A comparative study of the 1945 categorical assistance reports of two state departments of public welfare Alabama and Georgia

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE 1945 CATEGORICAL ASSISTANCE
REPORTS OF TWO STATE DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC WELFARE
ALABAMA AND GEORGIA

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY
FRANCES MARIE ANDERSON

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Everyone wants economic security. By that we mean the assurance that we shall at all times have enough income to provide the essential needs of life for our families and for ourselves."¹ The states have recognized that certain of their citizens cannot secure these needs alone. These people—who are too old, too young, or too handicapped to care for themselves—are the Departments of Public Welfare's first reason for being.²

We may define public welfare agencies as those departments of government which are seeking to provide a better way of life for all citizens. More specifically public welfare has a two-fold purpose: the relief of immediate need and the prevention of future dependency. The two are mutually inter-dependent, for by adequate implementation of the first of these obligations, public welfare can make major gains in the field of prevention. On the other hand, inadequate relief tends to aggravate the kind of problems we seek to prevent.

Purpose and Problem

The purpose of this study is to show to what extent the states have established law, policy, and procedure as they relate to the standards of assistance and services made possible by the Federal Act in relation to categorical assistance for 1945; to discuss the gaps in standards of assistance and service between what we see people need and provisions made possible by the state programs; to show what each state needs in order for its program to be more effective.

Scope and Limitations

This study has been limited to the categorical assistance and administrative sections of the reports of the two state departments of public welfare. It includes the historical development of public welfare in Alabama and Georgia; the provisions of the Social Security Act as related to public assistance; the needs of individuals set forth by the United States Department of Labor as compared with what they actually receive; and the gaps in each state's program.

Method of Procedure

Material was selected from the Social Security Act; Census Volumea, State Department of Public Welfare Reports, United States Department of Labor, and other readings pertinent to the subject.
CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF PUBLIC WELFARE IN ALABAMA AND GEORGIA

Alabama

No information was available as to the amount of assistance given to the poor prior to 1935 since no state or county reports were published. Hence, the writer will summarize the history available.

Prior to 1935 the matter of public relief was a thoroughly haphazard affair. Counties were in the business of taking care of their poor and handicapped persons by methods not always satisfactory or well managed. There were almshouses in 63 of Alabama's 67 counties. Some of them were not run efficiently. There was considerable duplication of expense and effort, and yet the poor were not always cared for as well as even the relief dispensed might have made possible. Those not included in the almshouse population were taken care of by outdoor relief, in which work relief played a part. There were no scientific means of determining the total or consolidated amount of public funds spent, nor could the actual number of beneficiaries be determined with accuracy. There was the possibility that one person, through applying to various agencies, might get more help than he had a right to, whereas some other equally or more needy case might be overlooked.1

Adults and children, healthy and ill people were housed in the almshouses and it was not until 1919 that plans for children were considered. With the passage of the Mother's Aid Law in some states; Alabama recognized that emphasis should be placed on safeguarding children's own homes.

for them, and providing the necessary substitute for an own home for those children needing such care. "Dependent, neglected, and delinquent children of Alabama were given care and protection through the State Child Welfare Department from 1919 until its functions were absorbed by the Department of Public Welfare in 1935."1

The spring of 1929 brought on problems that the counties could not shoulder alone. Thirty-three per cent of Alabama's population was unemployed and public relief had to shoulder the load.2 The federal government adhered to its traditional position that relief was state and local responsibility until 1932 when Congress established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and empowered it to make loans to help the states meet the relief crisis. The federal government finally assumed the major responsibility for the relief of unemployed in 1933 when Federal Emergency Relief Administration was enacted.3

The federal relief program was operated through the Alabama Relief Administration from 1932–1935. Grants were made on a matching basis; federal, state and local participating.4

In addition provisions were made for men to work under the Civilian Conservation Corps program and employment was provided through the Public

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2Douglas L. Hunt, op. cit., p. 10.


4Letter received from Miss Jean Ballard, Librarian, Alabama State Department of Public Welfare, March 25, 1947.
Works Administration. The Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation also supplemented relief and work payments by distributing surplus agricultural products to the needy.

This plan of public welfare continued until 1935 when the President's committee on Economic Security made its report and Congress passed the Social Security Act.

With the passage of the Social Security Act, Alabama established the State Department of Public Welfare and accepted the provisions of the Act.

The department assists all county and municipal governments in carrying out welfare functions and acts as the agent of the federal government in welfare matters of mutual concern and in administration of federal funds granted to the state for such work.

