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Socio-Economic and Political Implications of the Termination of General Assistance Benefits for Undocumented Victims of Torture in Minnesota

Evelyn C. Lennon
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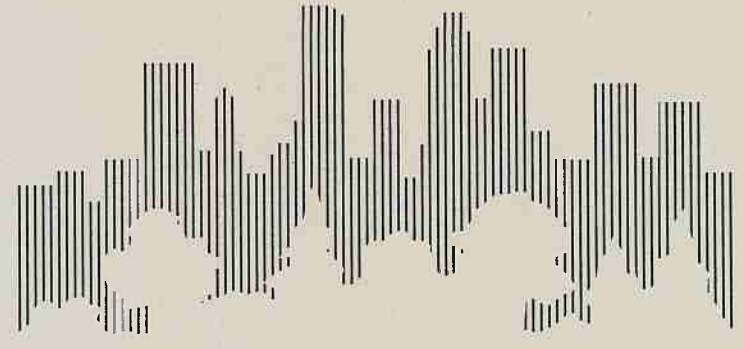
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MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK THESIS

Evelyn C. Lennon

**MSW
Thesis**

**Socio-Economic and Political Implications of
the Termination of General Assitance
Benefits for Undocumented Victims
of Torture in Minnesota**

Thesis
Lennon

1994

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS
OF THE TERMINATION OF GENERAL ASSISTANCE
BENEFITS FOR UNDOCUMENTED VICTIMS OF TORTURE
IN MINNESOTA**

A Policy Analysis
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
Masters' Degree in Social Work

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May, 1994

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL


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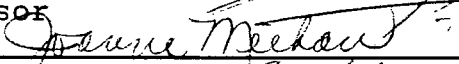
EVELYN C. LENNON


has been examined by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirements for the Master of Social Work Degree.

Date of Oral Presentation: May 11, 1994

Thesis Committee:


Advisor


Reader


Reader

DEDICATION PAGE

for Samuel

"You often say, "I would give, but only to the deserving."
The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in
your pasture.

They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish.
Surely he who is worthy to receive his days and his nights,
is worthy of all else from you.

And he who has deserved to drink from the ocean of life
deserves to fill his cup from your little stream.

Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet

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I wish to compliment the dedicated staff of The Treatment Center for their skills, concern, and compassion. Thank you, Joanne Meehan, for your leadership and for planting the seed of suggestion that led to this research. Thank you, Professor Vincent Peters, for encouraging me to recognize that, I, too, can "make a difference".

ABSTRACT

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS
OF THE TERMINATION OF GENERAL ASSISTANCE
BENEFITS FOR UNDOCUMENTED VICTIMS OF TORTURE
IN MINNESOTA**

POLICY ANALYSIS

EVELYN LENNON

MAY 1994

The Minnesota State Legislature amended the General Assistance benefits statutes, effective October 1, 1993, to exclude undocumented persons. This research project attempts to define the socio-economic and political issues as they impact victims of political torture who reside in Minnesota without legal status. The history of public assistance, its underlying social problem, and its judicial context reveals the controversy over entitlements versus rights. Social program and policy systems analysis highlights the linkage between the goals and objectives of the legislation and the message that is inherent in the delivery of services. An examination of the files of four clients of The Treatment Center who received General Assistance prior to October 1, 1993, reveals intensive intervention by social work professionals and severe strain upon the individual clients.

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CHAPTER I. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

In 1993 the Legislature of the State of Minnesota modified the General Assistance (GA) and General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) statutes to make people who are residing in the United States without Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) approval or knowledge, or who are of non-immigrant status, ineligible for state operated programs. Social indicators, such as an increase in requests for assistance for housing and food at social service agencies such as Neighborhood House and Catholic Charities, suggest that there are social, economic, and political implications of the changes in General Assistance benefits for refugees who reside in the United States without documentation. A relevant question in these circumstances is that of how the termination of GA benefits affects those refugees who are victims of politically-sponsored torture.

Background

The 1993 Minnesota Legislature has amended the statutes on ineligibility of persons to receive General Assistance (GA), Work Readiness (WR), Emergency General Assistance (EGA), Family General Assistance (FGA), and General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) (except for major emergency medical services) due to their immigration status. Effective October 1, 1993, those people who reside in the United States without the approval or knowledge of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS); or are non-immigrants, are ineligible for service. This does not affect children under the age of 18, the

blind, the aged, disabled, or documented Cuban and Haitian refugees.

This act may impact those clients of The Treatment Center who have no documentation, or who have not yet applied for documentation and subsequently have a receipt of that application. The Treatment Center is the fictitious name of a non-profit organization in Minneapolis, Minnesota that provides direct care to survivors of politically motivated torture and their family members with a comprehensive assessment and treatment program. The services include medical assessment and care, psychotherapy, psychiatric assessment and medical assistance, social work services, and advocacy.

Some of the clients of The Treatment Center are undocumented and seeking political asylum. With a scarcity of affordable (or pro bono) lawyers available, clients may wait from six weeks to several months for available assistance to begin their applications for asylum. The process to file an application can take an additional length of time. Clients who have no proof of entry into the system no longer receive benefits. Without the on-going monetary assistance of GA, there are clients who, while experiencing the physical, emotional, economic, spiritual, cultural, and social consequences of torture, may be without even the basic resources of living.

Purpose of Research Project

This study will investigate the impact of the changes in the General Assistance program on the lives of clients of The Treatment Center after its termination on October 1, 1993. The outcome of this study will be the exploration of information pertinent for social work practitioners. Social work professionals at The Treatment Center are

not certain how to prepare adequately for this change in the system. According to Direct Services staff at The Center, many undocumented clients experience circumstances that are limit their natural capacities to meet the basic needs of life. These barriers include minimal contact with their communities of origin in this geographic area, the inability to communicate in the dominant language, accessibility issues, and issues of trust in personal relationships as a natural reaction to the torture. The researcher sees numerous challenges ahead for the social work profession to address regarding this complex issue.

Social work is a discipline that focuses on issues at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The results of this research may be applied with the existing knowledge and resources of the professional staff and other support staff who work with victims of torture assistance programs. On the micro level, social workers providing direct services at The Treatment Center will have the opportunity to be informed by the outcomes of the study. Administrators at the non-profit organizational, or mezzo, level will be given information that may assist them as they do their agency, or cooperative, planning.

On a macro level, the operating characteristics of the General Assistance policy will be examined in the light of public policy making. What is the suggested proper response of the social work profession?

This issue is an important one for me personally. Because of my own commitment to social justice and the well-being of all humankind, I am challenged as a social work professional to consider this subject

matter for my research thesis. I would like to work in assisting in bridging economic, social, and cultural gaps. This would be done with the goal of enhancing understanding between those who have more than enough to meet their needs and those who are engaged in a struggle for survival. With my seminary training, I hope to be an instrument that connects theology with social work, offering hope and encouragement for individuals and groups and contributing to positive social change on a larger scope in the context of social realities.

My personal beliefs on behalf of oppressed and disadvantaged people will bring my values into this research project. My theology is built upon a "preferential option for the poor" - a value system that focuses on a restructuring of the predominant social system. As a social work professional, I am committed to the Social Work Code of Ethics and to "ensuring that all persons have access to the resources, services, and opportunities which they require" (National Association of Social Workers, 1980).

Definition of Variables of Interest

Torture is defined by Article I, United Nations Convention Against Torture, 1984: "For the purposes of this Convention, the term "torture" means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person for any reason based upon discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted

by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity". (Note: this language is masculine and will not be interpreted solely as such in this manuscript.) Victim of torture, for the purposes of this study, is defined as a person who has experienced the above action.

The Treatment Center is the falsified name of a non-profit organization which was founded to provide direct care to survivors of political torture. At the time of the creation of The Treatment Center in 1985, centers existed in Copenhagen, Denmark and in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. There are now almost seventy programs worldwide.

The terms "client" and "victim" are used by the author interchangeably. Possessing documentation refers to the fact of persons having immigrant status or to persons residing in the United States with the written approval of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

The policy to be studied is a social welfare policy. Social welfare policies are "collectively defined rules, regulations, procedures, and objectives to address social problems and those institutional problems that affect implementation of specific policies" (Jansson, 1990). These policies are concerned with the provision of services to designated persons. Social programs are the means of supplying those services.

