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ABSTRACT

The Plantation Adult Basic Education Program started in 1970 as an alternative to poverty for sugar cane workers in Louisiana. The document discusses the various aspects of the poverty conditions that exist in the area, such as: housing, diet, health, education, and lack of consumer information, and how these existing conditions are to be changed through the adult education program. Also outlined are a brief history of the program; the various kinds of help obtained from the program's sponsor--Southern Mutual Help Association; four program objectives (raising the educational level of workers, advising workers of available assistance, assisting workers and their families with diet and food preparation, teaching budgeting and effective purchasing); the goal of process experimentation and analysis; and the program's rationale. Broad conclusions are discussed with special emphasis on the creation of a learning laboratory and future plans for the program itself. (BP)

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THE PLANTATION ADULT BASIC
EDUCATION PROGRAM

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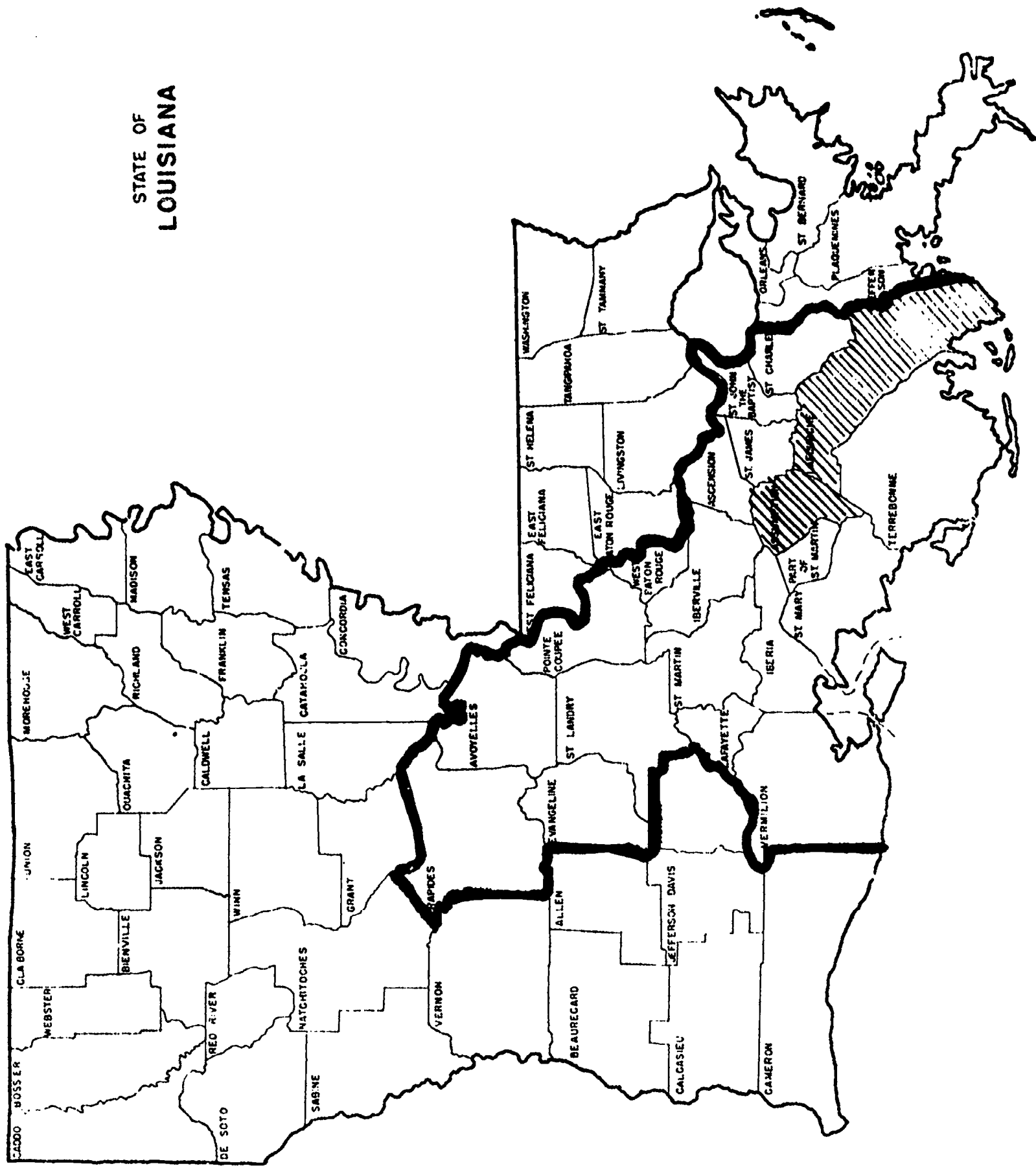
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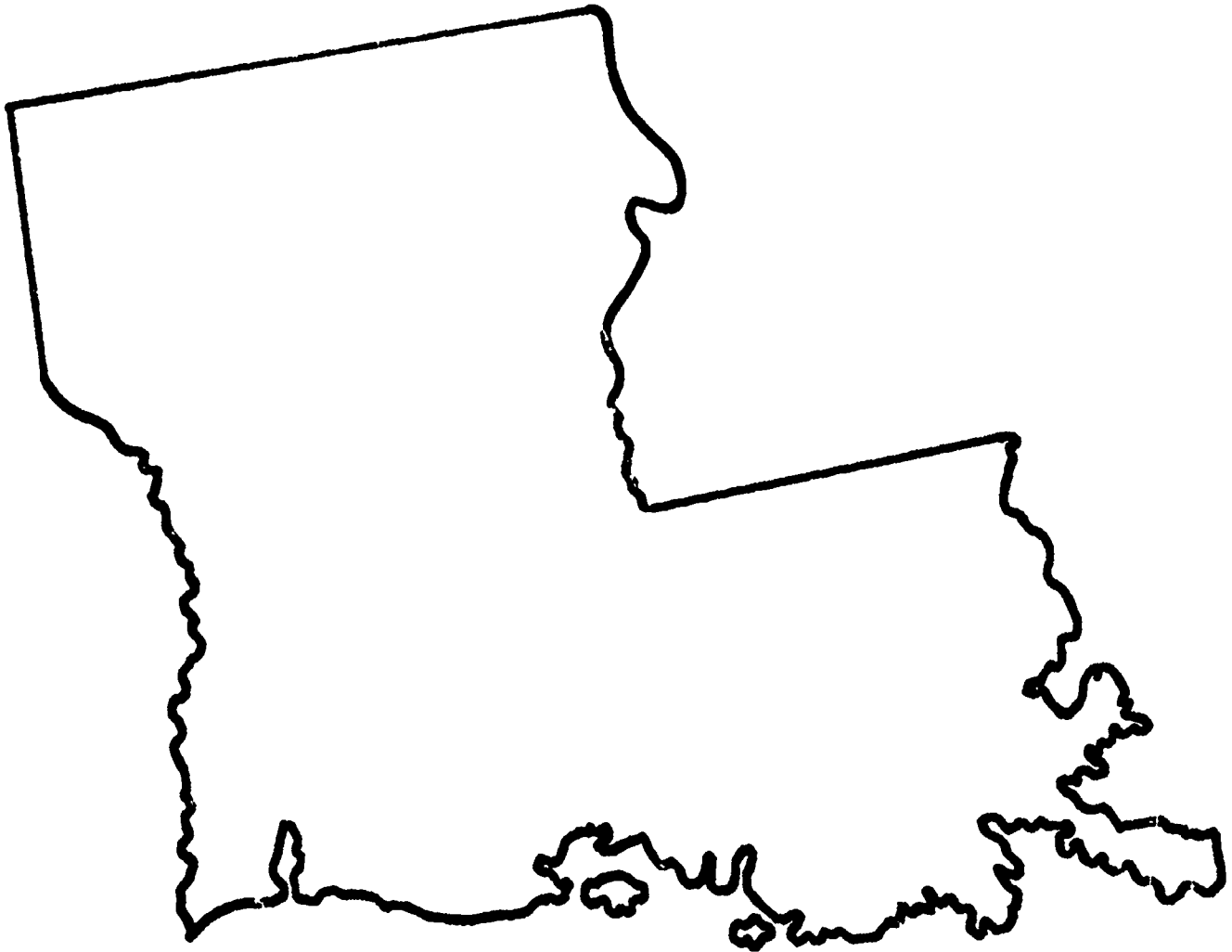
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CF 002 925

