

The Use of Authority in Supervision

BERNICE ORCHARD

Authority is viewed as an important component in public welfare programs in this paper. The goal of supervision is to help the worker learn and use the methods which will most effectively meet the client's needs. Supervision involves the use of authority in the relationship between the supervisor and the worker, and should be accepted as an enabling process to benefit the client, the worker and the agency. Miss Orchard points out ways in which the supervisory relationship can help the worker grow and develop to his maximum potential. She presented the paper at the Association's 1964 Southeast Regional Conference in Atlanta, Georgia last August. Miss Orchard is Professor, School of Social Work, University of Tennessee, Nashville, Tennessee.

The use of authority is frightening to many social workers, yet whether we like it or not, authority is an important component in public welfare programs as well as in other social work programs. In public assistance clients must meet eligibility requirements, must follow agency policies concerning verifications, reporting income and others. Public welfare caseworkers must determine that eligibility requirements have been met, must follow agency policies concerning eligibility and budgeting. Supervisors, among other duties, must see that the caseworkers under their supervision follow agency policies and do not make costly mistakes in determining eligibility and budgeting.

All of this involves the extensive use of authority. It is important that this authority be used constructively, which is not possible when one is afraid of it or conversely enjoys excessively the feeling of power that it brings.

Caseworkers tend to deny that authority is a component in casework practice. They stress the concepts of individualization and self-determination, both of which are very important concepts, but a client or a caseworker or a supervisor can be self-determining only within certain boundaries: first, the boundary of community law and order; second, the boundary of agency policies and, in a public agency, the laws under which the agency operates.

Two kinds of authority are generally recognized: the authority of competence and constituted authority.¹ The authority of competence comes from one's knowledge, experience and skill. A social worker who is assigned to supervise other social workers presumably has been given this position because he has greater knowledge, experience and skill in social work than the persons supervised. This greater knowledge, experience and skill is in social work, not in all areas. The supervisee may be a much better gardener than the supervisor or a much more skillful tennis player.

Constituted authority is the authority which is inherent in the position. The position of supervisor gives the supervisor certain authority over his supervisees: the authority to determine whether work is satisfactorily completed; the authority to evaluate the work of the supervisee for salary raises and promotions. The position of supervisor carries agency authority whether one has the authority of competence or not but certainly the supervisor can carry his role more adequately when he also has the authority of competence. The supervisor needs to be able to accept his authority with awareness of his attitudes toward it and their effect on his use of it.

¹Studdt, Elliott, "An Outline for the Study of Social Authority Factors in Casework," *Social Casework*, Family Service Association of America, 44 East 23rd Street, New York, New York, June 1954, pp. 231-236.

ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTHORITY

How do one's attitudes toward authority develop? Initially they stem from the parent-child relationship but modifications usually occur as one is influenced by persons in authority outside the home as one grows up. The baby or small child has to be dependent because he cannot meet his own needs. His dependence brings about submission to his parents who seem to him to be all-powerful. The small child also has a desire for independence, a desire to act out natural impulses which parents are trying to teach him to control, which brings about resentment of the authority of the parents. This is often referred to as the dependency-authority conflict.²

How or whether the child resolves the dependency-authority conflict depends to a considerable extent on the kind of authority to which he is subjected. In "ideal" situations in "normal" middle class American families, the child gradually takes over voluntarily the standards of loving parents and learns to control his own behavior in accordance with their expectations and to accept constituted authority without much conflict. If parents have been very strict and severe he may accept their controls through fear but also feel anger and resentment followed by guilt, which may interfere with his own acceptance and use of authority as an adult. The child who has had too little control from parents or inconsistent control will have trouble learning to control his own behavior and as an adult may resent and rebel against authority and have difficulty exercising it constructively when it is part of his responsibility.

USE AUTHORITY CONSTRUCTIVELY

What should be the supervisor's attitude toward authority so that he can use it constructively? He needs to accept the fact that the supervisory role includes authority. He needs to have the ability to be firm when necessary, to have patience, to have a sincere desire for supervisees to succeed and progress. He should have no need to deprive, hurt or retaliate, no need for power over others. In carrying out his administrative authority the supervisor is carrying out the policies and regulations of the agency, not exercising personal au-

thority. His authority of competence is used for the benefit of the client, the supervisee and the agency.

THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Customarily the process of supervision is divided into two components: education and administration. Charlotte Towle adds a third which she calls "helping," or perhaps enabling is a more descriptive word. It means enabling the supervisee to do his work to the very best of his ability thus increasing his own satisfaction from his work as well as benefiting the client and the agency. The enabling component permeates the supervisory process through the supervisor-supervisee relationship. The supervisor's attitude toward and use of authority is an important factor in the supervisor-supervisee relationship.

Administration has been defined by Berkovitz⁴ as an enabling and directing process. In a social agency this means creating favorable conditions for carrying out the agency program of service to clients. The supervisor has an important role in agency administration. He must: 1) see that the agency policies and procedures are carried out by his supervisees; 2) see that work is done in accordance with agency standards and the agency time schedule; 3) recognize the supervisees' particular skills and use them for the benefit of the program, if possible; 4) control the work pressures on the supervisees so that they do not become too great a strain (in view of the size of caseloads in many public welfare agencies this is often an impossible task); 5) see that conference, dictation and other schedules are maintained so that the work of others is not impeded; 6) help workers understand the reasons for policies and procedures; 7) serve as a channel of communication between the caseworker and the director and board, especially a channel through which the caseworker can make suggestions about policy: how current policies affect clients, desirable new policies, policies that should be changed or discarded; 8) evaluate the supervisor's work in accordance with agency standards.

Within the educational component of super-

²Towle, Charlotte, "The Role of Supervision in the Union of Cause and Function in Social Work," *Social Service Review*, The University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, December 1962, pp. 396-407.

⁴Berkovitz, Sidney, "The Administrative Process in Supervision," *Social Casework*, Family Service Association of America, 44 East 23rd Street, New York, New York, December 1952, pp. 419-423.

³Towle, Charlotte, *The Learner in Education for the Professions*, The University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 1954.

vision the supervisor's responsibilities are to impart knowledge to the supervisee so that he will 1) understand the purposes and goals of the agency program; 2) develop understanding of the psychological, social, cultural and economic factors which affect clients' behavior, and apply his knowledge in his work with clients; 3) understand and apply casework concepts; 4) carry over learning from one case situation to another, seeing similarities and differences; 5) understand how his own feelings and prejudices may interfere with his work at times.

In some agencies or at some times the administrative component of supervision may need to be emphasized more than the educational component while in others the educational component may be emphasized more than the administrative component but both are important. In public welfare traditionally the administrative aspects have been emphasized but the present concern about rehabilitative casework services should increase the importance of the educational functions of supervision.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF ENABLING

As stated above, the enabling component of supervision comes about mainly, though not entirely, through the supervisor-supervisee relationship. The relationship is a configuration made up of many factors, some contributed by the supervisor, some by the supervisee. It is not static but is constantly changing, again depending on many variables. Each needs to accept his own role and that of the other. The supervisor needs to accept his role as teacher, enabler, checker and to accept the authority inherent in it. The supervisee needs to accept his role as a person not yet competent to practice independently, as a learner and a subordinate but hopefully a learning, growing person who is continually attaining greater competence and ability to function with increasing independence. He needs to accept the authority of the supervisor without great dependence and loss of initiative.

In addition to authority, the supervisor-supervisee relationship has equally important ingredients. As in all relationships acceptance is a basic factor. Acceptance should be mutual. The supervisor accepts the supervisee as a capable but not perfect person who will make some mistakes and have some prejudices but who is sincerely interested in providing good services to his clients. Occasionally the supervisee may turn out not to be this kind of person but, in view of the careful selection process used by most agencies in the employment of staff, the supervisor is justified in this initial expectation. The supervisee accepts the supervisor as a competent person who has the ability and interest in helping him learn and who has the authority to expect acceptable work, to make suggestions and corrections. The supervisee should feel the security of acceptance which will not be withdrawn because of occasional errors of judgment in evaluating situations.

Trust is another mutual ingredient of the supervisor-supervisee relationship. The supervisor trusts the worker to grow and develop, to be responsible about carrying out assigned work, to follow agency policies and procedures but he does not expect him to be perfect. The supervisee trusts the supervisor to give him information as needed, and to be interested in helping him grow and develop on the job but not necessarily to know or give him all the answers.

WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

**The Master's Level:*

Degree Program

Preparing for practice in casework, group work and community organization. Field practice in a variety of settings.