A major variable in this research project is the General Assistance policy. General Assistance refers to public welfare policy providing monthly monetary support to persons who qualify on the basis of income. The new change in the law affects the programs of General

Assistance (GA), Work Readiness (WR), Emergency General Assistance (EGA), Family General Assistance (FGA), and General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) (except emergency purposes - emergency meaning "life-threatening" and subject to discernment on an individual basis by Medicare officials). The author of this study will deal only with General Assistance, although clients of The Treatment Center have also lost others of these benefits as an outcome of the change of law.

Another important variable is General Assistance payment for torture victims with or without refugee documentation. This is the actual amount of monetary assistance that is received. For a single person, it is currently \$203.00 a month. Without documentation, the amount is \$0.00.

"Undocumented alien" is a term used in Minnesota statutory language. "Undocumented alien" is defined as an individual "who resides in the United States without the approval or acquiescence of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)." The phrase "undocumented person" is used by the researcher in preference to "undocumented alien".

Extraneous variables include: 1. institutional attitudes towards work, persons of foreign birth, torture, poverty, persons from the country studied, etc.; 2. economic resources used by the clients after October 1, 1993 cut-off date; 3. the person's diagnosis; and 4. amount of social work intervention.

1. Institutional attitudes in the United States, as explained in this document, consist of racism, sexism, xenophobia, and classism. The Random House Dictionary, 1983, gives simple definitions of these complex terms: a. racism - "the idea that one's own race is superior";

b. sexism - "discrimination or bias because of sex"; and c. xenophobia - "an unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers". d. Classism is interpreted as the division of persons according to rank or grade, in order to create an unbalance of power (author's definition). It is the opinion of this writer that these definitions are questionable in their own use of terms; however, these concepts will be defined as such in the study.

2. Economic resources consist of the housing and food resources available to the clients in the six months following the cut-off of General Assistance. They include housing provided by friends, relatives, or a church agency; homeless shelter; food pantry, etc.

3. A diagnosis is given to all Treatment Center clients for purposes of guiding treatment and to allow third-party billing for reimbursable services, which include medical, psychiatric, and psychological services. It is used here only to illuminate difficulties that the client may have in adjusting to the situation and in obtaining resources on her/his own.

4. Amount of intervention by social work staff is measured as minimal, medium, and intensive. It covers the time period from October 1, 1993 to April 1, 1994. Minimal intervention consists of an initial social service assessment and one follow-up contact. Medium intervention is two-four contacts. An hour a week or more given by the social worker to issues related to the well-being of the client (these are issues impacted by the termination of benefits) comprises intensive intervention. Contacts are determined through an examination of client files.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Theoretical and Conceptual Framework Used in the Literature

Seven articles and two books provide relevant material on the history of United States welfare policy. Three sources offer material that give information concerning the question, "What is the economic and political rationale for the policy, its goals and objectives, its history" (Slavin, 1980; Partington and Jowell, 1979; Cottingham and Ellwood, 1989). Slavin states a comprehensive overview of public welfare since its development in the 1930's, putting emphasis on its dual functions of providing social insurance and charity. The two other books concentrate on the cycles of reform over the fifty years since the inception of the welfare system in the U.S. Reform has been a continuing concern of the public.

What role does General Assistance play in the lives of victims of politically-motivated torture? North (1982), Kerpen (1985), and Stagner and Richman (1986) write of the effects of General Assistance upon refugee populations in the United States. North discovered inconsistencies between immigration policies and income-transfer policies. For example, undocumented persons can receive social security and general assistance benefits in some states; legal immigrants face a three-year rule before becoming eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The Kerpen study states that fear about the high costs of maintaining refugees on public monies and resentment of a "favored" treatment for refugees has resulted in tension and violence. These attitudes have affected the numbers of new refugees admitted to this country; the numbers fell below those

levels allowed by law in 1982-1985, even as money was given to assist in their maintenance in overseas refugee camps. The inconsistencies of the system of delivery of services and the issue of welfare dependency provide the researcher some insight into the negative influence of the policy upon lives of victims of torture who come to the U.S. as refugees. Stagner and Richman found a wide diversity of characteristics among GA recipients. They classified these clients into three groups: those who never have held a job, workers who have exhausted Unemployment Compensation, and people with health problems not serious enough to qualify for other programs. They discovered that many clients rely on family and friends for supplemental support while receiving GA; few of the various groups of users sought help from social service agencies.

What happens when welfare benefits are cut to recipients? A Pennsylvania Welfare Reform Act in 1982 divided receivers of benefits into two groups: the chronically needy and the transitionally needy. Discontinuance was mandated after a time period for the second group (Halter, 1987). While 37% of the transitionally needy clients found work initially after termination of benefits, only 2.5% were employed after nine months without welfare payments. A Petersen and Kingston article (1987) examined the cases of elderly people removed from federal disability assistance programs because of a change in eligibility criteria. General Assistance became the new service provider for many of them, signifying the sensitivity of state and local programs to changes in federal policies.

National and international perspectives on welfare assistance are the subjects of Partington and Jowell (1979). Welfare is viewed as

necessary by the public and by policymakers, but is flawed in its present execution. DiNitto (1981) studied the relationships among local, state, and federal policies. Potential influence from the federal government to the local and state entities issuing and regulating the use of welfare monies is minimal, according to DiNitto's findings.

There is a gap in the research regarding the issue of welfare benefits to foreign-born victims of severe, politically-motivated psychological and physical injury. What the social role of U.S. policy has been and is presently regarding this population of refugees could reflect upon the greater issues of social welfare policy and program implementation.

The articles reviewed point to a need to investigate the socio-economic and political aspects of public assistance payments to victims of torture. Policy change in Minnesota may reflect issues that are large in scope and effect. The social work profession and human rights policy-making apparatus may be beneficiaries of an increase in knowledge concerning this issue.

Current Trends in Welfare Policy

A review of popular news magazines in the first months of 1994 revealed no items specifically concerning Minnesota's relationship with General Assistance. However, many articles were published about welfare reform.

Welfare reform had played big in President Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign, and the public appears to be calling his attention to it. The National Review, The American Spectator,

Newsweek, Time, U.S. News and World Report, and The Utne Reader all featured articles about the issue. The Christian Century, Commonwealth, The National Review, and Children Today investigated the effects of welfare and its potential reform on special groups, such as children and families of the poor.

It is suggested in these articles that welfare reform is demanded by all, but there is disagreement about how best to do that. Morgenthau (1993) feels that there exists a potential political dilemma with overtones of racism, classism, and social Darwinism in the conversations. Debates ensue in the public arena about cost, feasibility, and who loses benefits. Proponents offer that reform may not save money; it may create new entitlements, such as federally-subsidized daycare. Fifteen states have been given permission to experiment with their Aid to Dependent Children programs (Callahan, 1993).

If the popular press (excluding newspapers, which were not reviewed) is an accurate reflection of society, reform of the present U.S. welfare system is being demanded by consumers, government officials, and public citizens unanimously. What is not clear in the articles is if there can ever be agreement in how to accomplish that reform.

Resources for Welfare Policy and Program Analysis

There has been work done in recent years on the techniques of policy and program analysis. The application of analysis to implementation has been the object of attention, as well. This study concentrates on materials that pertain to analytical models of review

and to the subject of current general assistance welfare policy. Attention was given to recent works; resources used that date before the last ten years (1984) are those works considered "classics" in social policy research, i.e., by DiNitto, Friedman, and, particularly, Alfred J. Kahn.

The quest for welfare reform has brought about research on poverty, welfare programs, and the societal norms and attitudes that have fostered legislation (Cottingham and Ellwood, 1989; Kahn, 1969; Wilensky, 1975). Kahn focuses on the importance of planning as a result of research - on both national and local levels.

International efforts at social policy change happen in response to key social, political, and economic issues of this time in history for each country. Hokenstad, Khinduka, and Midgely (1992) have edited a book that reflects the connection of welfare programs with changes; i.e., in resources, civil strife, changing traditional male and female roles, the AIDS epidemic, and an influx of political and economic refugees.