Georgia

In 1919 a newspaper article telling of the conditions of a twelve year old boy being held in jail stimulated some interested people into thinking that something should be done about the conditions of the poor. From this article stemmed the first publication of public welfare activities carried on by the counties. Prior to this we know little about the public welfare services.

In 1919 Georgia created a Board of Public Welfare. This Board was organized March, 1920 to stimulate, improve and coordinate every public and private means for meeting the special needs of:

1. The children of:
   The Helpless Widow
   The Deserted Wife
   The Disabled Breadwinner
   The Imprisoned Father
2. The Disintegrating Family
3. The Dependent Aged
4. The delinquent.

The Board had no administrative powers, but is a consulting examining advisory agency. It's duty was to visit and examine institutions; report and advise officials, leaders and contributors; compile statistics; bring prosecution against neglect or mistreatment of individuals; prepare standards and hold up ideals; and stimulate the passage of social laws.

The Board set as its goals a trained social worker in every county, higher standards in Institutions and Social Agencies; improved laws for protection of the dependent and neglected children and a public informed on the State's Social problems.

In 1921 the Parent-Teacher's Association decided that every association should have a Family Service Committee with the specific task of seeing that home and family conditions which make life difficult for the school children are corrected. It also recognized the fact that there should be at least one trained worker at close call ready to help every group.

The county poor relief looked after long time relief of families whose income needed to be subsidized or met by public pensions. This fund was combined with relief from outside groups in order that more nearly adequate relief might be administered.

In 1922 there were three different methods of distributing out door relief funds: (1) private social agencies acting as agents for the counties with the counties providing the funds; (2) paid county charity officer, not trained; and (3) grants by county commissioners or upon recommendations of the grand jury.

The monthly grants were inadequate. They range from $1.00 to $20.00. The trend was to spread money over the entire pauper list. It was suggested

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1The State of Georgia at Work on the Problems of the Helpless and Dependent (Atlanta, 1920), pp. 1-4.


that the counties give adequate relief to such cases as they could handle and let private philanthropy take care of the rest.

There was little progress made in county poor relief and almshouses because of the limited number of trained workers.

A child placing law was passed to protect children from becoming mere victims of chance so that they might find their way into at least an average place in life; and not fall into the low places where poverty or crime hedged them in. The law provided that the institutions must be licensed by the State Department of Public Welfare. A trained worker was sent from the Child Welfare League of America to give suggestions and offer help.

In 1923 the department recognized the inadequacy of its appropriations and voted an additional $5,000.00 which became available January, 1924 and was partially used by children's division for child placing.

In 1924 investigations and recommendations were continued. Of outstanding value during this year was an attempt to find out how much the public knew about the individuals whom they were serving and their needs. It was startling to find out that they knew very little. It was suggested that if the institutions were overcrowded, then start new ones. This is an easy way out; yet, the conditions will not change. Only through careful study of each individual to find out his special needs and the best plan of meeting his needs can such conditions be changed. Recognizing this it was again suggested that trained social workers be secured.

The above study has brought to the attention of the courts, institutions and agencies a desire to pull together, to raise the standards of

\[1\] 1923 Report of the State Department of Public Welfare p. 16.
care being given to the wards of the state by introducing into their work, methods which have as their objective "the individual and his needs."¹

In 1925 it was recognized that relief was given out haphazardly and money was wasted. A study was conducted in the institutions, almshouses and the homes of relief recipients and it was found that many people were receiving relief who did not need it. There were many people in the almshouses who could have been helped by a trained worker, and children in institutions who could be placed in their own homes with assistance.

Mothers Aid was provided by one private institution under a trained social worker to mothers, fathers, and relatives to aid children in their own home.

In 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, and 1930 public welfare was administered in the same fashion with no increase in subsistence.

Under the provisions of the Reorganization of State Government Act of 1931, The Board of Public Welfare was abolished and its functions transferred to the Board of Control.

County out-door relief and almshouses were operated the same as before. The county pensions ranged from $1.00 to $15.00 per person, the average between $4.00 and $5.00 a month. As inadequate as county pension were, the department was of the opinion that it was a better system than herding a group of aged and infirmed persons into poorly equipped and poorly managed almshouses.

In 1932 the need for county boards of public welfare was greatly accentuated because of the growth of unemployment. The counties sought to take advantage of the opportunity to borrow from the Reconstruction Finance

¹1923 Report of Georgia State Department of Public Welfare p. 16.
Corporation during 1932. Then Federal Emergency Relief Administration was established in June 1933 which demanded state organization. By fall of 1933 each of the 159 counties of the state had a county welfare office, with an administrator who supervised Federal Emergency Relief; case aids for field work and clerical help.

