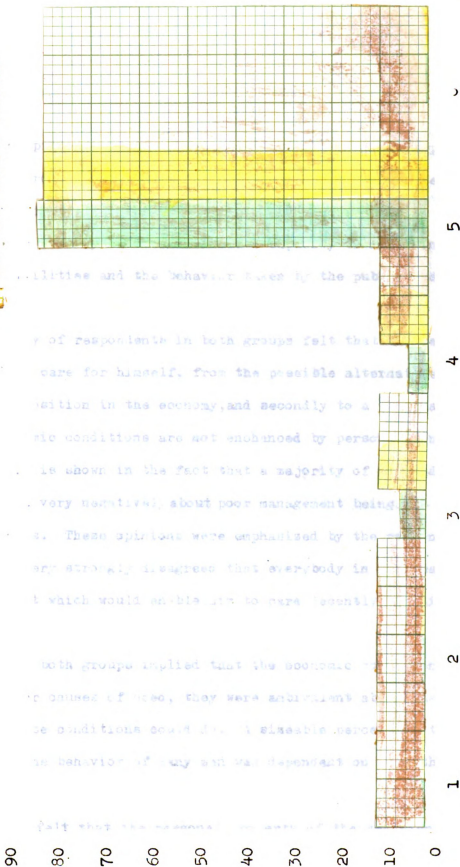
GRAPH 4.5

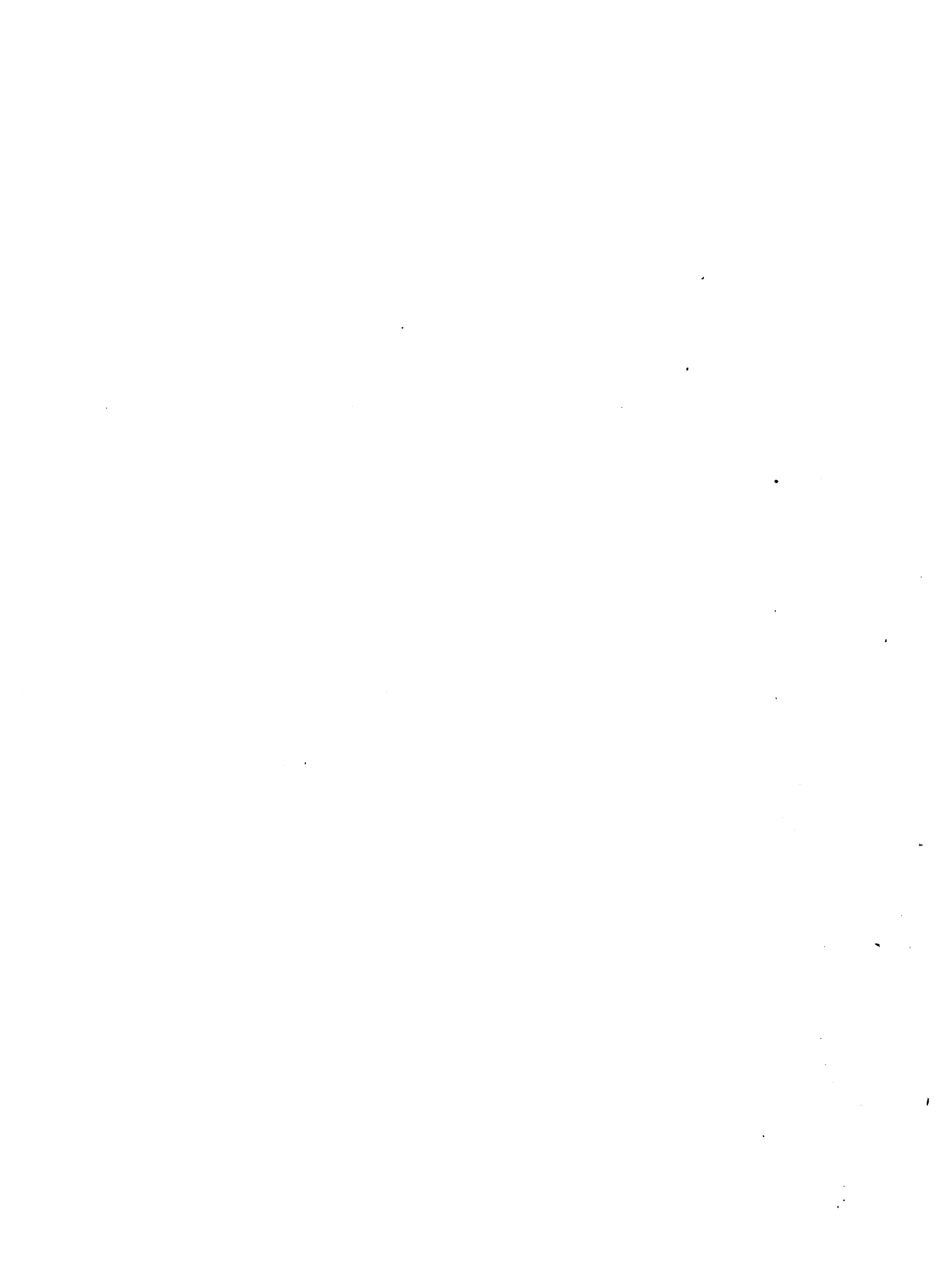
DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION ON WHY PEOPLE ARE ON RELIEF

When the public assistance worker goes into the home for his regular visit, he should look in closets and things like that to see if there is any evidence of a man staying in the home.

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Summary

In this chapter an examination was made of the opinions expressed by the workers regarding the reasons why people are on relief. The specific areas analyzed from the schedule was concerned with why people need help, effect of the economy on an individual's capacity to maintain his financial responsibilities and the behavior taken by the public assistance worker.