Wilensky (1975) explores the welfare systems of the wealthy countries of the world, comparing programs, spending, and the connections among economics, politics, and social organization. Another book concerned with social work in an international context, edited by Elliott, Mayadas, and Watts (1990), looks at social welfare policy in the United States from afar. They note that this country, among the wealthiest in the world, is known abroad for its inadequate social programs for the poor while it has the reputation of having an extensive welfare system for the non-poor. The middle and upper classes have farm subsidies, federal loans to cities, bank buy-outs,

etc. to aid them; social security payments are higher to those who have money. The poor receive a patchwork of programs aimed at getting them into the workforce, while seventy percent of them are actually women, children, and the elderly. In addition, they must clear hurdles of recertification requirements.

Kathi V. Friedman (1981) examines the welfare states of the United States and Great Britain while searching for ways in which redistribution can be done with equality. Does paternalism necessarily go hand-in-hand with social welfare? She believes that there is a slow, steady move underway towards the incorporation of additional rights into the political fabric.

Social welfare policy-making is value-laden and critical, argues Jansson (1990) in a book on the practice of policy. As professionals, social workers are in ideal positions in which to make good judgment calls regarding appropriate policy. It is part of the duty of the profession to use that expertise to reform agency, community, and legislative practice. The call to be involved in policy making as a profession also rings clear in an article by Alan Walker in a book edited by Michael McCarthy (1989). Social workers can find ways for community members to wield influence in influence in policy-making. This is power-sharing.

The literature supports the claim that there is methodology for designing and analytically critiquing social policy and programming. Social work professionals are urged to learn to develop these skills to optimize their effectiveness in assisting their clients.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY**Research Questions**

The research consists of a policy analysis of the Minnesota state policy of General Assistance benefits for refugees. It specifically targets victims of political torture, and includes the larger national welfare system while using a comparative study of implications and ramifications before and after policy change. This research is based upon a framework (see Table A, page 15a) that incorporates the following questions:

1.) What is the definition of the issue? Was there a grace period before the full effect of the monetary cut-off was felt? What economic resources are available to clients in the six months following the cut-off?

2.) What are the socio-economic and political rationale of the policy, its goals and objectives, its history?

3.) What was the rationale for amending the policy? What are the social and political values of the policy? What is role of social control in policy making?

4.) What alternative programs and proposed legislation could be explored? What current community organization efforts represent victims to challenge the policy?

5.) What are some possible courses of action for social work professionals who work with victims of torture, including client advocacy, alternative program planning, administration, and policy evaluation?

8.) What are anticipated future implications of the policy for social work professionals?

Major Hypothesis

The major question or hypothesis of this research study is as follows: the 1993 Minnesota Legislature has amended the statutes on ineligibility of persons to receive General Assistance (GA) due to their immigration status. There are socio-economic and political implications of the termination of General Assistance benefits for victims of political torture who reside in the United States without documentation.

The Work Plan

The work plan was designed in the fall of 1993 with the assistance of Dr. Blanca-Rosa Egas. The work plan is visualized from conceptualization through operationalization, methodology, processing and analysis of the data, and suggested courses of application in Table A.

The research was begun in January of 1994 and concluded on April 21, 1994. The hypothesis and questions were formulated in the fall of 1993 after a literature review and with the assistance of Professor Vincent Peters. Book resources and the Social Work Abstracts in the College Library system were perused for the writings on General Assistance, refugees and welfare, current welfare policy trends, and for information regarding social policy and program analysis.

Conceptualization consisted of the definition of the variables used in the study. Operationalization took this process one step further by developing specific meaning for the variables. Operationalization is the interpretation of the various variables that

TABLE A - THE WORK PLAN

	Hypothesis/Question	
	What are the socio-economic and political implications of the termination of General Assistance benefits for Victims of Political torture who reside in the United States without documentation?	
Conceptualization	Research Methodology	Population
Variables of interest defined for the purposes of the research study	Policy analysis of state policy and program including national welfare system, using Chamber's Value - Critical Method	Clients of the Center for Victims of Torture who do not have refugee documentation and have lost General Assistance benefits on Oct. 1, 1993
	Observations	
	Literature review Resources data gathered from files Existing data and historical data collected Comparative international data collected	
Operationalization	Data Processing	
Variables interpreted for the study	Comparative data compiled Resources data compiled	
	Analysis	
	Qualitative exploration study Presentation of resources data gathered from files Limited content analysis	
	Application	
	Possible courses of action for social work professionals, including client advocacy, alternative program planning, administration	

challenge and moderate the hypothesis. The study population and the data collection instruments are also described.

The research methodology in this paper is unique in its use within the thesis work plan. An analysis of policy and program, based on the value-critical method used by D. C. Chambers (1993), is used to evaluate General Assistance. It involves an examination of the social problem; the historical context; and the decisions made by the judicial system; and an analysis of the social policy and program. This paper comprises an "analysis within an analysis", as Chamber's methodology fits inside the framework of a research thesis.

Observations within the work plan include information regarding the implications of the cut-off of GA benefits which was gathered from client charts at the The Treatment Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Other observations include perusal of existing, historical, and comparative data concerning the interaction of the population and the policy. Data processing was the step in the work plan in which the researcher compiled the data for analytical use. The analysis applied the results of the use of the modified Chamber's research method on General Assistance to the information garnered from client files. As this is a qualitative study, the researcher looked for similarities, universals, and dissimilarities. Content analysis was done on a limited basis, due to the small number of samples.

The limitations of the study and affected courses of action for the profession of social work are given as the conclusion. Implications for further research are also considered.

Characteristics of the Study Population

It is estimated by the director of The Treatment Center that 8,000 victims of torture reside in Minnesota. The Treatment Center serves 120-150 people per year. Clients come from around the world - 42 percent are from Africa; 29 percent are from Southeast Asia; 16 percent from Central and South America; 7 percent are from the Middle East and 3 percent are from Eastern Europe. The majority are adults. The percentage of the population that is men is 82%; 18% is women.

Information was drawn from files of affected clients in order to add validity to the work. The study population is the clientele of The Treatment Center who have received General Assistance, some of whom have lost benefits on October 1, 1993. Data from these files is kept completely anonymous and confidential. It reflects only what resources have been used by clients for housing and for food after the cut-off of General Assistance. Appendix A is a sample of the questionnaire used for this research.

Data Collection Instruments

Available records from the Center's files provide information regarding clients' use of resources. The data collection instruments were administered as follows: a. The data collection from files took place under the supervision of the Director of Social Services at the Center. b. Written permission was obtained beforehand from the appropriate staff person(s) and from the Augsburg College Institutional Review Board. c. Only information required on the questionnaire was compiled; all of it was recorded without reference to client.

The appropriate Minnesota Legislative Records were studied to reveal information regarding the passing of the new rulings. Hearings before the 1993 Legislature were recorded and made available to the researcher for study at the Legislative Tape Library in the State Office Building in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Procedures for Protection of Human Subjects

The need for confidentiality of torture victim clients is absolute. They are in danger of retaliation by the political opposition both here and in their country of origin. Clients have had their privacy repeatedly violated and they are subject to re-victimization here. The information gathered from files was done with written permission of the guardian agency and in respect to the Confidentiality Policy of The Treatment Center. The written manuscript of the study will be kept in the thesis document in the Augsburg College library and one copy will be in the researcher's home. The clients' names will not be revealed and any reference to the torture, the clients' places of residence, and other identifying data was not gathered for the manuscript.

CHAPTER IV. THE PROGRAM AND POLICY ANALYSIS USING CHAMBER'S MODEL

Introduction

This critique of the General Assistance policy and program focuses on clients and the social environment. Public policies are not enacted for the benefits of individuals; rather, they are designed for groups of people with common social problems (Chambers, 1993). Social policies often fail some individuals on some occasions; social workers are involved in finding ways to meet the urgent and individual needs that do not get solved neatly through identified programs.

It is the responsibility of professional social workers to know the policy system well enough to provide critical interpretation and input in program design in order to promote humane and helpful assistance for the clients that they serve. This analysis attempts to share information on the policy and programs of General Assistance, while shedding light upon the greater systems of public welfare development and reform.

