

Social Work in the 80's



By TAMARA WRIGHT
Staff Writer

The rise of the social worker is everpresent as more and more problems arise in the lives of many people. President Reagan's proposed budget cuts, however, may limit and perhaps eliminate many of the services that the Department of Social Services render to the public, not to mention jobs.

Mrs. Treva Thomas and Mr. Ronald Peterson both gave speeches on "The Role

of the Black Social Worker in the 1980's" at a seminar with the same title, and gave their ideas about the role of the social worker. Both felt that the role of the social worker must concur with the needs of the public in accordance with a limited budget. Back in the 50's, the social worker was an "all around" professional dealing with mental health, rehabilitation, school counseling, and service. As the nation grew older and wiser, the demand for social workers was at a steady incline, and areas of

specialization became mandatory to the field, especially in the 70's. Medicine, protection, probation officers for juvenile and federal purposes, and gerontology entered the field, creating more jobs, and giving new incentive to potential social workers. Additional funds were made available to the department as the "new" social workers began to service the public.

The Reagan administration, however, is threatening the field of social work because of proposed budget cuts, and because of public misconceptions about the clientele of the social worker.

Today there are many common misconceptions about the recipients of welfare. The most prevalent is that people are poor because they don't want to work, when in actuality, 70% of the welfare clientele are children under 12 receiving aid from a program called Aid to Families with Independent Children.

Many people also believe that the majority of welfare clients remain poor. However, many of the families who receive money from AFDC are only supplied with these funds for no more than two years, and the majority of them, for less than two years.

Another common belief is that most welfare recipients are black and other non-white ethnic groups. Sixty-nine percent of the welfare recipients are actually white, contrary to belief.

Many people feel that poor people don't spend their money wisely. Studies show that 80% of welfare money is spent on food, clothing, medical expenses, and transportation.

Many believe that welfare families receive payments that are too high. However, the official poverty income level of \$7,450 for a non-farm family is not met by the welfare program in 24 states.

The social worker must work hard to alleviate these misconceptions, and must also make the public aware of the other services provided by the department other than monthly welfare checks.

They also support families who receive aid to dependent children, the elderly, blind, and disabled, give funds to children who are orphaned by fate or court actions and are placed in foster homes. Protective services are available to prevent child abuse, and legal, homemaker, limited medical service, and food stamps are available to those who qualify.

Today's social worker must take on numerous roles. First, as a political activist, the social worker must vote as well as run for political offices, because all social programs are tied to politics economically. Next, the social worker must become a "fund raiser" because money is always needed in this field, and money donated by private industries is becoming scarce. The social

worker must also become "internationalized" due to the vast amount of foreigners

in America. And last but not least, the social worker must become a social activist to bring about change and make things happen.

The challenges that the social worker of the 80's must face are to create new methods of social work and to think of things to do as a social worker to rid the public of their misconceptions. All ideas must be based on the needs of the time.

The job outlook for social work is immeasurable, according to Denise Willis, senior Sociology/Pre-Social Work major. "As long as there are problems in the world today, there will be a

need for social workers, and the world is not getting better, it's getting worse...about 50% of the social work majors here at E.C.S.U. will receive jobs with a bachelor's degree.

The opportunity is there if you take it, and E.C.S.U. prepares you well for a career in social work."

"I chose social work as my major because it is a 'helping profession,' and I love to help people. You get a lot of practical experience here. You can do volunteer work in various health centers and classrooms. If you want to, you can either observe, or work directly with the clients."

Spring Concert Tour

By Kit Cole
Staff Writer

The Elizabeth City State University Choir, under the direction of Billy C. Hines, completed its annual week

long Spring Concert tour, Sunday, April 5. An alumnus, Vendetta Sutton served as the choir's accompanist.

On Monday, March 30, at 1:25 am, the choir departed the University grounds with its designation being Penn-

sylvania, New Jersey, and New York. On arrival, at the many churches and schools at which they sang, the choir was greeted warmly by

alumni and friends of Elizabeth City State University who served as

hosts. After providing entertainment for audiences, the choir was housed in the homes of their hosts.

"I wish to thank the scores of alumni and supporters in the areas visited for con-

tinuing to make our concert tours possible," Hines said in expressing his gratitude.

The students who comprise the ECSU Choir enjoyed different aspects of the tour:

"Not only did I enjoy visiting different areas, I also enjoyed the different cultures

and atmospheres in which we sang," said Annie Barnett, "A Moravian church provided a rather foreign culture. We sang at an all-white school, where we were received quite well."

"New York City bought theatres, dance studios, and expensive food, but for us, Burger King," said Pricilla Williams.

Moved by the classical selections, spirituals, and popular songs, each audience more thoroughly enjoyed the choir's rendition of Schuman's "When The Saints Go Marching In," and excerpts from "Porgy and Bess."

Sunday, May 2, 1981, at 8:15 pm, the Choir performed their annual Spring Concert in Moore Hall Auditorium.