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STATE OF
LOUISIANA





PLANTATION ADULT BASIC
EDUCATION PROGRAM

"in the heart of sugar cane country"

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THE INTRODUCTION:

AN ALTERNATIVE TO POVERTY

THE INTRODUCTION:

AN ALTERNATIVE TO POVERTY:

THE PLANNED USE OF RESOURCES

Poverty in the midst of plenty is barbaric. It captures its victims with indifference to human values and holds them with unrelenting oppression. Its grasp resembles a dark, dawnless night unbroken even by a star of hope. The cyclical character of poverty feeds itself on succeeding generations. It is monstrous and its grip can only be broken by equal determination to alter its causes and conditions. The only alternative to carefully planned, sometimes drastic action is a continued, parasitic dependence by millions on a benevolent society for the means of an ignominious survival.

Poverty's ignoble nature gives rise to and perpetuates crime, dishonesty, low regard for human worth and a variety of suffering including disease, malnutrition, starvation and death. It thrives on ignorance, hostility, fear and unfounded prejudice. It is, at the outset, a base denial of equality of opportunity to achieve, and allows unequal access to the means whereby one can refine his inherent skills. It destroys ambition, incentive and self-reliance, thus causing its victims to despair of an escape and to sire offspring who believe poverty to be a normal if not deserved circumstance.

The pursuit of a better life is at once a right and a responsibility in a free society. There will always be those who succeed to greater degrees than other because they are better endowed, use their skills more effectively or possess greater determination. This type of merited achievement gives America its dynamic. What a free and democratic society cannot long survive is lip service to equality of opportunity while it systematically ignores the plight of those to whom opportunity is unavailable. One has postulated that the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference. "Let him pull himself up by his own bootstraps" is meaningless to those without boots.