The majority of respondents in both groups felt that the capacity of an individual to care for himself, from the possible alternative, is due mainly to his position in the economy, and secondly to a personality problem. The economic conditions are not enhanced by personal financial difficulties. This is shown in the fact that a majority of respondents in both groups felt very negatively about poor management being the cause of individuals needs. These opinions were emphasized by the respondents when most of them very strongly disagreed that everybody in America could get employment which would enable him to care decently for his family.

Even though both groups implied that the economic conditions are one of the major causes of need, they were ambivalent about what improvements of these conditions could do. A sizeable percent of the workers felt that the behavior of many men was dependent on more than these conditions.

The workers felt that the personal property of the recipients

should be respected. Could this imply that these workers think no less of the public assistance recipients than they do of people who are not on relief?

There was no great difference between the opinions expressed by the two groups. The opinions of both groups were that the persons in need are not the major cause of their destitution and should be treated with respect.

CHAPTER VII

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINIONS WITH REFERENCE TO INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN SOCIAL WELFARE

When developing any program which involves more than one level of government, it is necessary to consider the relations between these levels. Social Welfare in America is so organized that three levels of government is involved. The three statements from the interview schedule which deal with inter-governmental relations in social welfare have been isolated. This chapter will be concerned with analyzing the opinions of the workers to these statements.

The nature of financing public assistance was explored by analyzing the responses of the following statement:

Responsibility for the financing of Public Assistance should be removed entirely from local government and placed at a higher level.

Graph 5.1 shows the distribution of opinions by both groups on this statement. Both groups were very negative toward this proposition.

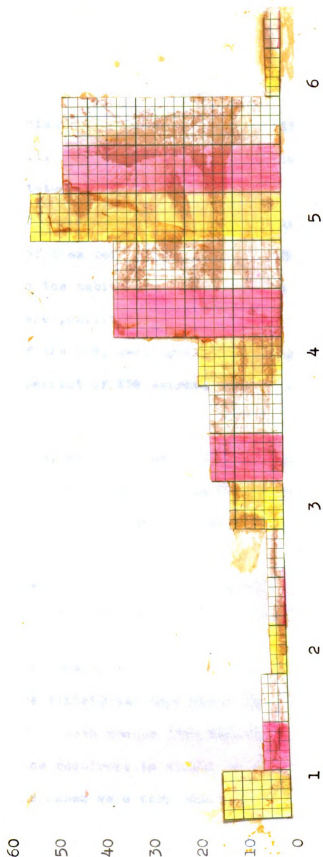
The SSW's responses were spread throughout all six categories. The negative categories received most of the responses. The next largest percent of responses (17%) were positive, 14% of them very positive.



GRAPH 5.1
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION WITH REFERENCE
 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN SOCIAL WELFARE

Responsibility for the financing of Public Assistance should be removed entirely from local government and placed at a higher level.

Northern Social Workers
 Southern Social Workers



The remaining responses indicate that several workers (11%) were ambivalent about removing financial responsibility from the local government or had no opinion on the statement (3%).

Most of the NSW, (80%), expressed negative opinions concerning this statement, over half of them being very negative. The next largest percent of responses was to the ambivalent category. The responses of a few of the respondents were positive.

Both groups, more of the SSW, were against removing financial responsibility. A larger percent of NSW expressed very negative opinions.

Residence requirements, as indicated in the introduction of this paper, have received much concern. The opinions of the workers regarding this area was also explored. They were asked:

Residence requirements for all federally
aided relief requirements should be abolished.

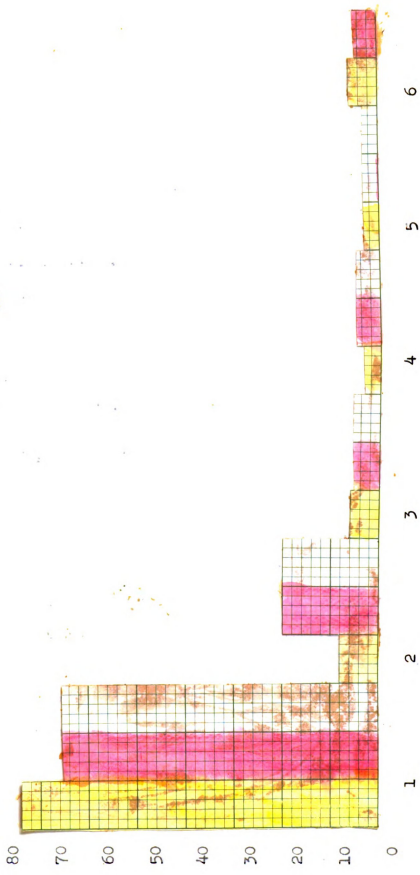
The responses of both groups, as shown in Graph 5.2, were very positive. The opinions were distributed throughout the categories.

Most of the opinions of both groups (82%,NSW--85%, SSW) felt strongly that these residence requirements should be abolished. The greater portion of these responses were very positive. There were a few negative responses from both groups.

GRAPH 5.2
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION WITH REFERENCE TO
 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN SOCIAL WELFARE

Residence requirements for all federally aided
 requirements should be abolished.

Northern Social Workers
 Southern Social Workers



The percent of respondents who felt that this proposition was dependent on other factors was identical to the percent who had no opinion on the statement.

At the present time the budget standards are uniform throughout any particular state. Is this standardizing serving a political need? To gain the respondents opinions regarding this, the following statement was analyzed:

Without statewide budget standards for categorical aid, there is a real danger that public assistance would become a local political football.

The greatest percent of responses for both groups were positive, (88%, NSW--75%,SSW). More of the NSW's responses were very positive.

The category which ranked second to the percent of responses in the positive categories, indicate that most of the remaining workers were not sure about this proposition, (6%, NSW--15%,SSW). A few of the NSW had no opinion on the political use of statewide budget standards.



Of the few negative responses, more were from the SSW. The distribution of these responses is shown in Graph 5.3.