Another step forward in Georgia’s welfare program was the acceptance of the Social Security Act in 1937 and the re-establishment of the State Department of Public Welfare to administer assistance programs.
CHAPTER III

SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

The Social Security Act was born as a result of the great depression. At a time when ten million workers were without employment other than work relief and when some eighteen million people were dependent on relief for subsistence, the president set up a committee on economic security to study the problems of the destitution and to make recommendations.¹

The committee found that the heart of the problem was loss of income. It found that whenever earnings are cut off destitution is not far away. The question then is how to provide an income throughout the whole life cycle—in childhood, youth, middle-age and old age.

One recommendation set forth was that social insurance programs be established. Social insurance as it was proposed applied only to workers and to the families of those who work. For many it is impossible to work. There are those who are too old, those who are physically handicapped, and those who are too young when the program of social insurance starts. All these must be assured the basic needs of life. For this reason the committee on economic security recommended also a program of "non contributory pensions."²

Over and above this it pointed out that the core of any social plan is

²Ibid., p. 2.
the child. It recommended aid to children who had lost a parent's support
and proposed a general program of child care services. 1

The Social Security Act was enacted August 14, 1935 and has been amended
by various acts of Congress. Its purpose is;

to provide for the general welfare by establishing a system of federal
old-age benefits and by enabling the several states to make more
adequate provisions for aged persons, blind persons, dependent and
crippled children, maternal and child-health service, child welfare
services, and the administration of their unemployment compensation
laws; to establish a Social Security Board; to raise revenue; and for
other purposes. 2

In this study three of the programs will be discussed: old-age assis-
tance, aid to blind and aid to dependent children which are administered
by the Social Security Board. It is the Board's duty under law to examine
state programs and their administration, and if they conform to the act,
to certify to the treasury the payment of federal grants to the states as
provided under the Act.

Under this Act, the federal government established a general pattern,
maximum matchable grants and indicated standards of state administration.
Following these guides, each state developed its own state program. The
state, not the federal government, determines eligibility to assistance
according to standards approved by the Bureau of Public Assistance of the
Social Security Administration. 3

The federal Act sets the following minimum requirements: for aid to
blind, extent of blindness, the recipient must not be living in a public

1 Ibid., p. 3.
3 Ibid., p. 5.
institution; for Old Age Assistance, dependency, 65 years of age, and not living in a public institution; for Aid to Dependent Children, dependency aid up to sixteen or eighteen years of age if he is still in school and not living in an institution, and who has been deprived of parental support by reason of death of the father or mother, the sickness, or the continued absence from home of either parent.

The federal government will pay half of whatever the state pays to each person, up to a combined total of $40.00 a month for Old-age Assistance and Aid to Blind. The state may pay more than this, just as it may pay less, but the federal government cannot contribute more than $20.00. The federal government also contributes one-third of whatever the state pays for Aid to Dependent Children up to a combined total of $18.00 for the first child and $12.00 a month for each additional child in the same home. The state may pay more or less but the federal government is limited to the above amounts.

State Plans Set Forth by the Federal Government

In order that the states' plan for Old-age Assistance, Aid to Blind and Aid to Dependent Children be approved, they must meet the certain standards.1

The Social Security Act shall not be viewed as the triumphant and perfect conclusion to the struggle to obtain greater security. It is on the contrary full of weaknesses and is strikingly incomplete. We can say, however, that the Social Security Act tends to liberalize relief, to

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1For These Requirements and Standards See Ibid., p. 27.
liberalize provisions governing residence qualifications, required regular reports, which increased interest in research and fact finding and provided means for more nearly adequate assistance to certain groups of people.

Since one of the aims of the Social Security Act is to safeguard all dependent children, then the Social Security Act should be amended to match general relief funds or to revise their eligibility requirements so as to include the children who are receiving help from general relief, in order that they might receive more nearly adequate assistance.
CHAPTER IV

CATEGORICAL PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN ALABAMA AND GEORGIA

This chapter will be divided into three sections. First, is a description of the services rendered by each state in order that the reader may see readily who is helped under these programs. Second, is a discussion on how the two state programs are administered and how the money is spent. Third, 1945 reports on categorical assistance, published by the two state departments of public welfare.