So, the generous and the sensitive decide to broaden the base of opportunity. Their motive is to use our plentiful resources, not to guarantee each poor person riches, but to provide at least the chance to develop and use his skills and intelligence. The sporadic, hit and miss approach does not work. Education, employment, training, decent housing, consumer assistance and health care must be provided at least on a minimal basis to insure that the poor desire and know

how to change their condition and become self-supportive. This is not anemic do-goodery. It is a planned, systematic, carefully administered investment in people and in our national future. A nation is as great as its people. There is no mystique about the poverty that demeans a substantial portion of Americans. It can be solved; its grip loosened. To tolerate poverty in this age is to admit that we are all less than we might be, in character and in resolve. The Plantation Adult Education Program is one small ray of light and hope in the cane workers' endless night of poverty. Let it glow!

PART ONE:

THE SETTING

PART ONE: THE SETTING

CONDITIONS IN THE AREA SERVED

HOUSING

The living conditions of field workers and their families in the Louisiana sugar cane industry prompted one author to write an engaging series of articles called: "Behind the Cane Curtain". The shacks housing workers defy the imagination in late twentieth century America. While they are invariably clean and well kept on the inside, there are evidences of deterioration through neglect. Profit demands play a large part in compelling growers to reduce upkeep costs on workers' homes to the barest minimum. Severe heat and cold, according to the season, rats and other vermin are common because of lack



of maintenance. The workers themselves make some repairs as they are able to obtain supplies. More costly upkeep is left to the owners to do as they feel is required. Many of the "shotgun" shacks have dangerously rotting front porches with wire holding posts in place which in turn support roofs of tin that are worn, rusty and leaking. One finds himself consciously walking in carefully measured steps while approaching the front door.

DIET

Housing is not the only area of concern. Income limitations place severe restrictions on food purchasing. Beans, rice and home grown vegetables constitute the most frequent

fare. Occasionally, a worker and his family will get enough ahead to buy and raise a hog for consumption. Many food purchases must be made from the company commissary because long standing debts do not leave enough income to buy from retail establishments and workers cannot get credit anywhere other than from the growers for whom they work.

HEALTH

Health care and medical attention are spasmodic, again due to cost and partially due to inaccessibility. Programs like S.M.H.A.'s Family Health Center are helping provide general purpose health care, but it is difficult for such programs to adequately meet the need. Worker health is such that frequent inability to perform and protracted illness are common. Many workers have large families. Lack of nutrition, infrequent medical attention and sub-standard housing bring about a disproportionately large number of illnesses among children.

EDUCATION

Lack of education and resulting illiteracy serve to keep plantation workers in their current plight by making it virtually impossible for them to locate and hold other employment. The average educational level for plantation residents is the third grade. Children of farm families quit school at an early age in order to work the fields and add to the family support. Two persons out of every plantation family drop out of school. What appears expedient, if not in fact essential, at the time turns out to perpetuate the poverty cycle of the family for still another generation.

CONSUMERISM

Another factor serving to impoverish workers is their lack of sophistication in consumerism. Because of limited exposure, they are rather easy prey for marginal and fraudulent dealers and merchants. When products and services turn out to be sub-standard, the worker and his family are usually bound legally and have insufficient income to resort to other means. Frequently, they are in fact still in debt for the original purchase. Legal assistance in cases where the workers might have an alternative, is, like all other professional services, almost entirely out of their reach. Fees for such representation merely serve to further tax an already overburdened budget. Only government related legal programs can fill the gap and they fall far short of the need.

CHANGING THE CONDITIONS

The oppression, disease, malnutrition, and constant financial strain are a way of life to these people. To most Americans, the existence of such conditions is absolutely unfathomable. This is the setting in which the Plantation Adult Basic Education program works to bring change. The talented, sensitive staff has a slight edge on most of us. Not only do they care, but they communicate. Many have known cane plantation life first hand. They are welcomed and listened to by their clients as members of the family - that larger family of concern, compassion and the long hoped for better life. Social scientists now acknowledge that actually reaching and enlisting enthusiasm from the target population often poses a greater problem for social programming than designing and delivering a workable technology. Like all human beings, the workers find it difficult to place confidence in professionals who have not experienced their conditions. They trust instinctively those who "know what it's like" on the plantation. They trust and they hope for change. The Plantation A.B.E. Workers know they must have that trust before anything can be accomplished. They are building on that confidence to help the workers help themselves. This labor is part of a concerted effort to alter the conditions which the New Orleans States-Item called "living in the shadow of death".

PART TWO:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
PLANTATION A.B.E. PROGRAM

PART TWO: A BRIEF HISTORY

HOW THE PLANTATION A.B.E. PROGRAM STARTED

The Plantation Adult Basic Education Program for sugar cane workers began in 1970. Southern Mutual Help Association knew the need to do something to raise the educational level of workers and their families and vigorously pursued Federal, state, local and private funding for this purpose. In July, 1971, demonstration program monies became available from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The initial grant was approximately \$72,000.00, for one year of programming.