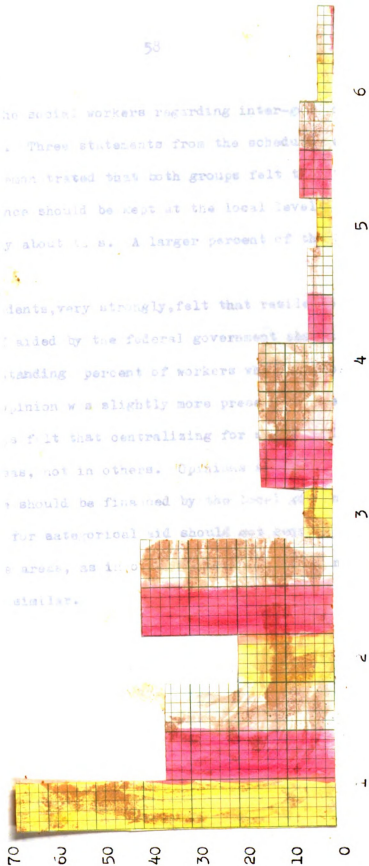
Summary

The principal consideration of this chapter was to explore the

GRAPH 5.3
 DISTRIBUTION OF OPINION WITH REFERENCE TO
 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN SOCIAL WELFARE

Without statewide budget standards for categorical aid, there is a real danger that public assistance would become a local political football.

 Northern Social Workers
 Southern Social Workers



the opinions of the social workers regarding inter-governmental relations in social welfare. Three statements from the schedule were examined.

The data demonstrated that both groups felt that the financing of public assistance should be kept at the local level. Most of them felt very strongly about this. A larger percent of the SSW expressed this opinion.

The respondents, very strongly, felt that residence requirements to receive relief aided by the federal government should be abolished. There was no outstanding percent of workers who expressed different opinions. This opinion was slightly more present in the SSW.

Both groups felt that centralizing for social welfare is desired in some areas, not in others. Opinions expressed implied that Public Assistance should be financed by the local government, but budget standards for categorical aid should not require residence for relief. In these areas, as in others examined, the opinions of both groups were very similar.

CHAPTER VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINIONS CONCERNING THE NEWBURG PROPOSALS

In the discussion of the literature reviewed, it was pointed out that many proposals have been made to improve the present public assistance program. The steps proposed by Mr. Mitcheel, city manager of Newburg, New York, were considered. It was brought out that two of the national social work leaders, president of NASW and president of Council of Social Work Education, viewed these efforts as being irresponsible. They believed that social workers would see that this plan would not work. The focus of this chapter will be to analyze the opinions of these workers toward the Newburgh proposals.

The opinions of the social workers toward the Newburgh plans were obtained by giving the workers 13 numbered 8 by 5 cards, a proposal on each card, and saying:

Now, I would like you to look at each of these proposals and place them into separate stacks—one, all of those which you think ought to be adopted by the local public relief agency, and one stack for those which you think ought not be adopted.

It is felt that a group accepted a proposal if 60% of more of the responses of that group were for adoption of the proposal. The distri-

bution of responses to the proposals is shown in Table 1.

All but two of the proposals were rejected by both of the groups. The two proposals that were adopted, 11 and 10, were both adopted by the SSW. The NSW only adopted number 11.

The responses of the NSS to proposal number 12, which was concerned with limiting all welfare aid categories, were equally divided between the two alternatives.

The SSW accepted only one more proposal than the NSW, but a larger percent of their responses were in favor of adopting more of the propositions. The SSW responded 100% in not adopting proposal number 11, which recommends that aid to persons except the aged, blind and disabled be limited to three months in any one year. This was the only proposal that received an unanimous response in either category. The greatest percent of NSW's responses in any one category, (97%), was for rejection of this proposition.

Most of the Newburg proposals were rejected by both groups. A larger percent of the SSW's responses were for adoption of all but three of the rejected proposals.

We see that both groups of social workers rejected most of the Newburg proposals. Did these proposals have a single meaning for the respondents? The coefficient of reproducibility was used in order to test the scalability of these proposals.¹

¹This method is described in Samuel A. Stouffer, and others, Studies in Social Psychology in World War II, Volume IV (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950).

The lower acceptable limit for the coefficient of reproducibility has been placed at about .90. The coefficients were .30 and .85 for the NSW and SSW respectively.² Thus, the percent of reproducibility indicates that these proposals are not scalable.

Summary

This chapter has been concerned with analyzing the responses of the workers toward adopting the Newburg proposals. All but two of the 13 proposals were rejected by both groups. The SSW accepted both of the accepted propositions; whereas, the NSW accepted only one of them. The proposals were not scalable for either group.

²See Appendix B for Table on SSW.

DISTRIBUTION OF OPINIONS ON

NEWBURG PROPOSALS

PROPOSALS	NSW	ADOPTED SSW	NOT ADOPTED NSW	SSW
1. All cash payments which can be converted to food, clothing, and rent vouchers and the like without basic harm to the intent of the aid shall be issued in voucher form henceforth.	17	30	83	70
2. All able-bodied males on relief of any kind who are capable of working are to be assigned to the chief of building maintenance for work assignment on a forty-hour basis.	31	40	69	60
3. All recipients physically capable of and available for private employment who are offered a job and refuse it, regardless of the type of employment involved, are to be denied relief.	6	10	94	90
4. All mothers of illegitimate children are to be advised that should they have wedlock, they shall be denied relief.	6	25	94	75
5. All applicants for relief who shall have left a job voluntarily, i.e., who have not been fired or laid off, shall be denied relief.	14	25	86	75
6. The allotment for any one family unit shall not exceed the take-home pay of the lowest paid city employee with a family of comparable size. Also, no relief shall be granted to any family whose income is in excess of the latter figure.	11	15	89	85
7. All files of all aid to dependent children cases are to be brought to the office of the corporation counsel for review monthly. All new cases of any kind will be referred to the corporation counsel prior to certification of payment.	9	15	91	85
8. All applicants for relief who are new to the city must show evidence that their plans in coming to the city involved a concrete offer of employment similar to that required of foreign immigrants. All such persons shall be limited to two weeks of relief. Those who cannot show evidence shall be limited to one week of relief.	9	5	01	95
9. Aid to persons except the aged, blind and disabled shall be limited to three months in any one year--this is a feature similar to the present policies in unemployment benefits.	3	0 0	97	100
10. All recipients who are not disabled, blind, ambulatory or otherwise incardicated shall report to the department of public welfare monthly for a conference to establish their continued eligibility for relief.	46	60	54	40
11. Once the budget for the fiscal year is approved by the council, it shall not be exceeded, the relief allotment unless approved by the council for supplemental appropriation.	66	70	34	30
12. There shall be a monthly expenditure limit on all categories of welfare aid. This monthly expenditure limit shall be established by the department of public welfare at the time of presenting the budget and shall take into account seasonal variations.	31	50	69	50
13. Prior to certification of continuing any aid to dependent children cases a determination shall be made as to the home environment if it is any satisfactory the children in that home shall be placed in foster care in lieu of welfare aid to the family adults.	37	35	63	65