Alabama

Alabama's Old-Age Assistance and Aid to Dependent Children's Acts were first passed in September, 1935 in conformity with the Federal Social Security Act to grant financial assistance to these groups of people in their own homes.¹

Along with financial assistance, the county departments stand ready to help families in solving domestic problems, to make arrangements for medical or nursing care whenever possible, to locate other community resources which may be useful for persons receiving assistance and in short to give counsel and guidance to children and adults.²

In meeting standards set by the federal Act to determine eligibility to assistance under these to programs, Alabama met all but one which was residence. The Social Security Act did not make residence requirement mandatory where as Alabama did and set one year of continuous residence as

¹1945 Report of the Alabama State Department of Public Welfare p. 3.
an eligibility requirement. She added a standard which requires that a
person must not make an assignment or transfer of property in order to
become eligible for assistance.

Alabama's program for Aid to Blind was in conformity with the federal
act, and was the youngest of the states public assistance services, having
been established by the Legislature in 1937. This program filled a vital
need for the relatively small number of dependent blind persons in the state.¹

Though the program has not grown to a marked degree as to the number
assisted, increasing efforts have been made by the Department of Public
Welfare to give specialized services to the blind and to enable them
to avail themselves of various public and private resources for help
and rehabilitation. When it is possible, the Department seeks to secure
necessary medical treatment, especially when it will mean even partial
restoration of vision.²

This program, as the other two, made residence of one year mandatory
in order to be eligible for assistance. It differs from the federal act
in that residence is not mandatory under its provisions.

Administration of the Program

The assistance and service programs described above are administered
by the State Department of Public Welfare which operates in accordance with
the State's Public Welfare Laws.

The State Department functions under a seven member board which acts
in an advisory capacity, a director and personnel needed for efficient
performance. The Board sets policies for the state and county departments.
The sixty-nine county departments function under a seven member county board
of public welfare with supervision from the state department; a director

²Ibid.
and personnel needed for efficient performance. This procedure insures maintenance of uniform standards throughout the state, while allowing for variations according to individual county needs and resources.

Financing of the program was from local, state and federal funds. Under Alabama law city and county appropriations for all public welfare activities are matched by state funds, and this total is then matched by federal funds for the categorical assistance programs on a fifty-fifty basis.¹

The source of funds for the administration of the programs for 1945 were on a twenty per cent federal, forty per cent state, and forty per cent county basis.

In 1945, a total of $5,897,676 was expended for old age assistance, $1,511,964 for aid to dependent children, and $145,124 for aid to the blind.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of assistance</th>
<th>Number aided</th>
<th>Average grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38,699</td>
<td>$17.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old age</td>
<td>32,590</td>
<td>15.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to blind</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>16.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to dependent children</td>
<td>5,342</td>
<td>26.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because there were more aged persons in need than there were in any

¹Ibid., p. 13.
other group, it followed that the majority of recipients of public assistance in Alabama were in the old age category. Even though more money was spent for old age assistance, the assistance to the aged continued to be insufficient. No family or person these days can live on an average of $17.00 or less a month which, according to the 1945 Report of Alabama State Department of Public Welfare met 50.33 per cent of each family's needs for food, clothes, shelter, and medical care less income and resources.¹

In round numbers aid to dependent children payments were larger than those for other categories. When considered on a per person basis, they were lower than those for other needy groups. The mother or other relative who is taking care of the dependent child or children is included in the budget if it is necessary for her to remain in the home. For the state as a whole present payments met only about one-third of each family's minimum needs for food, clothing, shelter and medical care.²

Since there are few handicaps more critical than blindness or more demanding of care from others, it stands to reason that assistance payments to the State's dependent blind are far from adequate. These grants met about 50 per cent of the recipients needs.³

Alabama's relative inability to meet adequately the needs of its disadvantaged people emphasised the need for the Federal government to provide grants-in-aid to states for public assistance in accordance with the economic resources of the states rather than on a strict dollar for matching basis.

¹Ibid., p.5.
²Ibid., p.5.
³Ibid., p.7.
The average range of public assistance grants per case in all counties was $7.92—21.97 for old-age assistance; $7.71—35.00 for aid to blind and $11.61—42.50 for aid to dependent children.

Just as some states are poorer than others, so some of Alabama’s counties are less able than other to meet the need of their dependent people. There was a wide range in Alabama between the richest and poorest county, and again it followed that there was greater need in the counties least able to meet it. This difference in the financial ability of counties was reflected in the public assistance case loads and in average payments to families. Experience has shown that there is need for some means of taking individual county resources into account in the distribution of state funds, just as there is need for some equalization of the distribution of federal funds to states.¹ The lowest figures represent the counties with the smallest income and the highest figures, the counties with the largest income.