At the outset, there were volunteer workers led by a 17 year old freshman student at Antioch College named Paul Liem and a skilled, young Black woman of 19 years, Joyce Hadley, herself a product of sugar cane plantation life. There are presently seven staff members, all familiar with the plight of the workers from first hand experience.

Paul spent six months on the porches, in the fields and in the homes of sugar workers listening to their needs. The plantation workers themselves set functional education as a priority and actually designed the program. The families truly feel it is their program. The outstanding work of Paul Liem, the other qualified student workers and the original team members cannot be exaggerated. These gifted young people divided into teams of two persons and took their "message" to the plantation workers by holding classes in the homes. Often the most primitive conditions, not at all conducive to effective learning, existed and were transcended by the determination of the staff to communicate and to see results.

Project records indicate that in excess of five hundred workers or family members have attended classes or been helped in some way by the program since its inception. The staff has conducted sewing classes, crocheting classes, classes in recipe making, cooking and food preparation classes. The program has rendered assistance to pupils in reading, writing, arithmetic and other subjects consistent with the functional education thrust of the program.

The Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, from the beginning, assisted the program with generous monetary gifts and moral support. The local welfare offices have used Plantation A.B.E. staff as a valuable communication link from the service provider to those in such dire need of the services.

One of the important functions the staff sees itself continuing to perform is in the area of contacts, information-gathering and referral to existing agencies which are able to and willing to help.

H.E.W. provided a second year grant for continuation of the demonstration effort and to support the worthy aim of A.B.E. to find other, more local and more long term funding assistance.

The Plantation program has a staff of seven workers. There is a coordinator, a secretary and an instructor. There are four outreach workers. These titles are somewhat misleading, however, since most of the workers have the ability to provide instruction and do so regularly. These have, since the beginning of the program, been people with a purpose. They have no regular hours. They work long days and many nights because they must make themselves available when the workers have time for them.

Thanks to Dr. Ted Pennock and the Tuskegee Institute, three of the staff members were able to spend two weeks on campus refining their skills and gaining new insights. Dr. Pennock gave his own time for a period of on-site analysis and assistance to the program.

With this type of help and with the patience and capability of the staff, the Plantation A.B.E. program has made great strides toward raising the educational level of workers and toward achieving their other goals. In one year alone, one hundred twenty-three persons were enrolled in the instructional portion of the program. Remembering that the program had far more to do than merely instruct, the success of the project to date has been a credit to those who had the vision, initiated the program and insisted that it continue in the face of a variety of obstacles. Their talent has made the effort a success.

PART THREE:

THE SPONSORING AGENCY

PART THREE: THE SPONSOR

SOUTHERN MUTUAL HELP ASSOCIATION

Southern Mutual Help Association, located in Abbeville, Louisiana, is the sponsoring institution for the Plantation Adult Education Program. This outstanding non-profit corporation is extraordinarily active in designing, obtaining support for and operating programs calculated to alleviate the misery of disadvantaged persons working and residing in Southern and Southwestern Louisiana.

S.M.H.A.'s program plan covers a wide range of services each based on an identified and indisputable need. The agency seems especially concerned about and singularly adept at helping seasonal and migrant agricultural workers. Included in their program schematic are highly organized and efficiently operated efforts in the areas of improving sub-standard housing, locating employment opportunities, a general purpose, comprehensive health clinic, emergency school assistance and, of course, the adult education program for field workers in the sugar cane industry.

These programs are characterized by tangible evidence of effective planning, enthusiastic participation, broad support including that of the communities they serve, and utilization of virtually all available resources. They are also carefully administered. Cost consciousness, good management and getting the greatest possible programmatic value for the dollar expended are trademarks of S.M.H.A. programs.

Competent personnel assist the various program units in planning, operating, finding and mobilizing resources, field work such as establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with community agencies, and upgrading the quality of services.

S.M.H.A. insists upon a blend of genuine compassion and unquestioned competence. They tolerate neither wasteful extravagance nor unbending adherence to traditional concepts. Their goals and programs are based on what can be accomplished to effectively meet the needs of their clientele within the scope of available resources. Alternatives to expensive programs are regularly examined. If they do not serve to diminish quality, these alternatives are utilized. Agency planners are willing to experiment, as all good social technicians must, but never lose sight of the ultimate goal: to enable economically, socially and culturally disadvantaged persons to have and avail themselves of the opportunity for richer, fuller, more productive lives.

The S.M.H.A. logogram shows two hands of separate races joining. Nothing could better depict the agency's philosophy. Experience indicates that citizens of varying races, cultures, backgrounds and economic levels, uniting with a single purpose and sincerity, accomplish that which appears impossible. S.M.H.A. dares the difficult, devises a work strategy, mobilizes support and measures effectiveness. They plan for ordered progress and they succeed in their plan.