11. Once the budget for the fiscal year is approved by the council, it shall not be exceeded by the wel-

66 70

34 30

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

There was no outstanding difference in the opinions expressed by the groups of social workers. The conclusions that are drawn will, then, apply to both groups.

The social workers felt that the government should take a more active role in social welfare. This role should encompass, in addition to financial aid, civil rights, medicare, and aid to education. It was felt that economic conditions are one of the major factors which causes the presence of needs. The government might be able to better this condition. Maybe President Johnson's project on poverty will aid in improving these conditions.

There is no doubt that it would be advantageous to staff the public assistance departments with professionally trained workers. This would be profitable because individuals receiving public assistance need, in addition to financial aid, assistance with social, psychological, and physical problems. A professional staff would be better equipped to deal with these kinds of problems.

Public assistance recipients should be treated like all other types of clients. Their workers should practice the principles of confidentiality and individual worth. These principles would be exemplified in a trained staff.

There is no doubt that professional workers could solve many of the evils in the present public assistance program. The problem now is how to get them attracted to this field. More investigation in this area is needed.

Investigation is also needed to discover how advantageous it would be to increase the role of the government in social welfare. Social workers think this increase is needed. What about the rest of the population?

APPENDIX A

COFFICIENT OF REPRODUCIBILITY
OF
NEWBURG PROPOSALS

Rank	Persons		Proposals												
	No.		11	10	2	12	9	1	8	7	5	4	13	3	6
1	1	x	x	x	x		x	x	x x	x	x		x	x	x
1	2	x	x	x	x		x	x	x x x	x	x		x	x	x
2	3	x	x	x	x		x	x	x x x			x	x	x	x
3	4	x	x	x	x		x	x	x x	x	x	x		x	x
3	5	x	x	x		x	x		x x		x	x	x	x	x
3	6	x	x		x x		x	x	x x		x	x		x	x
3	7	x		x	x		x	x	x x	x	x		x		x
4	8	x	x	x	x		x	x	x x	x	x		x	x	x
4	9		x x		x x		x x		x x	x	x	x		x	x
4	10	x	x		x x		x x		x x	x	x	x		x	x
4	11	x		x	x		x x		x x x		x	x		x	x
5	12	x	x		x x		x x		x x	x	x		x	x	x
5	13		x x		x x		x x		x x	x	x		x	x	x
5	14		x x		x x		x x		x x	x x		x		x	x
6	15	x	x		x x		x x		x x	x	x		x	x	x
6	16	x	x	x		x x		x x		x x	x		x	x	x
7	17	x		x	x		x x		x x	x	x		x	x	x
7	18		x x		x x		x x		x x	x	x	x		x	x
8	19		x x		x x		x x		x x	x	x		x	x	x
8	20		x x		x x		x x		x x	x	x		x	x	x
Errors			3	3	4	2	0	5	0	3	1	4	6	5	4

Coefficient of reproducibility = .85.

APPENDIX

The first two pages of the interview schedule shows the information that was on the cards noted in the schedule.

The information on the next page was on 8 by 5 cards. Cards for Question IVb were 5 by 3.

CARD I

- LOWER 1
- WORKING 2
- MIDDLE 3
- UPPER-MIDDLE 4
- UPPER 5

CARD 111

- 1. AGREE VERY STRONGLY
- 2. AGREE BUT NOT VERY STRONGLY
- 3. NOT SURE-----IT DEPENDS
- 4. DISAGREE, BUT NOT STRONGLY
- 5. DISAGREE VERY STRONGLY
- 6. NO OPINION ON THIS SUBJECT

CARD V

- A. RAISE THE STARTING SALARIES OF SOCIAL WORK TO RECRUIT MORE WORKERS.
- B. SUPPORT A RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE CAUSES OF DEPENDENCY.
- C. HIRE A PSYCHIATRIC CONSULTANT.
- D. SET ASIDE AN EMERGENCY FUND FOR USE BY CLIENTS WHO NEED MONEY, BUT CAN'T BE HELPED BY STATE OR COUNTY FUNDS.
- E. RAISE SALARY OF CUSTODIAL STAFF.
- F. HIRE ADDITIONAL CASEWORKERS.