Case loads in the sixty seven counties ranged from 213—3,483 for old age assistance; 0—117 for aid to blind; and 14—1,069 for aid to dependent children. Factors which influenced the variations of case loads were the differences in urban and rural population and the per capita income of the counties. The highest number of cases are found in the urban area and the lowest in the rural areas.

Georgia

Georgia passed laws in 1937 for old age assistance, aid to blind and

¹Ibid., p.17.
aid to dependent children which conformed with the provisions of the federal act to grant assistance to people, in these categories, in their own homes.

Along with financial assistance, encouragement in seeking medical care and even detailed plans for making it available to those who cannot plan for themselves was recognized as necessary. Encouragement in looking toward a possible time of self-support and independence and helping the recipient to plan in that direction may result in the elimination of need and the improved morale of the family.

Georgia's standards for public assistance varied from those set by the federal act. Georgia has a mandatory residence law of one year for all three categories whereas, the federal act did not make residence mandatory. She has not changed her age limit from 16 to 18 to include those people between 16 and 18 who are still in school in order to receive aid to blind was used as well as references made to property transfer or assignment in order to be eligible for assistance.

Administration of the Program

Categorical public assistance, under supervision of the State Department of Public Welfare, was administered in the 159 counties of Georgia by the county department of public welfare, through which financial assistance and services were provided for the people.

The state department as well as the county department was composed of a seven member board of public welfare which acted in an advisory capacity, a state and county director, and the personnel needed for efficient operation.

In meeting standards set by the federal act of 1945, Georgia set as
its maximum the same as the federal’s; $30.00 for old-age assistance and aid to blind; $18 for the first child and $12 for each additional child. These maximums can be changed whenever amendments are made.

The programs were financed by state, local and federal funds. The federal government paid fifty per cent; the state forty-five per cent and the county five per cent.

More money was spent for old-age assistance ($9,058,772) than for any other category, with aid to dependent children ($1,191,961) following and aid to blind ($1,348,562) coming last. It will be noted that Georgia spent a greater absolute amount in 1945 than did Alabama for old-age assistance but Alabama spent the greater absolute amount for the other two categories. However, a comparison of the data in tables 1 and 2 reveals that Alabama spent a greater per capita amount than did Georgia in all three categories.

TABLE II

AVERAGE ALLOWANCE PER INDIVIDUAL PER MONTH FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN 1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Assistance</th>
<th>Number Aided</th>
<th>Average Grant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76,089</td>
<td>$11.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Age</td>
<td>66,259</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to Blind</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>14.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to Dependent Children</td>
<td>9,829</td>
<td>9.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eighty-four per cent of the case load aided was aged people; twelve per cent, aid to dependent children; and four per cent aid to blind. More aged people were helped than any other group. This was due to the fact that there were more aged people in Georgia than any other group. Assistance to the aged continued to be insufficient due to the large number which had to be helped and the small amount of funds which could be used for that purpose. The average grant represented 75 per cent of each individual's needs, according to the standard budget guide, less income and resources. Georgia was able to meet only this portion of needs due to limited funds.

The principal reason for the poor showing was the fifty-fifty matching basis of the act. Georgia could not put up as much money for public assistance because she was one of the poorest states. Therefore, her grants were insufficient to meet the minimum needs of her recipients.

Public assistance payments ranged from $1.00—$30.00 for aid to blind; $2.00—$30.00 for old age assistance and $2.00—$99.00 for aid to dependent children. The wide range between the richest and poorest counties in Georgia accounted for the range in assistance payments. The richest counties payed more for public assistance. The difference in the population and financial ability of the counties was reflected in the case loads and in average payments to families. There was need for some means of taking individual county resources into account in the distribution of state funds.

Summary.—In the preceding pages one gets a picture of the services and administration of public welfare in Georgia and Alabama.

In the Census Volume of 1940, it was found that Alabama had a population of 2,832,961; and in the Census Abstract, it was found that Alabama had a per capita income of $700 for 1945. Georgia's population was 3,123,723 and she had a per capita income of $750. One can see that Alabama
and Georgia have low per capita incomes as compared with $1150 for the
country and for this reason were not able to provide for their large number
of dependent people adequately.

Of Alabama's total population 1.4 per cent received categorical assis-
tance as compared with 2.5 per cent for Georgia. Since Georgia's
percentage of recipients was larger, that along with other economic factors
could account for the small grants.

The programs differed in age requirements, financing of the programs
and in the amount of assistance and case loads.