**The Third Year:*

Preparing for advanced practice.

The Doctoral Program:

Designed for persons preparing for advanced practice, teaching, community leadership, or research.

Fellowship Opportunities Available in All Fields

2 Week Summer Institutes
Public Welfare Institutes
General Social Work Institutes
Advanced Seminars

Western Reserve University
School of Applied Social Sciences
2035 Abington Road Cleveland, Ohio

UNDERSTANDING LEARNING PATTERNS

The supervisor needs to understand the worker's learning patterns, prejudices and reactions to new situations because these affect his work. Some persons react to authority figures with subservience and dependence, some with resistance. Some persons in a new situation seem to learn very quickly but do not retain the new learning; some start slowly and hesitantly but when they have the security of adequate knowledge move ahead rapidly and confidently. Others appear to resist new learning when they are testing it out before incorporating it. These are but a few of the patterns which supervisors should recognize and understand so that they can differentiate between learning patterns and learning problems, between conflicts and prejudices which a supervisee can modify when he becomes aware of them and personality problems which may prevent success as a social worker.

Some dependence is inherent in the role of the supervisee just as some authority is inherent in the role of the supervisor. Partly this comes from the lack of knowledge, experience and skill of the supervisee. As his knowledge, experience and skill increase the dependence should diminish. Whether this happens depends to some extent on the supervisor's attitude toward authority and dependency. He should be able to accept the normal dependence of a new worker and give freely the information and knowledge which the new worker needs but he should not need to keep him dependent because the dependency itself is gratifying to the supervisor. As the supervisee gains in competence the supervisor should encourage him to function with greater independence so that he will continue to grow and develop.

Identification is a frequent ingredient of the supervisor-supervisee relationship. The supervisee wants to be a professional person like the supervisor, to model his professional performance after that of the supervisor. This makes it imperative that the supervisor provide a desirable professional image. At the same time the supervisor should encourage the supervisee to develop techniques that are natural to him because he is a separate person who should maintain his own identity as a professional person and not become a carbon copy of the supervisor. An insecure supervisor may feel that the supervisee's performance reflects his skill as a supervisor to such an

extent that he does not permit the supervisee freedom to develop in his own way. The supervisee's success or failure is not necessarily the success or failure of the supervisor.

Ambivalence is bound to be present to some degree in the supervisor-supervisee relationship because it is present in any relationship which includes authority and dependence. The supervisee will resent the supervisor's authority at times and the supervisor will be annoyed at the supervisee at times. Since individuals learn and work best in a positive climate it is hoped that positive feelings will predominate but realistic acceptance of negative feelings when they occur should avoid a detrimental effect on the relationship.

SUPERVISORY METHODS

The supervisor uses his authority of competence and his constituted authority constantly in his day-to-day work with supervisees. In much of the interaction he does not recognize his use of authority or think of it as such. When he is faced with dealing with a worker's inadequate performance he recognizes this as a time to use his au-

WANTED— TRAINING SUPERVISOR

For progressive Public Welfare agency with staff of 165 and social service emphasis. Opportunity to develop program and participate in State and National growth planning.

MSW and successful supervisory experience required.

Starting salary \$7,920

Contact:

Mecklenburg County
Department of Public Welfare
County Office Building
Charlotte, North Carolina

thority but often feels uncertain and hesitant. He wishes to be fair and to approach the worker in a way which will help him to be able to improve. There are principles which he can follow which may increase his own security that he is handling the situation fairly and with objectivity.

1. The supervisor focuses on the inadequate aspects of the supervisee's work but not on his total performance and he is careful not to imply that because the work is inadequate in some areas, the supervisee is an inadequate person.
2. The supervisor does not give negative criticism until he can see a repetition of the same error several times or until he observes a pattern of problems in certain areas. He wants to be sure that this is not a single incident which will be corrected quickly by the supervisee. Simple mistakes may be given back to the supervisee for correction without spoken or implied criticism but a repeated pattern of careless work will need to be discussed with the supervisee.