CARD VI

- A LESS THAN \$4,000
- B \$4,000 to \$5,999
- C \$6,000 to \$7,999
- D \$8,000 to \$14,999
- E More than \$15,000

CARDS GIVEN TO ANSWER QUESTION IVb

1. ALL CASH PAYMENTS WHICH CAN BE CONVERTED TO FOOD, CLOTHING, AND RENT VOUCHERS AND THE LIKE WITHOUT BASIC HARM TO THE INTENT OF THE AID SHALL BE ISSUED IN VOUCHER FORM HENCEFORTH.
2. ALL ABLE-BODIED MALES ON RELIEF OF ANY KIND WHO ARE CAPABLE OF WORKING ARE TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE CHIEF OF BUILDING MAINTENANCE FOR WORK ASSIGNMENT ON A FORTY-HOUR BASIS.
3. ALL RECIPIENTS PHYSICALLY CAPABLE OF AND AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT WHO ARE OFFERED A JOB AND REFUSE IT, REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT INVOLVED, ARE TO BE DENIED RELIEF.
4. ALL MOTHERS OF ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN ARE TO BE ADVISED THAT SHOULD THEY HAVE SEDLOCK, THEY SHALL BE DENIED RELIEF.
5. ALL APPLICANTS FOR RELIEF WHO SHALL HAVE LEFT A JOB VOLUNTARILY, I.E., WHO HAVE NOT BEEN FIRED OR LAID OFF, SHALL BE DENIED RELIEF.
6. THE ALLOTMENT FOR ANY ONE FAMILY UNIT SHALL NOT EXCEED THE TAKE-HOME PAY OF THE LOWEST PAID CITY EMPLOYEE WITH A FAMILY OF COMPARABLE SIZE. ALSO, NO RELIEF SHALL BE GRANTED TO ANY FAMILY WHOSE INCOME IS IN EXCESS OF THE LATTER FIGURE.
7. ALL FILES OF ALL AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN CASES ARE TO BE BROUGHT TO THE OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL FOR REVIEW MONTHLY. ALL NEW CASES OF ANY KIND WILL BE REFERRED TO THE CORPORATION COUNSEL PRIOR TO CERTIFICATION OF PAYMENT.
8. ALL APPLICANTS FOR RELIEF WHO ARE NEW TO THE CITY MUST SHOW EVIDENCE THAT THEIR PLANS IN COMING TO THE CITY INVOLVED A CONCRETE OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT, SIMILAR TO THAT REQUIRED OF FOREIGN IMMIGRANTS. ALL SUCH PERSONS SHALL BE LIMITED TO TWO WEEKS OF RELIEF. THOSE WHO CANNOT SHOW EVIDENCE SHALL BE LIMITED TO ONE WEEK OR RELIEF.
9. AID TO PERSONS EXCEPT THE AGED, BLIND AND DISABLED SHALL BE LIMITED TO THREE MONTHS IN ANY ONE YEAR--THIS IS A FEATURE SIMILAR TO THE PRESENT POLICIES IN UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.
10. ALL RECIPIENTS WHO ARE NOT DISABLE, BLIND, AMBULATORY OR OTHERWISE INCAPACITATED SHALL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE MONTHLY FOR A CONFERENCE TO ESTABLISH THEIR CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY FOR RELIEF.
11. ONCE THE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR IS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL, IT SHALL NOT BE EXCEEDED BY THE WELFARE DEPARTMENT UNLESS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL FOR SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION.

12. THERE SHALL BE A MONTHLY EXPENDITURE LIMIT ON ALL CATEGORIES OF WELFARE AID. THIS MONTHLY EXPENDITURE LIMIT SHALL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE AT THE TIME OF PRESENTING THE BUDGET AND SHALL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SEASONAL VARIATIONS.
13. PRIOR TO CERTIFICATION OR CONTINUING ANY MORE AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN CASES, A DETERMINATION SHALL BE MADE AS TO THE HOME ENVIRONMENT, IF IT IS NOT SATISFACTORY, THE CHILDREN IN THAT HOME SHALL BE PLACED IN FOSTER CARE IN LIEU OF WELFARE AID TO THE FAMILY ADULTS.