Georgia had set 21 years of age as a requirement for aid to blind
and gave assistance up to 16 years of age to needy dependent children if
they were still in school. Alabama had an age requirement of 16 for aid
to blind and 18 years of age to needy children if they were still in school.

Financing in Georgia was on a 50 per cent federal, 45 per cent state,
and 5 per cent county. Alabama's financing was more or less on a 50 per
cent federal, 25 per cent county and 25 per cent state.

In Georgia and Alabama there was a wide variation in the amount of
assistance per person in all the counties and wide variation in case
loads. This was due to the economic conditions of the counties as well
as the population in the urban and rural areas.

In conclusion we can say that both states were faced with the same
problems—not enough money appropriated to meet the minimum needs of their
recipients; need for individual county resources to be taken into consid-
eration in the distribution of state funds; and the need for some plan to
be taken in order to assist the 2,920 applications pending in Georgia (and
the 1,980 pending in Alabama for assistance because of insufficient funds.
CHAPTER V

GAPS IN ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES BETWEEN WHAT
WE SEE PEOPLE NEED AND PROVISIONS MADE
BY THE STATES' PROGRAMS

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 1935 $2,000 as
the result of their estimate of the budget that shall be sufficient to
maintain a standard of health and decency for a family of five.1 Today
the cost of living is up 55.5 per cent over 1939 standards for all items of
need, which discounting rises between 1935 and 1939 would indicate that
$3,110 would be the minimum standard in 1946 for decency and health for a
family of five.2

The minimum normal standard must furnish everything necessary for a
manner of living that will make possible a high standard of physical and
mental growth and provisions for the moral welfare of children; and for
physical, mental and moral health and efficiency for adults.3 These stand-
ards must include adequate housing, proper food and clothing, fuel, house-
hold supplies and incidentals, care of health, recreation, education and
insurance.

One author says that the minimum required efficiency standard of living
aims at getting the requisite efficiency in work and living with the smallest
consumptive expenditure possible. It is on this basis or with this end in
view, that the standards of the minimum wage budgets for welfare recipients
have been constructed.

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1"Studies of Standards of Living," Bulletin of the Bureau of Labor
Statistics (Washington, 1941), p. 120.

2"Cost of Living and Retail Prices," Quarterly Labor Review, (December,
1946).

3Florence Nesbitt, "Standard Budget for Dependent families," American
The responsibility to provide relief is intimately woven into public welfare's contribution to the prevention of social and economic problems. The way one administers assistance programs largely determines the effectiveness of his efforts in the preventive field, for to give inadequate aid to those already dependent frequently results in a selection and support of the turnover of the State's dependent people, generation after generation. In contrast adequate assistance can build toward better citizenship and lead to social and economic independence or security.  

Alabama

Public assistance in Alabama was paid on a need basis. Need has been defined as the monetary differences between the cost of an individual's necessary living requirements and the actual income and ready available resources he has on hand for meeting those requirements. Public Assistance was intended to supplement any actual and continued resources which are inadequate, or to provide, in-so-far as funds will permit, the necessities of life for an individual when no income and resources exist. Need was determined through budget procedures for applicants for public assistance.

The three steps in the determination of need by the budgetary process were (1) the determination of the subsistence requirements or living cost of an applicant; (2) the determination of the total amount of actual income regularly received and resources currently available to an applicant for maintaining himself; (3) the determination of the amount of public assistance needed if any, by computing the difference between the requirements, and income and resources, i.e., between (1) and (2).

The grant presumably was the amount of monthly payment which the individual, found eligible for assistance, actually received from the agency.

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1Dunn, op. cit.
3Ibid.
It represented the recipients equitable share of available funds as related to his budget deficit or the amount of assistance needed.

The State Department has established quantity-quality standards for food, clothing, and household supplies on a minimum cost basis. A quantity-quality standard is one which designates specific amounts and a definite description of the particular goods under consideration. Such a standard takes into account the varying conditions of individuals, such as age, sex, activity, and consumption habits, together with the quality, durability, and cost of goods, in setting up fair averages. Such standards insure public assistance clients uniform consideration in the determination of need.

The cost of food, clothing and household supplies are determined by the state department annually on a state-wide basis and are submitted to the Counties as a guide to be used in computing the requirements of individuals. All budget requirements other than food, clothing and household supplies are determined according to the actual needs of individuals, taking into account the accustomed standard of living together with the actual expenditures they are making, or would have to make to obtain the goods or services needed.