3. When the caseworker wishes to carry out a casework plan which seems unwise to the supervisor he needs to consider whether the client will be damaged if the caseworker is permitted to carry out his plan. If the supervisor decides that the caseworker's plan will not harm the client, even though another plan might be more helpful, he may permit the worker to go ahead with his plan with the idea that the caseworker may learn more quickly from his mistake than from being urged to follow a different plan which is not his own. Awareness of the supervisee's learning pattern is important here. Some people learn more readily from their own mistakes than any other way while others are devastated by making a mistake. If the caseworker's plan will, in the supervisor's considered opinion, really be damaging to the client, he will, of course, need to insist gently but firmly that it not be carried out.

4. The supervisor needs to consider before discussing unsatisfactory work with a supervisee whether the supervisee has too much to do, because his lack of production, careless work or frequent errors may come from too much pressure. It is helpful if the supervisor knows how his supervisees react to stress. Some persons work best when they feel pushed while others become anxious, disorganized or immobilized. Perhaps the worker needs help in setting priorities or in organizing his work.

5. The supervisor ought to ask himself whether he has frustrated the supervisee by not giving him enough help or by keeping too tight controls when the worker is ready to take more initiative and become more independent. He may need to find out from the supervisee whether his methods of supervision are meeting the supervisee's needs. The problem may be due to a lack of understanding or communication between them.

6. Does the supervisee have the knowledge that he needs to do the work that is expected of him? Because there is so much to be done public welfare workers often are pushed into carrying a too heavy work load too soon. Their lack of necessary knowledge adds to the feeling of pressure and creates frustra-

**SMITH COLLEGE
SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL WORK
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK**

Plan A Curriculum—Three summer sessions in study on the Smith campus and two winter sessions in field work in selected agencies or clinics.

Plan B Curriculum—Two summer sessions and one winter session designed for applicants with substantial professional experience or previous graduate work.

PROGRAM OF ADVANCED STUDY

- **Third-Year Certificate**
A third graduate year of theory and clinical practice.
- **Doctor of Social Work Degree**
Advanced preparation for practice, research, supervision, teaching, and administration.

Academic Year Opens June 23, 1965

*Stipends, without agency work commitments, are available for all programs. Early application is advised.
Open to men and women.*

For further information write to
**Committee on Admissions
Smith College School for Social Work
Gateway House, Northampton, Massachusetts**

tion which may affect attitudes toward work as well as amount accomplished.

7. The supervisor will want to find out, if possible, whether the supervisee is experiencing heavy outside pressures such as family problems or health problems which may be affecting his work. If the outside pressures are temporary it may be possible to ease the job pressures a little until the supervisee can attain a balance again. If the outside pressures are prolonged the supervisor may be able to suggest resources which will help the supervisee cope with them.

To sum up, when the supervisor sees a pattern of poor work in certain areas or certain reactions which interfere with a worker's performance he looks first for realistic causative factors and deals realistically with any that he finds. Often pointing out an unproductive or erroneous pattern to a worker in a matter-of-fact, non-punitive way means that the worker is able to correct the pattern himself and without inadequate feelings.

UNDERSTANDING THE CASEWORKER

The supervisor needs to keep in mind that social work makes heavy demands on its practitioners.⁵ They deal with troubled people with serious problems and needs. Many are people whose standards and values are very different from the social worker's standards and values. Some clients behave in ways which social workers have been brought up to abhor. New workers without graduate social work education often do not have knowledge of human behavior, cultural patterns or economic conditions which make it easy for them to have understanding and sympathy for some clients. Meeting a constant barrage of problems and needs is very wearing, especially when the resources available really do not meet the needs. Social workers have to find ways of protecting themselves against these constant assaults on their feelings. At times work may suffer from the emotional pressures of the job just as it may from volume. Supervisors can help supervisees find healthy ways of dealing with their feelings so that

⁵Habcock, Charlotte G., "Social Work as Work," *Social Casework*, Family Service Association of America, 44 East 23rd Street, New York, New York, December 1953, pp. 415-422.
⁶Schour, Esther, "Helping Social Workers Handle Work Stress," *Social Casework*, Family Service Association of America, 44 East 23rd Street, New York, New York, December 1953, pp. 423-428.

they do not handle their frustrations by being punitive toward their clients. Just recognizing the frustrations and showing understanding of the feelings may relieve the pressure so that the worker can mobilize his energy to give service to his clients.