Public Assistance Study
School of Social Work
Michigan State University

Study Number 675

Interviews Number _____ #

Interviewer _____ #

Project Director Baltrip

Respondent _____

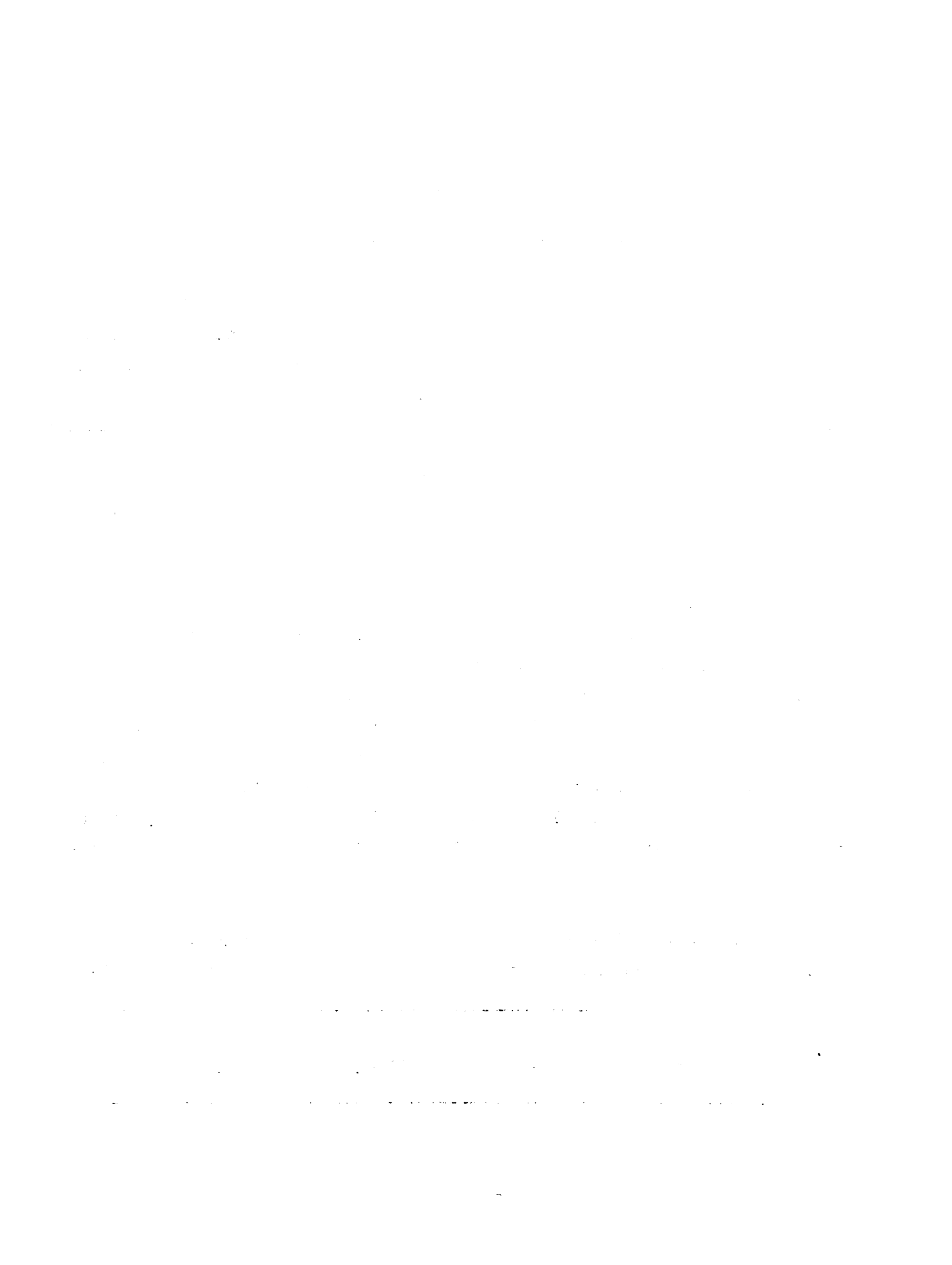
Agency _____

(Memorize this paragraph and repeat it as the introduction to each interview.)

I am doing some interviewing as part of a study that is being done at Michigan State. We are interested in finding out how different people with different backgrounds, jobs, and interests feel about some questions in the area of social welfare. Some of the questions will be about your job, you and your family. We need this information so that we can compare your answers with people who are like you and people who are different. Most of the questions will be about how you feel about various things. This is not a test in any way; we just want to know what you think. Needless to say, this interview is entirely confidential and I tear this (Show respondent where his name is written) off before I hand in my report. I need this only so we will know who we have interviewed and we don't talk to you twice. This interview should take us a caseworker's hour--50 minutes of your time--but I am sure you will agree that it is important for us to know how people like yourself really feel. Do you have any questions?

I. Now first, I would like to ask some questions about your job.

1. What is the exact name of this (or if interviewing in respondent's home, your) agency? _____
 2. What is the basic purpose of the agency? _____
-



3. What is your job here: (or "there" if the interview is in the respondent's home.) _____

Probe so as the response can be coded in reference to executive, supervisory or line personnel.

4. What is it that you like the best about your job? _____

5. What is it that you like the least? _____

(If the respondent says "the pay", ask anything else?)

II. Soc-Economic Characteristics

Now, I would like to ask a few questions about you and your background.

1. Where did you grow up? _____ (Specify, state if U.S.,
country, if foreign)

Was that a farm _____, small town _____, city _____, large city _____

How many brothers _____ and sisters _____ did you have:

How many grades of school did you finish?

8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

2. Do you have a college degree?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Do you have a graduate degree: If you do, what is it? _____

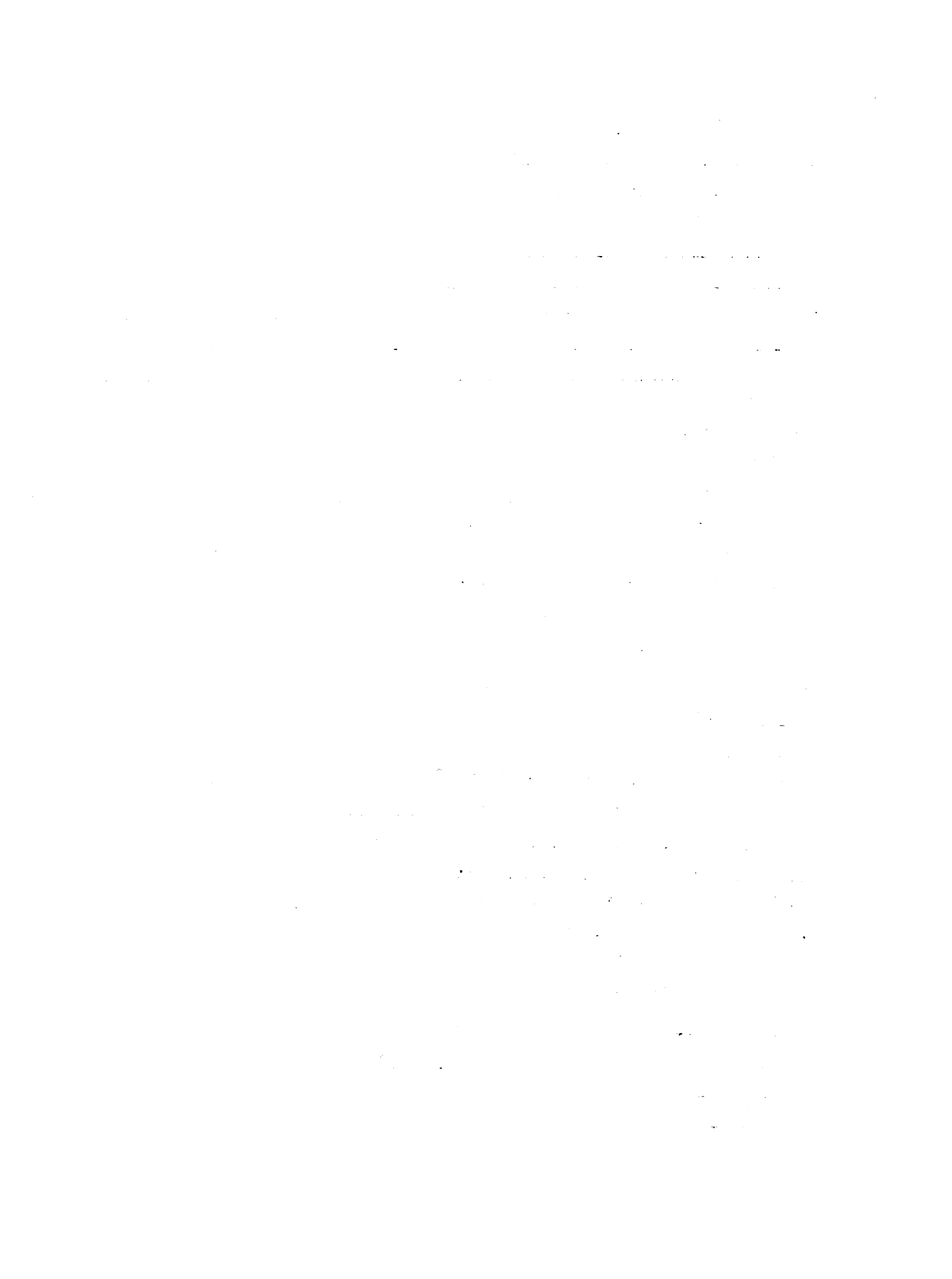
In what field did you specialize? _____ as an undergraduate
_____ as a graduate.