The amount of monthly payment to a particular recipient shall not exceed his budgetary deficit. When need cannot be met in full, in order to maintain equitable standards of assistance through relating the amount of payment to the budgetary need and the amount of funds available within the categories, individual grants should be authorized on a percentage basis. This means that every County in the State must determine public assistance grants by the percentage method.

The writer will illustrate the working of the budget for a family of five since there were no available standards for a single person or for a group of three.

1Tbid., p. 37.
2Tbid., p. 38.
3Tbid., p. 42.
In 1945 Alabama met only 33 1/3 per cent of the Aid to Dependent Children's need. A budget for Aid to Dependent Children recipients will be used to explain what an agency recognizes as minimum as compared with what the United States Bureau of Labor recognized.

Case I

Mrs. A is a very active mother with three strong children and one invalid. The children's ages range from 10 to 18 years and are all girls. Since the mother is not self-supporting and not eligible for assistance in her own right, she is included in the budget. There is an income of $42 a month from relatives. The family lives in a three room house in a very congested area of town and shares an outdoor toilet with three other families.

The following budget is for an A.D.C. family of five:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$87.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>$28.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical care</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church &amp; recreation</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidental</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household supplies</td>
<td>$22.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>$16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>$2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$182.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$42.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.C. grant (33%)</td>
<td>$46.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmet need</td>
<td>$94.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The family needed $182.05 a month or $2284 a year to meet minimum budgetary requirements using Alabama's Standard. However, the family received $1056 a year. This was below "minimum of subsistence level, which was based essentially on mere animal existence, and allows little or nothing for the needs of men as social creatures."

One might ask the question; how does this compare with standards set

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by the Bureau of Labor? The $3,110 used was based on meeting social needs as well as monetary ones, whereas, the $2284 was based on subsistence levels. If Alabama were able to pay the total need, it might help society to prevent tuberculosis and other dietary deficiency diseases. As she gave less than the deficiency in the budget determined on a subsistence basis, she was really giving relief on a basis which actually induces the development of delinquency arising from insufficient funds for food, clothing, incidentals and recreation. The relief standard in Alabama was not preventive but tended to develop more problems for the state to solve.

Georgia

In Georgia need was defined as a condition resulting from a lack of income or resources sufficient to maintain a standard of living compatible with health, decency and self-respect. The needs of an individual cannot be satisfactorily determined other than through the discussion of requirements and resources and the computation of an itemized budget.1

A budget is an estimate of the living cost of the family under tolerably decent conditions. It should be kept in mind that the budget is the total cost of living without any reference to what the family is earning or receiving from any source.2

To secure uniformity in budgeting and to insure equitable treatment of applicants in the determination of need, a suggested minimum standard budget guide was formerly prepared for use throughout the State in which the minimum requirements of individuals and families were listed according

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to sex, age, activity, health, cost, and locality.\(^1\)

Assistance was based not only on a thorough understanding of the applicants given requirements but also upon a thorough knowledge of his resources and income.

The grant was the amount of monthly payment which the recipient actually received; it was computed by subtracting the income and resources from the total needs. Due to insufficient funds, Georgia was only able to meet 85 per cent of the needs less income and resources.

In illustrating the budget, the writer will show what Georgia recognized as a minimum standard for decency and health as compared with the United States Bureau of Labor.

Case II

The B family is composed of the mother who takes in washing and earns $3.00 a week; Jean age 9, John age 15, Robert age 13, and Mary age 15. The family lives in a three-room house and pays $8.00 a month for shelter with water included. All members of the family are in good health.

The following is a budget for an A.D.C. family of five:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$54.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>18.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household needs</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical care</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidentals</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church contributions</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supplies</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>110.46</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>32.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>85 per cent</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.D.C. grant</strong></td>
<td><strong>54.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unmet need</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.46</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\text{Manual, op. cit.}\)
The B family needed $110.46 a month or $1,325.52 a year according to Georgia's minimum budget guide. The family actually received $1,032 a year which was lower than the minimum of subsistence level, which was based on essentially or mere animal existing, and allows little or nothing for the needs of men as social creatures.

The B family received $54.00 because that was the maximum amount according to the State laws for a family of four dependent children to receive.

Georgia's minimum budget of $1,325.52 a year was about one-third of that set by the Bureau of Labor. The $3,110 set by the Bureau of Labor was based on meeting social needs as well as economic ones. Georgia's was based on subsistence levels. The amount the family actually received is conducive to malnutrition, delinquency and other diseases because of insufficient funds to provide the necessities of life. The relief standards in Georgia are far from adequate.