Occasionally a supervisee shows a pattern of resistance or emotional blocking which interferes seriously with his work. The resistance or blocking may manifest itself in any of a variety of ways:

1. The supervisee has an intellectual understanding of human behavior and casework theory which he can discuss knowingly with the supervisor but is not able to use when confronted by a client. This is also a stage of learning—when one knows much more than he can apply in practice and so the supervisor needs to make sure that the pattern persists over a period of time and continues to interfere with the supervisee's relationship to clients before identifying it as emotional blocking. Perhaps this person needs professional help, perhaps he could

ATTENTION—PUBLIC WELFARE STAFF!

Attend a school with strong *public welfare* emphasis, a required administration-community organization sequence, and opportunity for intensive study, research and field work in administration for experienced second-year students.

Recognized programs also offered in family and child welfare, medical and psychiatric social work and social group work.

FACULTY: 20; additional Lecturers and Field Work Instructors.

STUDENTS: 143, representing 20 states.

LOCATION: First-year program in Knoxville and Nashville; second year program on "Block" basis with class work in Nashville.

FIELD WORK: Placement in 52 agencies.

For further information and bulletin write:

Sue Spencer, Director

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

810 Broadway

Nashville 3, Tennessee

function in some areas of social work not requiring intensive treatment relationships or perhaps he should not be in social work.

2. The supervisee avoids certain pertinent topics in discussion with clients, changes the subject as the client is about to bring out meaningful material, asks inappropriate questions, is unable to work with certain kinds of problems or kinds of behavior. This may be due to inexperience but if prolonged usually indicates difficulty in handling feelings, fear of his own or clients' feelings or similarity to some difficult situation or relationship in the supervisee's life. For instance, a divorced woman may be angry at men and judges harshly her male clients or she may have difficulty only with those whose behavior is similar to that of her former husband. More often, however, the emotion which is aroused is related to something which occurred much earlier in the worker's life and has been repressed and "forgotten." The repression is threatened and painful feelings may be stirred up

against which the worker unconsciously protects himself by not hearing what the client says or by not following an obvious lead given by the client.

3. The supervisee agrees in conference to carry out certain treatment plans but doesn't do it. It may be that he does not understand the plan well enough to execute it and further discussion will clarify it for him. If it happens repeatedly or always in the same types of situation, the supervisor will conclude that the supervisee is blocked by his own feelings which may be related to the client or the situation or may be related to the supervisee's feelings about authority and/or his relationship to the supervisor.

4. The supervisee retains strong prejudices after knowledge and experience in social work should have modified them and has such rigid standards and values that he is unable to understand clients' behavior and to work with those whose behavior violates his standards. Actually some behavior exhibited by clients threatens his maintenance of his own standards and values and so he has to erect rigid defenses against the feelings which are aroused. This kind of person should not continue in social work because it is too hard on him emotionally—to say nothing of the effect his lack of understanding and punitive attitudes may have on the agency's clients.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Professional Education Leading to the Degrees of

Master of Science

Doctor of Social Welfare

For those preparing for careers in casework, group work, and community organization, the Master's Program offers courses and field work placements in a variety of settings, both public and private—child welfare, family welfare, psychiatric services, housing, probation and parole, inter-group relations, urban community development.

Fellowships are available in all programs.

For complete information write to

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

2 East 91st Street
New York, N.Y. 10028

The resistance and emotional blocking most commonly encountered is that which is brought about by a reactivation of the worker's conflicts or repressions by particular kinds of behavior or case situations.

After the supervisor clearly identifies the pattern and rules out realistic factors which might be affecting the supervisee's performance, he points out the pattern to the supervisee as he sees it in specific cases. "In this and this and this case you stopped the client just as he was about to tell you something important." "In A, B and C cases it seems to me you were bothered by clients' expressions of hostility." "Have you thought about how much alike Mrs. X, Mrs. Y and Mrs. Z are and that you reacted much the same way to each?" The supervisee's first reaction may be to

(Continued on page 61)

This is hardly a good example of group relations! Although during the six group meetings, there was occasionally some interaction, some engagement with each other, these AFDC clients probably would have been better served by casework. Before they could effectively use a short-term group experience, they needed to experience through the help of a caring person some trust in one human being so that they could move out with trust in a group of people.