According to Chambers, the current criteria with which contemporary social welfare programs of the U.S. are evaluated are equity, adequacy, and efficiency. Equity implies that the same treatment is given to persons of equal merit or virtue; it gives a sense of "fair treatment". Adequacy means that a decent standard of living, physically and mentally, is provided. This is known as distributive justice. Efficiency means that the product that is delivered is the best that it can be for a reasonable price (Gilbert, Specht, and Terrell, 1993).

For the purposes of this study, analysis of the policy is

concerned with the inherent conflicts of these criteria. This report strives to seek a balance and a flexibility between the defined needs of the social systems and the concerns of those in need.

Description of the Social Program and Policy Analysis

Analysis is "separating of any entity into its constituent elements" (Random House Dictionary, 1983). Analytic frameworks are step by step processes that define problems, collect information, and reach conclusions. The value-critical method of policy and program analysis of Donald E. Chambers is adapted for use in this research. It seeks not to describe a policy, but to analyze the policy in light of its appropriateness, i.e., how well it answers how things could be, not how they are. There is judgment involved in this task; values are given to the implementation and operationalization of the policy.

Part A of this two-step method of evaluation describes the context of the social problem to be explored; the history of that problem and the solutions sought to alleviate it; and the interpretations made of the resulting legislation by the judiciary system. In Part B, six operating characteristics of the policy and program are discussed in detail.

Part A - The Social Problem, Historical, and Judicial Contexts of the Policy and Program

An analysis of General Assistance demands an examination of the background and definition of the social problem. A search for the historical framework reveals political processes at work and the existence of a formal structure. The influence of the judiciary (defined as all federal and state courts) can be seen in the interpretation given to the policy through its implementation (Chambers, Partington and Jowell, 1979).

The questions for this analysis include: What is the problem, and why is it defined as such now? Is it a new problem? What are the precedents for the ideology being used to define the problem? It is necessary to know who the stakeholders are and how they are different from the stakeholders of the past. How have the courts made professionals responsible for the delivery of services? What is foreseen for the future?

The Beginnings of the Present System - From the 1930s to the Late 1960s in the U. S.

Between thirteen and fifteen million people lost their jobs in the early 1930s. The economic crisis of the times created more poverty than had ever been known in this country. Private agencies were no longer sufficient to meet the overwhelming needs of hungry and homeless people. The Great Depression that was precipitated by the stock market crash of 1929 forced the federal government into the business of providing social and economic aid (Trattner, 1989). A national response was warranted for a situation that was so pervasive in scope.

This era marked the end of three centuries of private and local responsibility. There was a shift in influence from that of the local assistance system of the English Poor Laws to that of a strong central socialism. President Roosevelt committed the government to attempting to ensure eight basic rights. Among these rights were a decent home for every family; adequate medical care; useful paid employment; and protection from poverty as a result of old age, sickness, or injury (Wacquant and Jones, 1989).

National social insurance and public assistance were two of the programs aimed at achieving these rights. General Assistance was part of the public assistance package for the New Deal, as the legislative response was called. General Assistance benefits were designed to be funded by the states and the counties to fit those who did not fall into other covered categories (i.e., work relief, social insurance, and categorical public assistance) (Trattner, 1989).

By 1940, the welfare system had become firmly entrenched in preventative work, as well as that of providing obligatory care. The judiciary interpreted welfare as a function of capitalism and as an insurer of stability (Mishra, 1981). Many families were back "on their feet" again, as World War II provided economic opportunity to women, as well as to men.

The post-war years brought a backlash to the welfare system. This reactionism stemmed from a sense of affluency in the predominant culture. Policies were enacted in state legislatures that aimed at deterring new applications for assistance. Allocation of funding did not keep up with real need. Poverty did not seem real to the policymakers and the voters, who were removed from it (Trattner, 1989).

The Civil Rights movement, the military involvement in Viet Nam, and the students' revolts in the 1960s against those in power brought the reality of poverty back into the public eye again. The Kerner Commission recommended an agenda for social change, charging that an "underclass of poverty" was responsible for growing crime and civil disorder. The response, the New Frontier programs of John Kennedy and the Great Society legislation of Lyndon Johnson, made heroic attempts to rescue the poor and remove a growing gap between them and the affluent.

Gronbjerg called these years a "watershed in the extension of citizenship" (cited in Friedman, 1981). The distinctions between entitlements and rights, as interpreted by governmental agencies, were argued in the court system. Court reviews were plentiful, with lawyers often representing entire groups of individuals questioning the decisions made by agency administration concerning who got what. Also under legal challenge were administrative procedures that infringed upon basic rights, issues of privacy, residency laws, and concerns regarding human dignity (Kahn, 1969).

The Moderation of the 1970s

Trattner(1989) called the Nixon years "transitional" ones. The election of 1968 began a move away from governmental support of welfare. The public was tired of the previous decade's challenges to the status quo of the power elite. Individualism and self-help became preferred attitudes for a vocal, influential segment of the social order. The ground became fertile for the social conservatism of the Reagan years.

Resentment grew among the middle and upper classes as they saw their hard-earned dollars being poured into the inner cities. Many citizens felt that they were the most important stakeholders - caring for the legacy of an America built with their sweat.

Undocumented persons were first excluded from a federal public assistance program in 1972. They were declared non-eligible for the new Social Security Income Program. Between 1972 and 1981, undocumented persons were excluded from major programs, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Food Stamps, Unemployment Compensation, student loans, and housing assistance. Other programs, including Medicare and Social Security programs for old-age, survivors, and disability benefits, were available to all who met the requirements (Education and Public Welfare Division, 1985).

These statutes restricting financial programs for undocumented persons followed a 1971 Supreme Court decision in Graham v. Richardson, 403 U.S. 365 (1971). This decision found state laws restricting public assistance for aliens to be unconstitutional, as they denied enforcement of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment and denied the exclusive power to the Federal Government to control the flow of immigration (Education and Public Welfare Division).

It was estimated in the early 1970s that approximately \$13 billion was being paid out annually in service to undocumented persons (Education and Public Welfare Division). This unfavorable view of a drain on the national budget coincided with the emergence of theories of the adverse effect of undocumented workers on the labor market. Both perceptions - of the enormity of cost, financially and

economically - began to change slightly in the late 1970s after significant legislative changes concerning immigration were enacted.

The Conservatism of the 1980s

The continuing poverty of individuals became somewhat overshadowed by an out-of-control federal budget in the 1980s. Threats to the social security provisions of the middle class surfaced at a time when more and more middle class jobs were being removed.

Reischauer (1989) noted a "new policy environment" in the late 1980s. He suggested that there was a more sympathetic attitude toward the population on welfare than there had been in the past. This may be tied in with the fact that there was a growth in numbers of homeless people and poor children. In addition, welfare supported what was seen as a less-than-adequate lifestyle.

Welfare reform became an item on the U.S. policy agenda in the late 1980s when President Reagan launched studies of ways in which to direct change in the system. An examination of the welfare system revealed significant dissatisfaction with the goals, objectives, and results of the current operation. A budget deficit influenced a limited revision of the system as the outcome.

During this time, the states failed to raise payments to meet inflation rates. The federal government largely withdrew from welfare policy with Reagan's New Federalism legislation and the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. There was a lack of conformity and greater experimentation in the administration of programs.

Financial assistance programs for those who were not citizens of the U.S. received similar threats to their existence. For example,

the Refugee Assistance Act of 1980 was set up with the optimistic goal of rapid self-sufficiency for each client. Four years later, Congress was shocked with the disputed findings that refugee welfare dependency rates were as high as 67 percent (Kerpen, 1971). The immediate reaction to these levels was to connect high dependency rates with chronic dependency among refugees, particularly those from rural, "less-developed" areas of the world.

Studies in the early years of the decade indicated that undocumented persons used public services more widely than was commonly thought (Van Ardol, 1979), and that the population was less transitory than had been imagined (Connor, 1982; Marshall, 1972; North and Houston, 1976; the Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens, 1976). The 1984 Texas study of Weintraub and Cardenas revealed that this use was concentrated in education and health programs, not in social services or public assistance funds. The 1984 California study by Muller had similar findings in this area (all cited by Education and Public Welfare Division, 1985).