PART FOUR:
THE OBJECTIVES

PART FOUR: THE OBJECTIVES

A. RAISING THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF WORKERS

Among the highly ambitious goals of the Plantation Adult Education Program is the desire to raise the educational level of the cane field workers. It is enormously difficult to accomplish and is inter-related with better housing, better roads and transportation, improved health facilities and care, and changing of attitudes on the part of the public, the growers and the workers themselves. Not any less important is an increased emphasis on the planning the size of families so that income is more adequately matched to the requirements for establishing and maintaining the conditions of a decent existence.

As it is, educational levels are affected because so many find it essential to quit school while still in the early grades in order to assist in supporting very large families. Without an adequate education and knowing nothing except farm work, they then become captives of the process, have large families and thus perpetuate the cycle. Limited knowledge and skills restrict their earning power in such a way as to make access to health, housing, clothing and additional education virtually out of their reach.

One factor adding to the perpetuation of inadequate education is a severe lack of motivation. Often there simply is no great incentive to receive an education; no real sensitivity to its value for the present or future. Where such a value is perceived, there still is conflict with the urgent need for additional family income.

Still another barrier to overcome in raising worker's educational levels is the frequent hostility on the part of some to such a prospect. There is always the fear of the unknown. We know what extra income will do. What will education do? What jobs and how much will we make? Working for whom and doing what? Then some growers likely feel that the industry is dependent upon the availability of an abundant, low cost labor supply - that to offer better salaries and conditions would increase costs to the points of sacrificing profits. They naturally fear the loss of such a labor supply through increased education and its resultant demands from workers for a better way of life.

In order to see the magnitude of this programmatic aspiration, one must confess that the task is far greater than simply defining, establishing and delivering educational services, however well designed and intended and however skillfully

delivered they may be. The real task is the creation of a climate in which these services are desired, interpreted as valuable, demanded and utilized. All of this effort has to be integrated into a sensitive and systematic, multi-faceted program of remedies for the other ills from which cane workers suffer. This is precisely what S.M.H.A., and the Plantation Adult Education Program seek to do.

The goals of raising educational levels are not viewed as independent, but rather as a part of a system of goals. These goals are, in turn, part of a range of programs spanning a multiplicity of problems created, intensified and perpetuated by poverty in the midst of abundance.

B. ADVISING WORKERS OF AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE

Most of those who labor in the sugar cane fields simply do not know of legislation passed by the congress and by the state legislature which provides to them certain opportunities for relief. Until the beginning of S.M.H.A.'s efforts through the Plantation Adult Education Program, many had never been told of welfare assistance, food stamps and other services. Knowledge of these programs and services has led, predictably, to greater utilization of them and to benefits to the workers and their families. Provision of food alone has been of incalculable assistance. While the situation with nourishment, adequate housing and income is still critical, it is and can continue to be vastly improved over the past when such assistance was non-existent or only infrequently utilized.

S.M.H.A. and its programs believe that where the law provides assistance designed for the economically disadvantaged, such assistance should be announced widely and extended to those for whom it was intended to the limits of its availability. We join the tax payers of this nation in the concern that such assistance be offered only to those who need it and that it not be wasteful or duplicatory. The fact is, however, that the need still far surpasses available resources. To allow human misery, degradation and suffering to continue in this land of abundance, especially when the law has made relief possible, only aggravates and compounds an already grievous problem.

All Americans desire the highest possible standard of living in return for honest, diligent labor. Sometimes abuses of the past can only be corrected by the "helping hand" until persons are allowed to stand by themselves in their pursuit of opportunity. This has traditionally been the American way. Therefore, we seek to acquaint workers with the opportunities provided by law, to press for more adequate assistance, and to encourage those in need to utilize available programs and services.

Such a goal is in keeping with S.M.H.A.'s reason for existence. Only as all Americans are allowed and encouraged to participate in the process, can our dream of a strong and dynamic nation become a reality. Democracy, to be vital, must include all citizens in the provision of justice and equality of opportunity under law.

C. ASSISTING WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH DIET AND FOOD PREPARATION

The Plantation Adult Education Program's workers have a unique opportunity for entry into the homes of workers. While acceptance by workers is by no means universal as might be desired, some degree of mutual confidence and trust has been established. The program's work in improving basic learning skills and in making available assistance known to the workers has helped to establish a rapport between workers' families and the P.A.E. staff. One opportunity for service lies in demonstrating to workers the art of diet design, selection and food preparation. All of this is done within the context of foods known to be available to them; not on the basis of largely exotic foods neither within the purchasing power of nor desired by the workers and their families.

It must be said in all honesty, that these workers do an amazing job of preparing and using their limited rations. Often they are restricted to varieties of beans, greens and rice. Some plant gardens and increase their variety of food intake when they are able to get their gardens to grow. Because of weather and other problems, this is not always possible.