In summarizing the gaps we can see that the assistance programs were not "preventive" but actually tended to create problems of health, and delinquency due to insufficient grants. The programs did not meet the real needs of the people—healthy social, moral and physical development.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Public Welfare has come a long way in Alabama and Georgia since the passage of the Social Security Act, but there is still much to be done.

The study of the categorical assistance reports of Alabama and Georgia's State Department of Public Welfare Reports for 1945 showed that the average amount of assistance received by the recipients was not conducive to decency and health but tended to create problems of health and delinquency. The programs did not meet the real needs of the people—healthy social, moral and physical development. This was due to the fact that Alabama and Georgia were two of the poorest states and did not have enough money to adequately care for their dependent people.

No one is more aware than the public welfare worker of the unfortunate consequences of "too little and too late!" Such consequences cannot be erased in one or perhaps more generations for we have had too many years of inadequate housing and medical service, of low income and malnutrition, of under-employment and unemployment. These gaps must be bridged if we are to reduce the number of our dependent people and provide decently for those who are disadvantaged due to lack of resources. Thus, public welfare has a major stake in every area of economic and social planning which is designed to better the life of one or more citizens. As there is better housing, wider health protection, greater opportunities for useful work, and more money appropriated by the State and Federal government, so there will be changes in the nature and scope of the public welfare services.
Needs of the States

The figures and facts cited on the preceding pages give evidence of what some of the most pressing needs of Alabama and Georgia's Public Welfare Programs.

Not only is it a matter of concern that the Department with existing resources will be unable to aid all distressed people, but also it is obvious that $16.00 is too small an amount to provide for an individual's needs. In light of these grave problems of unmet needs, it is encouraging that the State Board of Public Welfare of Alabama set forth the following recommendations to meet the needs of the state:

1. Urge Federal and State Action which would increase appropriations for Welfare and would insure more nearly equitable distribution to all needy people regardless of where they live.

2. Secure Federal legislation to amend the Social Security Act:
   a. Grants to states on the basis of each state's economic capacity rather than on a strict dollar for dollar matching basis.

3. Provide some means of taking individual County resources into account in the distribution of state funds.

4. Provide public health provisions for sanitation, individual health and hospital facilities for the department's recipients.

5. Hire more trained workers.

6. Provide ways of interpreting program to the public.

7. Simplification and improvement of the method whereby Alabama's Public welfare program is financed.

Georgia feels that Federal legislation for variable grants to the
States should be secured, which would enable low income Southern States to receive increased Federal participation. Most recent census reports Georgia as one of the six lowest income states in the entire United States. While Georgia has one of the largest number of recipients in the United States, the average grant per individual recipient is one of the lowest, due to lack of the States funds with which to match the Federal money.

Georgia recommends the following steps in order to meet her needs:

1. Secure Federal legislation for General Relief to all persons in need of assistance regardless of age.

2. Secure necessary State legislation to provide retirement for State Welfare employees. This plan would aid the Welfare Department to retain its most highly qualified personnel by encouraging them to remain with the profession.

3. Secure larger appropriations if possible for the benefits to old age assistance, aid to blind, and aid to dependent children recipients. In consideration of the large number of needy recipients in the State of Georgia and the average grant so small, it is recommended that more money be made available with which to pay larger grants due to the increase in cost of living.

4. Increase age limit of aid to dependent children recipients up to eighteen years of age (if regularly attending school) to comply with present amended Federal regulations.

5. Lower age limit of aid to blind recipients below twenty-one in order that persons not in school at the Academy for the Blind, and in need of assistance, might receive same.

6. Secure Educational leave with pay provisions for public
assistance staff in order to maintain the best and most highly qualified staff at all times.

7. Secure more trained workers.

8. Provide means of interpreting the program to the public.

From this information, we find that Alabama and Georgia being two of the 48 states with the smallest income, have basically the same needs. The 1946 amendments to the Federal Act which are:

1. An increase in the maximum Federal contribution from $20 a month in old-age assistance and aid to blind to $25, and in aid to dependent children from $9 for the first child and $6 for each additional child to $13.50 and $9 respectively;

2. An increase in the Federal share of State assistance payments from one-half to all State expenditure up to $40 per individual for the aged and the blind, and $18 for the first child and $12 for each additional child, to two-thirds of all State expenditures of such additional expenditures up to $45 for an individual, and to two-thirds up to an average of $9 per child and one-half of such additional expenditures up to $24 for one child and $15 for each additional child;

3. Provides that the Federal share of the cost of State administration of assistance to the aged shall be on the same basis as that for the blind and dependent children, that is, one-half of the sums expended for the proper and efficient administration of the State plan.¹

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