There is a lack of equity, adequacy, and efficiency to the distribution of programs, both on a national level and from the states (North, 1982). One example is of a lesser benefits package granted by President Carter to Cubans and Haitians than that offered to Southeast Asians and to Eastern Europeans.

In 1980, ten states, including Minnesota, offered undocumented persons access to General Assistance. Seventeen states excluded this category altogether. Twenty-four states offered no significant programs (defined as those paying out more than \$1,000,000 per year in benefits). Nine offered no General Assistance programs to anyone (Education and Public Welfare Division, 1985).

The Situation in the 1990s and the Future

In 1993, six states other than Minnesota provided benefits for undocumented persons, while Minnesota's cut-off date was October 1, 1994. These states were California, New Jersey, the District of Columbia, Rhode Island, Maryland, and Florida. An amendment introduced by Senator Exon in the U.S. Senate was passed by an 85-2 vote that restated current law excluding undocumented persons from AFDC, SSI, food stamps, Medicaid, etc. It took a harder line initially, but was toned down in the course of debate.

The problem of poverty is very much with us in the 1990s. The numbers of poor people have shifted from being predominantly elderly to being largely composed of children. Changes in family structure and participation in the work force have occurred, and have profoundly affected those who historically have suffered more poverty. This includes African-Americans, Latinos, women, and recent immigrants (Cottingham, 1989).

The reform debate has carried into the present decade. As the federal government pulled out of welfare policy, the states took scattered control. State officials had previously not been concerned with more than acting as subcontractors to the federal government. Now states have begun to initiate some innovation in programs. Many of these programs have been in the form of work preparation and training.

What is the future of public assistance in the United States? It is unlikely that the country will ever again return to the optimism of the social reform policies of the New Frontier and the Great Society,

according to Trattner (1989). The unfulfilled hopes of the era have led many to turn inward to individualized concerns. This may result in the continuation of charity to the "deserving" poor, and those who are deemed worthy of assistance may be redefined as a group. Policy and program reform is certain; what is not predictable are future attitudes by the middle and upper classes towards the poor.

Part B - Analysis of Operating Characteristics

The functional, or operating, characteristics of the policy and programs should be consistent with the analyses they give to the underlying social problem. There are six operating characteristics of importance:

1. Goals and objectives
2. Forms of benefits or services received
3. Entitlement rules
4. Administrative or organizational structure for service delivery
5. Finances
6. Interactions with Other Services and Benefits

Goals and Objectives

In analyzing policy goals and objectives, it is important to measure outcomes, not services. This is in order to make the policy and programs accountable. Goals in social service programs define desired states of social conditions. They answer the questions: Why have this program? Objectives are not abstract, but are operational statements predicting outcomes.

The question has been raised, "Are we trying to reduce poverty or are we trying to reduce dependence?" (Ellwood, 1986). What are the goals of the policy?

General Assistance was designed not to reduce poverty, but to assist poor people in gaining financial aid. If it is not possible for an individual to work, the government will keep that person from starvation. Franklin Roosevelt affirmed this in 1944 with a Bill of Economic Rights (Wacquant and Wilson, 1989).

Public assistance was designed to offer a minimum level guarantee of income to meet basic living needs (Kahn, 1969). This is different from the goals of social insurance programs, which seek to maintain previous economic standards under conditions of interruption i.e., retirement, family crisis resulting in loss of earning power). Public assistance is not adequate and it is not guaranteed to all (Kahn). It is a system of redistribution of income based upon the philosophy that all that are able should work.

General Assistance in Minnesota is a two-pronged program. Those applicants judged to be able to work are put into Work Readiness, which pays them a subsistence amount during a period of required training programs. General Assistance benefits are unencumbered for those who are handicapped in a way that regular work would be impossible for them. This exemption requires a doctor's evaluation and approval from an administrator of the program. Objectives for General Assistance can be measured by the number of people who successfully find jobs within a reasonable time, or by those, unable to work, who are sustained by their payments.

Do General Assistance goals and objectives work to assist in

solving the social problem? Information is incomplete and reviews are mixed on this subject. Victims of torture without documentation do not reap any benefits from General Assistance.

Hogwood and Gunn (1984) offer a word of caution for policy analysts. They note that the stated and the real goals or objectives of people are often markedly different. Social control, in the form of charity and/or social welfare programs, is not unknown in the history of the United States, and has been seen as benevolent and desirable (Trattner, 1989).

It is difficult to measure the extent of the possible presence of racism, sexism, classism, or xenophobia in legislation. In Minnesota, attorneys and social workers of the Legal Services Advocacy Project who are members of the Latino community feel that the changes in General Assistance is a political move aimed directly at them. There are an estimated 11,000 undocumented persons of Latino origin in Minnesota, according to an Action Alert of the Catholic Peace and Justice Network of Minnesota (Spring, 1994). Representative Goodno, sponsor of the bill that terminated GA to undocumented persons, is from Moorhead, Minnesota, where there is a large Mexican-American migrant farmworker population and a strong local negative reaction to them (Floor Debate testimony, 1993). Women's groups feel that undocumented women who are the mothers of U.S. citizens have been specifically targeted with the loss of income.

Forms of Benefits and Services

Benefits come in various forms - material goods and commodities, expert services, subsidies, protective regulation, and others

(Chambers, 1993). General Assistance is given in the form of cash, which entitles the recipient to use it as (s)he chooses. What is the value of this cash payment versus in-kind benefits or subsidies?

Cost-effectiveness, consumer target efficiency, and stigmatization are three criteria that Chambers uses to evaluate forms of benefits and services. Benefits are often interrelated and can be used with each other. In this respect, there may be more equity in the "trade-offs" that are made in order to achieve maximum value. The combination of several programs may provide services that outweigh the benefits of each program added individually.

Cost-effectiveness for General Assistance is judged by the amount of money the government pays to provide essential living conditions. In-kind benefits, such as housing and Food Stamps, may seem to cost less, but their worth is extremely hard to gauge on a fair market (Chambers). Target efficiency means the consumer can find the most for the money on her/his own. Stigmatization is lowered when the client pays in money, rather than with script. Autonomy is defined as an important issue by many clients (Compton and Galaway, 1989).

Multiple benefits may be used in this system. For example, a client may also receive food stamps and public housing assistance, which are both credit/voucher benefits. Work readiness is often a stipulation for receipt of GA; this means professional services are offered to the client in the form of job preparation and counseling.

Is General Assistance reaching those who were targeted initially as beneficiaries? It is estimated that half of the eligible poor in the United States have received no benefits from public assistance (Kahn, 1969). Stigma or physical obstacles toward eligibility may

affect millions of those in need. Language and cultural barriers and xenophobia have made the use of GA difficult for many Latinos in Minnesota, according to social agency staff.

Entitlement Rules

Entitlement refers to the definition of specific types of eligibility and allocation rules (Chambers, 1993). This category of General Assistance welfare policy tests the set of rules that determine who gets what, when, how much, and under what circumstances. In this case, entitlement rules are not based on prior contributions, as are U.S. Social Security benefits; on entitlement by private contract, as in Workmen's Compensation payments; or on entitlement through administrative or professional discretion, such as is acted out in emergency benefits or with medical benefits. Eligibility and allocation is based upon administrative rule and judicial decisions through means testing (Chambers).

Means testing involves the presentation of a verifiable statement of income before approval for receipt of funds is made. Categories of eligibility are determined in the legislature, carried into effect by designated staff, and standardized according to a total of an individual's income and assets and his/her status. Means testing directly confines social benefits to "special" groups, focusing money on those deemed in "greatest need" (Gilbert, Sprecht, and Terrell, 1993).

The correspondence between the entitlement and eligibility rules and the targeted social problem is crucial to the success of the policy and program. What is the relationship between outcome and the ideology behind the policy enactment?

The U.S. Social Security Act of 1934, which included public assistance and social insurance programs, was an omnibus bill that was conceived with a dual nature (Friedman, 1981). While social insurance was an extension of the earnings of the individual, public assistance benefits were given by administrators to recipients. Public assistance was charity, not a matter of right. "Any stigma associated with the notion of the 'public dole' is justified as a means of preventing idleness and discouraging individuals from applying for public assistance" (Bowler, 1974: 10). The three-tiered structure of delivery of welfare (federal/state/local) reinforced the idea of money given only to those who had no choice in whether or not they could work (Friedman, 1981). The prevailing sentiments of those in power effected who got what. Designated groups, i.e., immigrants and refugees, could be left out of the system.