If respondent has gone to college.

2A. Where did you go to college? _____

3. If you were to place yourself and your family in a social class, in what class would you say you belong?

_____ lower	1
_____ working	2
_____ middle	3 <u>Give card #1</u>
_____ upper-middle	4
_____ upper	5



Which class would you say your family was in during the years you were growing up?

1 2 3 4 5

4. Are you married? _____

Do you have any children? _____

How much money do you think a family like yours needs to be comfortable? _____

5. We are interested in how people feel about personal finances, speaking of your own family, would you say you are:

_____ pretty well satisfied

_____ more or less satisfied

_____ definitely dissatisfied

with your own financial situation

6. How about your own future; do you think your own financial situation will:

_____ remain the same

_____ get worse

_____ get better

7. Do you have any religious preference?

_____ yes

_____ no

What is it? _____

How often do you attend church?

_____ every Sunday

_____ about once a month

_____ every now and again

_____ a few times a year

_____ never

III. Now, I would like to ask you some questions about how you feel about some general public opinion matters:

1. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, Republican, or independent?

Democrat _____ Republican _____ Independent _____

If Democrat:

Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not very strong _____

If Republican:

Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not very strong _____

If Independent:

Do you ever think of yourself as being closer to Democrats or Republicans?

Yes, Democrats _____

Yes, Republicans _____

Neither _____

2. How concerned with politics would you say you are? _____

I see, now if you had to put yourself in one of four groups: Very concerned with politics, concerned with politics, concerned but not much, not at all concerned, which group would you put yourself in?

(If Respondent asks you what do you mean "politics" answer "just as you use the term yourself.")

3. Some people say, "I am for the man, not the party". How well does that comment describe your own feelings? _____

4. Some people think the national government should do more in trying to deal with such problems as unemployment, education, housing and so on. Others think the government is doing too much. On the whole, would you say that the government has done: _____ about right; _____ too much; _____ not enough.

When people like myself interview, we hear lots of things. I would like to have your opinion. On this card (Give card #3), you see the numbers 1 to 6. 1 means agree strongly, 2 means agree but not strongly, 3 means not sure, it depends, 4 means disagree but not strongly, 5 means you disagree strongly, and 6 means you don't have any opinion on that subject. As I read each remark you tell me the number that most closely agrees with your feelings.

5. The government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who want to work can find a job. 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. The government ought to help people get doctors and hospital care at low cost. 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. If Negroes are not getting fair treatment in jobs and housing, the government in Washington should see to it that they do.

1 2 3 4 5 6



8. If cities and towns around the country need help to build more schools, the government in Washington ought to give them the help they need. 1 2 3 4 5 6

IV. Now I am going to ask about a variety of public welfare questions.

1. People on public assistance provide such a variety of problems that the assistance department should be staffed by skilled and professionally trained workers. 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Just as it wouldn't make sense to run a hospital without doctors, it doesn't make sense to run a public assistance agency without professionally trained workers. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. The expansion of social insurance means a reduction of public assistance. It is likely that the case loads will be increasingly dominated by people with personal problems who require intensive and skilled help. 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Names of relief recipients should be published in the newspaper to cut down on cheating. 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Names of relief recipients should be made available in the courthouse to interested parties. 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Names of relief recipients should be kept strictly confidential. 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. In Aid to Dependent Children cases, the relief worker has to find out if the mother has a "boy friend" living in the home or frequenting the home. This is a pretty easy matter to determine. 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. Sometimes a man out of work who can't find a job will try to make it appear that he left home just so his family can get aid to dependent children relief. 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. When the public assistance worker goes into the home for his regular visit, he should look in closets and things like that to see if there is any evidence of a man staying in the home. 1 2 3 4 5 6

10. States which cut off relief of mothers who have additional illegitimate children while on relief have lowered their illegitimacy rate. 1 2 3 4 5 6

11. Last year the total amount of money spent on public assistance was _____
How much was spent in this county? _____

IVb. Now I would like for you to look at each of these proposals and place them into separate stacks---one, all of those which you think ought to be adopted by the local public relief agency, and one stack for those which you think ought not be adopted.

Adopted

Not adopted

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.

V. Now, I would like to ask you about some more questions which we hear talk lot about these day.

1. Which of the following statements (Shoe card #4) would come the closest to describing your own philosophy of relief:

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____

Take this card again (Card #3) and tell me the number that best fits for you. 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. To say that a needy person has a "right" to help from his government is no more socialistic than to say that children of a school age have a right to a free education. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. A family allowance program like those present in many western countries would help many families who are in low income categories and prevent them from having to fall back on relief.