The program seeks to offer the widest possible range of services. While extending the number of opportunities for improvement available, it is, therefore, altogether fitting to offer help in preparing and using what is presently within their grasp. Food stamps offer the workers some chance at better nourishment if they understand how to buy and prepare foods, to which they are not accustomed, in an economic and tasteful manner. The workers are shown how these foods contribute to nutrition, health and just simply feeling better. As is always the case with change of long standing and need-inspired habits, newness meets with a measure of resistance. It is necessary to be patient and rational in the face of this and staff persons endure, persuade and are considerate in all their efforts. Such assistance can and will be of great value in helping workers and their families move toward improved health and better living conditions.

D. TEACHING BUDGETING AND EFFECTIVE PURCHASING

Another aspect of assistance to workers and their families is that of teaching the importance of budgeting and effective purchasing. Again, nothing encourages this like the stark realization that available dollars must go as far as they possibly can. Workers do not have to be told how critical and essential it is to use money wisely in order to feed, clothe and decently shelter their large families. The fact is, however that this has not been stressed and certainly not much help in how to do it has been offered.

There is still a great amount of worker reliance on the commissary. This appears very often to be a momentary expedient, indeed possibly the only way out of a financial dilemma. Whether or not it is in the best long range interests of the workers is still very much disputed. Constant medical, clothing and sustenance requirements keep the purchasing power of the workers virtually exhausted. If ways can be found for buying at least the essentials at minimum cost, some relief from oppressive debt can be realized.

The idea is that even though amounts are always minimal, workers should be shown the importance of money management, selectivity, and searching for genuine bargains. While this is a notion taken for granted by much of the general public, it is by no means widely practiced among those who have historically had so very little as to require immediate problem solving with little or no regard to cost.

It is sadly true that often those who have the least appear to use it least wisely. This simply served to underline the necessity for helping them to discover the ways that they are vulnerable. Poor persons are prime targets for "sharks" and charlatans who are eager to separate them from their meager resources. Never having been taught to discriminate among products and services, they also very often do not know their rights of defense against such practitioners of fraud and deceit. Part of this goal is to teach the essence of budgeting for essentials and getting the best possible quality for the lowest possible price. By this means, at least minimum standards are encouraged and susceptibility to perpetuating their own plight through ignorance or deception is at least partially reduced.

E. PROCESS EXPERIMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

One of the goals of the Plantation Adult Education Program is the establishment of an educational process which can be implemented by others for others. This process must eventually be documented, disseminated and digested for efficient, effective educational usage. But before the documentation can begin, the groundwork must be firmly laid through experimentation, trial and error, and evaluation.

It has become evident in the two years of experimental procedure that certain elements are critical to a successful educational process among this given culture. The first essential element is the location of the people, the population, the clientele. While it sounds a bit ludicrous in statement, it is one of the key elements that has for years, been overlooked. It simply is more convenient and certainly more financially expedient to apply energies and efforts to a more visible population. It is a time consuming, dangerous, hot, fatiguing, and expensive job to travel literally thousands of miles each month in search of and in service to plantation residents. But it is this very experience that brings to light the intensity of isolation and remoteness that is inherent in the plantation way of life for 100,000 residents in the cane fields of Louisiana. It is this experience that has brought the realization that any program, especially if it is to be educational must be basically and essentially an outreach program.

Finding the workers and their families is not enough. The staff must have the necessary communication skills. This does not simplistically involve the ability to talk as might be assumed. Clothes, hair style, walk, mannerisms, ability to listen (really listen), attitudes, and the ability to be understood when talking are all part of the communication skills necessary. Ability to speak the local dialect is an added dimension in a staff member's communication ability.

"You have to get to where the people react to you as sort of a member of their family." Joyce Hadley's comment indicates the importance of the staff member's being accepted. P.A.E. members have had to be one with the community, to accept and appreciate their life, their culture, and their personal value. In return, the plantation residents have come to trust the staff and appreciate their contributions. These are the elements that foster motivation, involvement,

and growth in our educational process. Because the program content is relevant, and plantation residents can truly identify with staff members, there are more enrollees than can be effectively served by our limited resources. Motivation is no problem; it is an asset!

In short, the P.A.E. has succeeded in carefully laying a deep foundation for an educational process which will later be detailed in a program manual.

PART FIVE:

THE PROGRAM

PART FIVE: THE PROGRAM

A. THE RATIONALE

The Plantation A.B.E. Program was funded first in 1971 as a result of a report researched through many miles and hours by a 17 year old precocious "intern" from Antioch College and the daughter of a fieldworker both hired and directed by the Southern Mutual Help Association.

S.M.H.A. operates programs based on the priority of peoples' needs in the area such as the Family Health Center in Franklin, a Youth leadership Program, a Tutoring Program, a Cultural Enrichment Program and is presently processing a proposal through the Department of Labor for a Manpower development program. S.M.H.A. is a grassroots organization serving in the 17 sugar cane parishes (counties) of South Louisiana. Its clients are the working poor.

Since under the law, the Plantation Adult Education Program is near the end of its eligibility as a Federally funded demonstration program, the present aim is to achieve an on-going bridge of cooperation with the Louisiana State A.B.E. Program so that mutual efforts and experiences will help change the dismal picture for cane workers. The poverty and illiteracy of plantation settlements is so much a part of the history of Louisiana that it remains largely ignored.