In this manner, local control allowed some areas to pay less to African-American clients than to white clients (Bowler, cited in Friedman, 1981). It was rationalized that blacks needed less money than whites to live.

The key issue here is that of entitlements versus social rights. Social rights, known as the redistribution of wealth in a society, rest upon the conviction that some dependency is unavoidable (Friedman). "The poor are always with us" is an old saying.

Entitlements, as charity, can be called impersonalized patronization (Friedman). Western culture has not created an answer to the question of whether or not to allow people to suffer simply because they could have made choices to avoid their plights. Attempts have been made to give the government the responsibility to determine

who is deserving and to allow private organizations to dispense assistance to the rest of those in need.

The stigma and shame of charity (entitlements) is a built-in component of public assistance (Friedman). The presence of this factor in the administration and delivery of General Assistance works against Chambers' criteria - that of a program that serves with equity, adequacy, and efficiency. In terms of equity, the rule is that welfare recipients should not gain more than the poorest who work. This interpretation of "fair treatment" gives a message that stigmatizes both welfare recipients and the working poor by inclusion. State grant levels are set on the basis of costs of basic needs by states; distributive justice (adequacy) is not consistently served with this formula that does not account for regional differences in living costs. Efficiency suffers in a system in which recipients are made conspicuously aware of their status.

For an entitlement to become a right, formal recognition is required. Friedman has observed that the legitimation of social rights through jurisprudence is beginning to take place in this country. Social rights can be created by statute. Statutes state a rationale behind the right and offer a legal recognition. Social rights can also emerge "from below" (as opposed to being legislated "from above"). This happens when an entitlement exists and serves as a "legal catapult from which an appellant may ultimately launch a claim that may (or may not) be deemed a right by a regular court of law" (Friedman, p.122).

The 1960s were a period of the strengthening of entitlement in the United States. Judicial rulings challenged and firmed up the

administrative decisions of welfare agencies. The 1990s to the present brought a closer relationship between entitlements and rights. Goldberg v. Kelly (1970), a landmark case, gives power to welfare recipients. It guarantees the right for every person to a hearing with due process of the law before benefits are terminated. Friedman wrote of the court system: "(Public) Assistance is here divorced from charity, from patronization, from any attitude of superiority on the part of the government vis-a'-vis the citizen", p. 129).

Administrative and Service-Delivery System

Social rights differ from other rights in that administration is needed to make them accessible to recipients (Friedman). Are the services of GA accessible to clients? Are they accountable? Does the system relate well to the diversity of its clientele? The value of the service-delivery system is judged against its ability to contribute toward the solution to the social problem (Chambers).

These questions cannot be answered with authority in this study. A survey concerned with the issues of staffing (numbers and ethnic and racial representation); of geographic location; and of the use of other agencies in referral would need to be undertaken to provide this information.

Accountability was not tested, although several notes on the questionnaires gathered for this paper refer to the social worker's contact with welfare administrators on the behalf of clients. Constitutional due process protects welfare recipients with the right to a hearing.

Financing and Other Fiscal Issues

The "bottom-line" reason given for the withdrawal of General Assistance funds for undocumented persons in Minnesota was lack of funding. Persons in favor of the bill supported the argument that \$2.9 million would be saved per year. Legislators arguing against the bill felt that the bill was not cost-effective. Counties will eat the cost elsewhere in the system; cost-shifting to taxpayers will take place as persons get their needs met elsewhere. What will be the price in the long run of the termination of care to clients? What of the potential costs of public health care?

Discussion of the 1993 Floor and Committee debate centered on the inhumaneness of non-preventative care, costs, and lack of other states that provide assistance. "Cadillac coverage" was the phrase used to describe General Assistance in a Minnesota that was a beacon for those who violated immigration law.

A fiscal analysis of a proposal to restore eligibility for undocumented persons who are caretakers of minor children estimated the cost to provide GA to one caretaker in each of seven hundred cases at \$1,806,420 for fiscal year 1996. Hennepin and Ramsey Counties have no definite count of undocumented persons affected by the changes.

It is difficult to estimate the numbers of persons in these categories. Studies have found that 27.4 percent of a large group of undocumented persons had received welfare prior to their seeking to legalize their situations (Van Ardsol, 1982). The Los Angeles County Department of Social Services denied 19,088 claims in a twelve-month period ending on June 30, 1980 because of a lack of legal status, saving an estimated \$50 million (Education and Public Welfare Division, 1985).

Interactions with Other Services and Benefits

In an ideal world, public assistance programs would work in cooperation with each other to offer each recipient minimum "floor" protection for her/his basic needs. In reality, the debate over the goals of the programs results in a system of inadequacies, overlapping, and gaps in coverage (Cottingham and Ellwood, 1989). For instance, public assistance programs stress work eligibility, although Kahn (1969) stated that there are proportionately few employable people on assistance.

There has been little research that has studied the interaction of the General Assistance program (or other welfare programs) with other social institutions (Cottingham). Cottingham felt that welfare reform would not be successful if it is not linked with other changes in the network.

CHAPTER V. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Results of the Questionnaires

Files of four clients of The Treatment Center were studied for information pertaining to this research. Of interest were the services that were used by clients after they had lost General Assistance resources. The resulting amount of intervention by social workers at the Center was also of concern to the researcher. Appendix A is a copy of the questionnaire used; its contents meet the approval of the Institutional Review Board of Augsburg College.

Three of the clients whose charts were reviewed are undocumented persons; all are diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and/or Major Depression; and all are currently being seen as clients of The Treatment Center. The lack of documentation is due to various reasons - the difficulties of obtaining pertinent information from the home country, the nonrecognition of political refugee status from the INS for the country of origin, the lack of understanding of the system and a paucity of resources for the clients. The clients are in preliminary stages of application for political asylum.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is characterized by the three domains of intrusive memories, avoidance, and arousal symptoms. Major depression can cause depressed appetite, withdrawal, suicidal tendencies, thoughts of death, poor concentration, loss of energy and concentration, and reduced interest in daily activities (DSM IIIR, 1987).

All clients had an initial social services assessment done by a

staff social worker. Documentation of some of the many subsequent direct contacts and indirect intervention was noted in the respective client charts. (The Social Services Director stated that notation is not entered into the charts regarding every action by a social worker on the behalf of a client.) The clients have been seen at the Center for at least the period of eight months covering the period from October 1, 1993 to the present.

Client One has an expired visa, but remains in public housing and receives General Assistance in Ramsey County. This person was sent notices of the impending cut-off of public assistance prior to October 1, 1993, but termination of funds never happened. Clients Two and Three have been completely dependent on housing, food, and small stipends from churches, social service agencies, and concerned individuals in the peace and justice community. Both are in transitional situations requiring new resources, and the latest caregivers hope that they will only be short-term providers. Client Two received housing and a small donation for living expenses from one set of benefactors for six months; he is now receiving funding from a different small group of individuals. He augments the stipend with a tiny income from collecting aluminum cans and doing odd jobs. He has obtained an old bicycle for transportation. Client Three was given housing and support by a small religious household. She will soon move into subsidized housing, although she has no income except what the religious household will give to her. The housing unit is described by the social worker as being geographically isolated from services and in a neighborhood that is potentially dangerous for a single woman.

Client Four received General Assistance for one month. He then moved in with another client and, with the help of The Treatment Center social worker, he found assistance in getting a part-time job through a work-training program. He received a work permit on 9-20-93. He continues to need help with obtaining clothing, groceries, and other items.

There was no grace period for the cut-off. Warning was given for two months in advance of termination of services.

According to written entries in client charts, obtaining assistance for these clients was a complex, time-consuming struggle to find and secure resources. Programs and housing that fit the needs of the clients were largely nonexistent; for the most part, sources were obscure, of minimal quality, and not readily available.