1 2 3 4 5 6

4. A real advantage of the family allowance program is that it would free many families from meddling social workers. Therefore the

18. Categorical assistance should be abolished and replaced by a single relief program for all who are in need regardless of the cause of their destitution. 1 2 3 4 5 6
19. In general, some residence restrictions imposed by state law are good because otherwise relievers would drift to cities and states with high relief standards. 1 2 3 4 5 6
Repeat substitution "federal" for state. 1 2 3 4 5 6
20. I believe that during the next 10 years the productivity of our nation will continue to expand so that we can afford to give every aged, disabled, widowed, or orphaned person a grant large enough for him to live in health and decency. 1 2 3 4 5 6
21. If the economy got better many men who have apparently deserted their families would find jobs and start supporting their families again. 1 2 3 4 5 6
22. Public Assistance program should provide just financial support. 1 2 3 4 5 6
23. Public Assistance should have a broad purpose, like strengthening family life. 1 2 3 4 5 6

VI. Take Card #3 From Respondent

This is the last section, and I want to find out how you feel about some other questions in regard to social welfare.

1. The one best way to cut relief expenditures in this country would be:
 - A. Follow the example set by the city manager in Newburg, New York, and really get tough with the relievers.
 - B. Spend a little more money the first few years and hire enough social workers to give the people on relief the kind of professional help they really need.
 - C. Changing the relief policy in any direction is no the answer. What we have to do is simply find ways to provide more jobs.
2. Right now the most important P.A. question is:
 - 1 the question of state-county integration of departments
 - 2 the state adoption of the ADC*U program
 - 3 finding ways to attract more qualified workers
 - 4 finding ways to cut down on cheating in relief

family could work out their own problems in their own way and not the way some social workers think they should.

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Making assistance unpleasant is a good way to discourage able-bodied people from going on relief. 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Anybody in American who really wants to work can, if he tries, find a job that will pay enough money for him to care decently for his family. 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. I believe that individuals and their families have a right to receive both income maintenance and help in the resolution of social, psychological and physical problems which limit their potential for constructive living. 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. We are treating the very poor pretty much the same way we did 100 years ago. 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. I believe that policy and procedures for eligibility of relief should be modified to provide a greater flexibility. 1 2 3 4 5 6

10. Responsibility for the financing of Public Assistance should be removed entirely from local government and placed at a higher level. 1 2 3 4 5 6

11. The recurrent crises in Public Assistance are more a reflection on American society in general than they are on the character of the people who need assistance. 1 2 3 4 5 6

12. The failure of an individual to provide for his own financial need is usually the result of poor management. 1 2 3 4 5 6

13. Social workers should make the application of Public Assistance a process which is difficult and uncomfortable in order to encourage people to get along on their own. 1 2 3 4 5 6

14. The OAA law should be repealed. 1 2 3 4 5 6

15. Residence requirements for all federally aided relief requirements should be abolished. 1 2 3 4 5 6

15. Without statewide budget standards for categorical aid, there is a real danger that public assistance could become a local political football. 1 2 3 4 5 6

16. Development of casework services in the public assistance program while initially costing more, in the long run will save us a great deal of money. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Sometimes people don't have any money and can't care for themselves; In general what do you think is the single biggest reason for this.
- weak morally
- gave a personality problem
- dislocation in the economy
- PA makes them lazy so they don't try.
4. What sort of agreement would you expect to find on the following questions between the professional staff and board.

High Agreement Moderate Low

- a. approval of staff appointments
- b. approval of general relief grants
- c. approval of categorical relief grants
- d. approval of administrative budget
- e. approval of regular salary increases for professional staff.
5. On the question of whether the state should deny aid to the mother of a second illegitimate child, do you think this is primarily a:
- legal problem
- ethical problem
- mental health problem
- some other kind of problem
6. We hear a lot of talk these days about providing casework service to the recipients of Public Assistance; What is casework:
(Take answer verbatim)
- _____
- _____
- _____

7. In general, do you think casework is a useful way of helping people:
- yes, very useful
- yes, useful
- limited usefulness
- don't know, no opinion
8. In general, do you think casework can help (what % of the) clients who are currently receiving relief in this county.
- 10% 25% 75% 90% 50%

9. The Department of Labor classifies jobs in various categories.

Generally, would you say that a social worker should be classed as:

- Professional
- sub-professional
- technical
- unskilled

10. Now, how about the public assistance worker?

- professional
- sub-professional
- technical

11. How many years past high school does it take to become a fully qualified social worker?

- 2
- 4
- 6
- 8
- don't know

Probe to see if they consider certification.

12. The reason social workers can't help people on relief is:

- A. social workers are too sympathetic
- B. social workers are too narrow minded and don't see the problem in all of its ramifications.
- C. social workers put too much emphasis on psychological adjustment, personal therapy, etc., and not enough on things like finding jobs, checking on relief cheats, etc.
- D. social workers do help.

13. Surveys have been done which estimate the number of poor families in America. About what percent of the poor families do you believe are currently receiving Public Assistance, or assistance anytime during the year?

10% 25% 50% 75% 90%

14. Some people think political pull plays an important part in whether the government will help a private citizen with some problems he has; other don't think so. In, your opinion, does political pull play an important part in whether the government will help a private citizen?

yes, it plays an important part

yes, it plays some part

depends

no

no opinion

15. If the local Public Assistance Agency received an unrestricted ten thousand dollar annually renewable gift, what should be your priority for its use from highest to lowest. (Card #5)

VII. Could you indicate from this card (No. 5) your approximate family income from all sources before taxes?

- a. less than \$4,000 (poverty)
- b. \$4,000 - \$5,999 (deprivation)
- c. \$6,000 - \$7,499 (deprivation-comfort)
- d. \$7,500 - \$14,999 (comfort-affluence)
- e. more than \$15,000 (affluence)

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