The attitude of the Louisiana State Education (A.B.E.) Department toward the Plantation program appears to be one of cooperation and collaboration toward a common goal. They have expressed such a willingness in two letters from State Superintendent of Education, Louis Michot to Dr. George Hann, Regional Commissioner H.E.W., Dallas, Texas. The State Department of A.B.E. supplemented the training provided for Plantation program staff by Dr. Ted Pinnock, in Tuskegee in 1971 by accepting two staff members as participants in a two week institute at the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette at State expense. The Department also assigned a top staff member, Mrs. Marie Meno, formerly one of the working poor, to direct a workshop for teacher training for Plantation A.B.E. staff.

Subsequent to a recent visit by an evaluation team, the Director of the State A.B.E., Mr. James Soileau conducted a one day workshop with project staff to probe and analyze deficiencies pointed out by the evaluation report. At the

end of January, 1973, Mr. Soileau returned to evaluate program progress and provide more input from his 16 years of A.B.E. experience and from top members of his staff.

Mr. Soileau expressed pleasure with Plantation A.B.E.'s ability to do what no other educational group has been able to do in the past 70 years, i.e. to penetrate and be accepted by what he terms the "hard core" of adults working in the cane fields. These working poor believed for years that a day spent in school was a day's work lost.

ANTICIPATED CONTRACTORS
FOR PROVISION OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
F.Y. 1974

1. CPI Associates, Inc., Dallas, Texas

Management
Administration
Record and Filing Systems
2. MRC (Multi-Racial Corporation), Washington, D.C.
Data Systems and Analysis
Resource Analysis and Development
3. CHRIS HARRIS PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

Documentary for Informational and Training Purposes
To be Distributed Nationally, State and Regionally
4. NSF - National Sharecroppers Fund
Manual

Coordination
Design
Content
Publication
5. TUSKEEGEE UNIVERSITY ~~OF FLORIDA~~
Training in ABE
Evaluation
6. STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TRAINING AND EVALUATION
7. SMHA CENTRAL OFFICE
Coordination of Technical Services

ANTICIPATED TECHNICAL SERVICES

A. Management System Analysis

Management System Implementation

Survey of possible management systems
Selection of appropriate system and setting
it up specifically thru task force
assignment. This is designed to foster the
team work concept which is a prerequisite for
program production

B. Record System Analysis

Record System Implementation

This involves a survey of existing record
systems and the selection of the appropriate
system to facilitate program progress and
evaluation. It further involves the actual
implementation of that record system and the
periodic checking of its effectiveness. The
Record system is defined by the recording of
all staff activities and progress, and program
activities and progress. These records may range
from a simple enumeration of contacts made or
GED's processed to the more complicated records
of social, attitudinal and motivational change

C. ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING

This involves a workshop in government guidelines
and forms as well as training in necessary skills
for office competency

D. SETTING UP OF DATA SYSTEM

Data accumulation
Data compilation
Data analysis

This is critical to the eventual input of content
into the manual and film as well as essential for

the State Department of Education in its attempt at ABE. Data could include in-depth quantification of economic background health and nutritional facts, motivational and attitudinal realities. It is a culture analysis, not a personal progress record and is essential to future attempts of ABE within the plantation cultures or similar cultures.

E. RESOURCE ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT

This involves the critical task of finding local resources to deal with the defined problem employing our experimentally proven techniques, methods of bringing to bear local resources such as Louisiana Department of Education and local revenue sharing will be explored.

F. FILM DOCUMENTARY

25-30 minutes informational and training film with sound to be used at national, regional and state level outlining the problem and demonstrating effective solutions of that problem with regard to ABE

G. EVALUATION

Fiscal, administrative, and programmatic evaluation on a periodic basis with a three year experimentation analysis evaluation

H. TRAINING

ABE and Techniques of communication and "Seek its" Tuskegee and University of Florida (g. Acker) and g. Yonamura of N.Y.U. How to establish a functional learning center using minimum staff and paraprofessionals

I. COORDINATION OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

Due to the low 8% indirect cost limitation, the immense task and expertise called for in the coordination of technical services can only be accomplished by the minimal addition of \$1500 to provide for a coordinator. While the Executive Director has been and will continue to give more than 15% of her time toward the supervision of the program other expertise must be utilized to insure the effectiveness of the technical services component

J. MANUAL COORDINATION AND PRODUCTION

Design

Content

Publication

This manual will be a summation and an instructional booklet based upon the 3 year experiment of the Plantation Adult Education Program. Not only will it narrate an analysis of the problem, but it will provide a valuable training tool to the nation and to the State of Louisiana on successful and unsuccessful methods and techniques in ABE

**THE CONCLUSION:
RESULTS TO DATE AND PLANS
FOR THE FUTURE**

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In one rough-walled room lit by a bare bulb, a middle-aged woman sat on the floor, leaned against a chair and learned to write her name. With great difficulty, she made the letter while a skilled and sensitive Plantation specialist provided encouragement and assistance.