Resources obtained were often incomplete in terms of usefulness. For example, public housing was procured for Client Three; she could not move in immediately as she had no furniture or other furnishings. She had no funds for utilities or household goods. Food shelf groceries are available only once a month as a supplement for clients, although emergency provisions can be obtained for them with the aid of social services staff. A four-day supply is given at each visit. Clients must have transportation to the food shelf and for the return with their food.

All clients have required intensive assistance from the social worker assigned to them. They have received well over one hour a week of aid from the social work professional for many months. In addition, they have received hours of service from workers with other agencies. None of the clients speak English as their native language;

one cannot carry a conversation in English and requires an interpreter at The Treatment Center.

Client One experienced what most likely is an anomaly in the social welfare system. Client Four had adequate documentation to keep receiving monies. General Assistance was an important source of income while he waited for a work permit.

The questionnaires reveal that the economic worlds of undocumented clients, already considerably strained, are made more difficult without General Assistance. A large amount of physical and psychological support is required to enable them to survive. Assistance in problem-solving and finding resources is offered by the social work professionals, but the material goods (housing, clothing, money, and food) must be supplied by additional sources, which are not plentiful and are not readily available.

Reflections on the Policy and Program Analysis

The Center clients have experienced economic loss. What of the socio- and political implications of life without General Assistance? In assessing the impact of the non-availability of public monies to the clients, the author makes reference to the Chamber's program and policy system analysis done in this research paper. The impact of welfare history in the United States and the examination of six operating characteristics of public assistance provide insights into this question.

The historical precedents of Minnesota's termination of benefits for the clients reveal a strong commitment to a national welfare policy in the United States since the Depression era. Who the

beneficiaries of these programs are has been the subject of ambivalence and dispute. The question debated throughout this century has is: "Who needs (deserves) this?" When the clients served are not citizens of the country, the answer is even more difficult for a constituency to reach. The response to people who are not U.S. residents has cycled with the economic ups and downs of the nation and with the existing conservative or liberal political attitude. When people feel that they are doing well money-wise, benefits are spread wider to include more groups.

Legislative updates from Latino advocacy groups during the current session suggest that xenophobia is increasing in Minnesota. There may be significance in the fact that the present governor was elected by the moderate political vote in the last election, according to an attorney for Centro Legal.

The influence of institutional attitudes upon public policy may be significant. To neglect to consider the impact of prejudices in upon policy-making would be to discount the historical and judicial contexts of public welfare policy. In the past, equity and adequacy have sometimes been sacrificed in the name of efficiency; this may be a smokescreen for the institutionalism of racism, sexism, classism, and xenophobia (Trattner, 1989).

In terms of goals and objectives of public assistance, the outcome of the cessation of General Assistance benefits to these clients has been successful. They have not been given opportunity to develop dependence upon public welfare. Did Client Four go to work only because he had to in order to survive? Would more victims of torture come into Minnesota from their countries of origin - or from

other states with lesser or no benefits - for "free" money? These are questions of efficiency versus equity and adequacy that are not easily answered.

Perhaps a different form of benefits and services could avoid the potential for dependency. One client receives subsidized housing and medical care; could food commodities be offered without being considered attractive to potential misusers? What of the effects of the loss of buying power and choice for the clients?

If the clients' trauma is such that they cannot work, they may deserve entitlements. (This is not presently recognized as being so.) But whose responsibility are they? If they cannot return home, should Minnesota - or the federal government - or the United Nations - foot the bills? If the United States seeks to reduce poverty, not dependence, these clients may would be best served in Minnesota, with General Assistance, while they are clients of The Treatment Center. This is the attitude of The Treatment Center direct services staff, who frequently write letters of support to U.S. governmental agencies requesting subsidized medical care, economic assistance, and political asylum.

The cut-off of GA to undocumented victims of torture has resulted in a shifting of responsibility from public to private sector. Public assistance is being interpreted by the state to mean a minimum guarantee of income to exclusively those people who are legally sanctioned by the INS. The resources needed to sustain undocumented victims of torture - those, like the client sample, who are without relatives, community, or other means of assistance - come from the limited budgets of concerned agencies, groups, and individuals. The

non-profit organizations, including religious institutions, report that they are experiencing an escalation in the use of their services and benefits.

In the cases of Clients Two and Three, resources from the non-profit providers failed to adequately meet their needs. Joanne Meehan, Director of Social Services at The Treatment Center suggests that it may be idiosyncratic that these two clients found some resources; she is not certain that this could be easily duplicated for others.

Their subsistence is provided by communities of concerned individuals. In the terms of cost-effectiveness, the Minnesota Legislature has chosen the option of yielding few benefits at a low cost versus providing considerable benefits at a large cost to the taxpayers. Aid, in the form of help from non-profits and from individuals, yields care at what price? Researchers have not investigated the effects of the cost-shifting to other public programs and to private dollars that has taken place.

Arguments for target efficiency focus on the individualistic response to each of these clients. However, it is the opinion of the researcher that "the most for the money" is not happening for these clients whose living conditions may serve to delay the recovery of their independence, if not exacerbate their dependency.

The job of defining charity - who deserves to get what - was, in these cases, given to the private sector, resulting in the government being able to "wash its hands" of the subject. This allows for less controversy from the taxpayers, the majority of whom do not have close ties (by race, national origin, class, or experience) with undocumented victims of torture.

Charity, in these situations, is given by non-profit organizations that citizens can choose to give to on their own and with their own preferences. Charity is, in this way, dispensed on an individual, case-by-case basis. This help may be given face-to-face and benefit the recipients with genuine human warmth and contact. (It is also inadequate for various situations in terms of resources made available).

Inherent in the 1993 change in legislation is a message. Policymakers do not support the view that we live in an interdependent community in which some poverty is unavoidable. The undocumented is a group that is expendable; the citizens of Minnesota have changed their minds regarding the group's worthiness to receive help. There is a growing sentiment that they are here as freeloaders to participate in the benefits that hard-working Minnesotans have provided in the past (from testimony on audio-tapes of the 1993 Legislature's floor debate). Questions to be asked here are: what is the effect of stigmatization upon people who have received physical and psychological torture? What is the message that is transferred to women and people of color who do not feel that they have not been treated with the dignity and respect that human beings deserve?

For people who are without their homes, have lost many loved ones, and are without income in a new land, uncertain reliance upon agencies, individuals, and groups works to remove dignity (Devore and Schlesinger, 1987). For people who are also in distress as a result of experiences of torture, it is to be in a situation again where they are at the mercy of others.

Social work professionals are pledged to uphold fundamental

values that include "the worth, dignity, and uniqueness of all persons as well as their rights and opportunities" (Compton and Galaway, 1989). The nature of the work is to promote and support conditions that honor these values. The NASW Code of Ethics says that the expansion of choice and opportunity should be made available to everyone, and those who are oppressed or disadvantaged should be receive special attention within the social milieu.

Minnesota has chosen to support the prevailing national policy of excluding undocumented persons from receiving public assistance dollars. Based upon my understanding of the socio-economic and political implications of the legislation, upon my sentiente for social justice, and upon my ethical responsibilities as a social work professional, I am committed to exploring the means by which to facilitate a renovation of the social system.

It is a grand gesture to imagine that what is now seen as the role of charity can be redefined into social rights (or even entitlements) in the immediate future. However, I believe that social work aspires to such high standards. Social work professionals in Minnesota, whose clients include undocumented victims of torture, are called to work for the provision of resources, services, and opportunities that will optionally enhance the quality of the lives of the clients that they serve.

CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSION**Implications for Social Work Practice**

I see that there a number of tasks that social workers can do to assist undocumented clients. They are:

1. to engage in supportive relationships with other caregivers.
2. to serve as informed resource and advocacy providers and to work to enhance the problem-solving and developmental skills of clients.
3. to educate others to promote an understanding of the situation for the undocumented.
4. to work to provide or create needed services.
5. to challenge the status quo on micro, mezzo, and macro levels of involvement.
6. to creatively use research in order to enhance the work at hand.

These tasks are explored in more detail in the following paragraphs:

1. Networking in supportive relationships (coalitions, task forces, support groups, etc.) provides information regarding issues, problems, and relevant trends. Assistance, advice, and verbal and written support are available from members. Talents and personpower are joined together to make effective the tactics devised to meet the needs of clients.