In another room, younger women brought their children to class. An infant cried and was comforted by its mother. The mother has five children. Her husband is a tractor driver working for \$1.65 an hour and sometimes the mother herself cuts cane by hand.

"Most nights I am tired in the class," she says. "But I never went beyond the fourth grade and lessons perk me up. They - you know, open my eyes."

This educational experience occurs over and over again throughout the cane fields of Louisiana. It was made possible by a two year experimental grant by the Department of Education totaling \$162,000. By the end of the third and final year of experimentation and the expenditure of \$212,000, hundred of lives will have been touched and permanently changed for the better. Hopefully, the State Department of Education will have been involved enough to assume the educational responsibility for 100,000 Plantation residents. Even more far-reaching, a national working model of Adult Basic Education will be created for use by millions of educationally deprived, but culturally rich adults in America.

Louisiana will have at its disposal, expertise built up over the three year experimentation period - expertise proven through experience!

Local resources will have been applied in the solution of a local problem.

A manual explaining the experiment, step by step, and its results will be available and disseminated locally, regionally, and nationally.

A color (with soundtrack) film will be available for informational and training purposes. Its use by the Louisiana Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education will prove most useful.

Thousands of Louisiana's "working poor" will be given hope again -- a hope that will enable them to "help themselves"! This is money invested in the future of the deprived workers of the Louisiana cane country and in the future of our state and nation.

CREATING A LEARNING LABORATORY

After two years of operational experience of the Plantation Adult Education Program in Louisiana's Sugar Cane fields, the staff has proposed narrowing the radius of service to ten (10) miles circular to the learning center. This would reduce costly and time-consuming transportation and allow for a closer observation of experimental results. It is important to emphasize that learning will still take place within the Plantation system and not geographically remote from it. A feeling of closeness and identification to the physical learning center is still maintained as essential to the learning experience of Plantation residents.

Plantation residents and their settlements will be reasonably contiguous to the learning center. The staff will become more proficient in working with the A.B.E. adults as described in the technical services portion of the program section. New students will be screened for eligibility, tested for placement and interviewed for the establishment of rapport. They will be orientated into the purposes, objectives, and services of the Plantation Adult Education Program. Much future learning hinges on the staff's ability in communication with the A.B.E. student and in the conveyance of an understanding and knowledge of his background and particular needs. As long as this communication is present, efficiency will characterize the learning experience.

The projects' certified teacher's skills will be maximized through the training and utilization of teaching assistants assigned to perform outlined tasks under the direction and supervision of the education specialist.

Various learning machines designed and programmed to deliver a "self-learning" experience are essential, especially in lieu of the reduction in the numbers of professional staff in the adult basic education program. Through training received both on site and at Tuskegee University, a degree of familiarity with programmed learning now exists. The use of these machines in the particular cultural setting will yield valuable experimental results for further adult education work both in the State of Louisiana and for similar cultural settings in other parts of the nation.

An analysis of the experimentation in the learning lab and of the previous two year's experimentation will involve all staff, program recipients, the Louisiana State Department

of Education, and additional consultative experts in Adult Basic Education. In order to insure as thorough an analysis as possible, both objective and subjective analytical methods will be employed. Objective, measurable results will be obtained and analyzed. Subjective case studies and experience will become available as a result of the experimentation.

CONCLUSION

The Southern Mutual Help Association and its program units are non-partisan in character and activity and take no part in political activist causes. Yet the organization is justifiably proud when its clients are recognized and have a chance to articulate their feelings and experiences in the councils of national power. A cane worker who had previously achieved only minimal education and was hesitant to speak at any type of public forum became a student of the Plantation Adult Basic Education Program. At the invitation of a congressional committee holding hearings on agricultural policies and practices, he testified as to his own work experiences. Mr. Gustave Rhodes stated that he was proud of his work, but mightily ashamed of what others think his work is worth. This is ^{surely} such an indictment of a system which allows for such a condition of psychological poverty to exist.

It is not so much that he spoke before a House of Representatives committee that is important, but rather that he contributed something and that ^{he} improved his own self-image and confidence enough to feel he could express himself before such an awe-inspiring body. No one not in his condition could appreciate the magnitude of that change.

It should be and is the task of such projects as Plantation A.B.E. to give clients the strength that accompanies a feeling of self-worth. That is certainly a vital part of adult basic education. To acknowledge that one has something important to say, to say it from experience and with appropriate force and confidence, and to feel that those who should hear are listening - these are basic to an improved self-awareness and to continued learning. S.M.H.A. and the Plantation program have not forgotten these traits of inner stability and character in fulfilling their functional education mission. Literally, the program is enabling sugar cane workers to function - to function in a complex society they are eager to understand. It is a society that has hitherto largely ignored them. They have been awed by its magnificence and by their own smallness. They are beginning to understand how it works. The Plantation A.B.E. program seeks to help them better understand the system, accept themselves as having a contribution to make, to improve their own conditions, and to share in society's benefits to the limit of their abilities and their contributions. If functional education can include and accomplish this among its many important goals, it will have been more than worth the investment.