Since the rumors of the impending legislation surfaced a year ago, individuals and organizations concerned with the plights of undocumented persons in Minnesota have formed several coalitions. One

group in St. Paul disbanded after losing its leadership to another task force; the leader was sponsored by La Raza Federation. It published a resource list of agencies to aid social and legal workers in making appropriate referrals for services.

The Legal Services Advocacy Project and Centro Legal, Inc. co-chair a task force with the mission of "softening the severity of the law that was passed last session... Our broader mission is to combat the negative attitudes and misperceptions held by Minnesotans towards those who are undocumented". This group is concerned with persons who have come to Minnesota in search of jobs, (sometimes at the bidding of Minnesota businesses), or are escaping from war and persecution. At the time of this writing, they are preparing an amendment to the Omnibus Bill that would return to GA eligibility any caretaker of a child under age 18 and any undocumented person who resides with and is a member of a family that includes at least one other person legally residing in the United States on a status other than a nonimmigrant status.

This active task force is concerned with making General Assistance reinstate some of the groups of individuals that lost funding October 1, 1993. They are "walking a fine line" between acting to aid families and placating the public while diluting the issue. There is fear that the "real issues" of xenophobia and racism and classism may be ignored in the efforts to achieve funding.

The following organizations are supporters of the task force:

Asian-Pacific Council

Casa de Esperanza

Centro Legal

Children's Defense Fund

Chrysalis
 Coalition for the Homeless
 Council on Black Minnesotans
 Joint Religious Legislative Coalition
 La Raza Federation
 Legal Services Advocacy Project
 Mid-Minnesota Legal Assistance
 Migrant Legal Services
 Minnesota Battered Women's Coalition
 Neighborhood House, Inc.
 Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services
 Spanish Speaking Affairs Council
 State of Minnesota Ombudsperson for Family and
 Children
 Urban Coalition

2. It is important for social workers to be clear about their responsibilities, goals, and values. The focus of all social work is on encouraging, and providing opportunities for, client self-development.

In addition, social workers must seek to stay informed about available resources. Social work professionals at the Treatment Center are challenged to be advocates for their clients. They serve as informants about the charitable system of public assistance. They use the power of their profession to ensure that entitlements are delivered to clients. They assist attorneys in preparing applications and defending social rights.

One advocacy strategy for social workers is that of developing

an understanding of the language of the Department of Human Service's instructions to county agencies for implementing GA. Knowledge of the hierarchical divisions of administration is an important tool that has been used effectively to aid individual cases.

3. There is a need to build a constituency among the public. Education must be on-going and broad and it can be done through formal or informal instruction.

On a formal level, training can be provided for INS officers and judges to aid in the identification of torture victims, to expedite asylum claims, and to prevent re-traumatization through INS investigation. Educational opportunities can be offered for other care providers and for the general public. Less formally, education is accomplished with exemplary role modeling in the private and the professional capacities; this means acting to prevent sexism, classism, racism, xenophobia, and all forms of institutional attitudes.

4. If the resources offered are incomplete, new and/or expanded services may be started. Every social worker has experience in problem-solving and planning, and should have knowledge of grant-writing. For example, coalition of religious institutions could be united to offer household furnishings for torture victims without documentation. The creation of additional treatment centers and other agencies to serve torture victims is being discussed at an international level.

Alternatives should be explored that attempt to meet the problem at its source. Non-welfare alternatives extend beyond policy revision. Resources could be devoted to prevention, with welfare

being the last system tapped for assistance. Ways in which to expedite obtaining legal council for victims could be investigated. Public programs or private institutions could offer expanded nurturing services for those who suffer mental anguish and physical disabilities from the experience of torture.

5. Change can occur on all levels of involvement. The Treatment Center works with its board of directors to try to meet the challenge for its clients. In addition to providing direct services, it offers outreach and education to the community. It employs a human rights lobbyist in Washington, D.C. and it is working to write legislation that would re-include victims of torture under G.A. in Minnesota.

Bruce S. Jansson describes the use of policy practice, a new dimension of the social work profession which uses "conceptual work (which includes the tools of policy analysis), interventions, and value clarification to develop, enact, implement, and assess policies" (1990: pp. 24). Policy practice involves strategizing to change social programs through policy change. Because policy options are shaped by the values and interests of policy analysts, those people in the social work profession are experts, who could be given the task of influencing the political process in the interest of clients.

The choice for future policy makers will be to decide how much time and effort to spend on reforms of the welfare system and how much to spend on wider issues that affect clients who receive General Assistance.

6. Research can be done through an examination of resources, needs and desires, and attitudes. This can add to the body of knowledge of the issue and can enhance both policy and practice.

Suggestions for further research are in the next section of this chapter.

Implications for Further Research

Legislative attempts to reinstate particular groups of undocumented persons on the General Assistance rolls would benefit from hard data regarding the people (including children) affected by the change in law. For example, efforts at counteracting the stunning impact of a proposed \$5 million projected cost to reinstate caretakers of children could be enhanced with a reliable census of the number of undocumented persons who lost GA on October 1, 1993. The fiscal analysis was done by the Minnesota Department of Human Services with admittedly much inaccurate information.

A survey of those eligible now, or those who would be using the services now, would also be important to groups working to replace lost benefits. A measurement of the impact of xenophobia on the output of the Minnesota Legislature (if it could be attempted!) would be significant information. Research that would define the long-range impact of not providing subsistence for undocumented victims of torture would have to measure projected dollars spent by public and private agencies on related services. These numbers would include social work time.

Narratives of clients who have no welfare benefits would present personal pictures of pain and suffering that could have been avoided in this country. Family members may be directly affected by the termination of GA benefits to one parent, as well.

Since October 1, 1993, several new clients have been seen at The

Treatment Center who have no income. They have not ever received General Assistance. A study designed to investigate their long-term use of resources would be of value.

Limitations of the Study

An analysis of a legislative policy is a complicated procedure, for much discussion and decision-making goes on "behind the scenes" in closed conversation, as well as in public exchanges. The researcher was not present during the months preceding the implementation of the General Assistance policy changes. Presence at meetings of two groups working in the winter of 1994 to amend the bill offered insight into the legislative process.

Policy is not always an outcome of a majority public opinion, but rather it is made by groups who hold power. Therefore, this research attempted to be an introduction into the study of the forces that affect victims of torture with limited resources who reside in the United States. Restrictions to this study include the lack of a reliable tool for measuring institutional attitudes towards certain groups.

The sample from which the questionnaire material was drawn is small. This information added validity to the study, but it would have been more effective if the group studied was of one ethnic background and national origin. A thorough search for resources unique to the community (i.e., settled immigrants, religious institutions) then be accomplished.

In the area of public policy, there is great value in interviewing people who are strategically placed (Jansson, 1990).

They have invaluable information concerning the implementation of existing policies. These key informants include legislative aides and agency staff. Interviews with the legal services professionals who worked to oppose last year's legislation and with members of legislative staff would have added strength to this project.

Personal interviews with clients would add validity to any study. Information regarding the experience of being on the receiving end of public policy would be of value to researchers.

The research is short term and this limits the study. Additional time (perhaps the client's length of treatment at The Center) would allow a longitudinal study with more information generated for the reader and the researcher.

Conclusion

General Assistance benefits of \$203.00 for individual recipients provide a degree of comfort. This money buys only the meager basics of life, but it allows its holders some choices in their living arrangements. The loss of the allotment for undocumented persons leaves some undocumented persons without resources. In addition, it gives a message of social undesirability to this category of clients. Social control, ever a part of public assistance, is made evident in this expression.

In the cases of four undocumented clients of The Treatment Center, who were also victims of torture, their fragility enabled them to receive the services of a social services department of a privately-funded humanitarian organization. An intensive amount of participation by social workers has kept the clients precariously equipped.

There are challenges for social work professionals regarding the social policies that affect their clients. They have a responsibility to analyze and to evaluate the resulting programs in their roles as resource providers and as advocates for clients. In their commitment for social change that enhances the lives of victims of torture; that empowers women; and that combats institutional attitudes of racism, sexism, classism, and xenophobia; social workers are called to search for ways in which they can work to interpret and to influence policy-making and program planning.

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