TO ACHIEVE A SENSE OF SELF-WORTH

"There are many ways, lay and professional, to enhance social functioning. Social group work is one of them. Its specific effectiveness lies in the psychological make-up of human beings: two basic needs—the need to belong and the need to have self-respect—are dependent on fulfillment of positive group experiences. A third need is located in the totality of human society, namely the need to cooperate with each other. For the individual it means taking responsibility for one another, and this includes—and requires—group interaction." Social casework and social group work are both needed in the AFDC program if we are to most effectively help these clients with their social problems. A child's normal development is dependent on the normal development of his parents. The parent needs to have self-respect and to have a sense of belonging before he can create a climate in the home that is conducive to healthy development of the child. The social group work method offers AFDC parents, through democratic and responsible participation in a group, an opportunity to achieve a sense of self-worth and belonging.

*Konopka, Gisela, *Social Group Work—A Helping Process*, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1963, p. 163.

Coming in April—

PUBLIC WELFARE Feature . . .

Protective Services for Children

Also—

From all Across the Country—

brief reports describing programs and projects from state and local public welfare departments related to protective services for children.

Send your report to:

The Editor, **PUBLIC WELFARE**
1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Use of Authority

(Continued from page 40)

deny that there is any validity to the supervisor's observations, in which case the supervisor does not insist on his point of view but may suggest that the supervisee think it over. The supervisee frequently returns saying that he has decided the supervisor was right. In some instances, it may be necessary for the supervisor to point out the pattern when he sees it again. Often bringing the pattern to the supervisee's attention means that he can change it, perhaps not immediately, but gradually. It is not important to the supervisor why the supervisee is disturbed by the particular situation because the supervisor does not engage in a treatment relationship with the supervisee. If the pattern persists and continues to interfere with the supervisee's work the supervisor may suggest that he seek treatment elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

There is a great deal of authority inherent in the supervisor's role—both the authority of

The
George Warren Brown
School of Social Work

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

ST. LOUIS 30, MISSOURI

Admission in Fall Semester Only

Master of Social Work

A professional two-year curriculum, largely generic. Field instruction available in family casework, child welfare, medical, psychiatric, group work, public welfare, community organization, research, corrections and school settings. Scholarships and stipends are offered on a competitive basis.

Doctor of Social Work

A professional degree based on a research concentration.

Early inquiry and application advised.

For further information, write to the Dean.

competence and the constituted authority derived from the responsibilities of the position. It is important that supervisors recognize and accept this authority so that they can use it constructively. They need to understand their own feelings about it, their possible reluctance to accept it, their fear of it, or their pleasure in the feeling of power that it brings, to mention the extreme reactions. Authority can be a constructive and helpful component of the supervisor-supervisee relationship. It provides structure and support. Through his authority of competence the supervisor enables the worker to learn the work he is expected to carry out, to learn to understand the persons with whom he is working, to learn the methods which are most effective in meeting clients' needs. Through his constituted authority he facilitates the worker's use of agency policy and procedures. Through the evaluation process—both day-by-day and formal periodic evaluations he enables the worker to recognize his strengths and weaknesses and helps him grow and develop to his maximum potential.

Crisis

(Continued from page 46)

could be done on the kinds of illnesses or disabilities which the majority of clients have had who receive public assistance: the fathers with chronic back pain, with chronic asthma, with an amputated leg, with chronic heart trouble, all unemployable.

What has the crisis of illness or disability done to the family? I would suspect that the family has already resolved the crisis of the illness by the time most of them apply for assistance. The question becomes: which direction did the solution take—adaptive or maladaptive. What happens when the wife is asked to work, or in some instances it is demanded that she work, if her husband is incapacitated? Another crisis may be induced by the agency policy, and we must recognize this for what it is. The introduction of role change: the wife becomes the worker and the husband becomes the homemaker. Although in our society it is acceptable for wives to work, the change of the husband's role from worker to homemaker is a potential crisis situation.

Will you be ready to help give a family the opportunity which is in each crisis situation? It has been found that a crisis situation can provide an opportunity for the social worker to help a family when earlier attempts have been unsuccessful.

What crisis situations do to children, particularly those in the formative years, must be examined. How are they affected when the father or the mother leaves the home to be hospitalized? What fears and anxieties do the children suffer? How are they affected by a long-term hospitalization of a parent suffering, for example, from tuberculosis or mental illness? Are you aware of the children's reactions to crisis within the families in your caseload? The affect of crisis on children and their attempts to cope with it has not been covered in this paper, but it was not to avoid the issue.

It is hoped that the introduction to the subject of crisis will lead you to think about it, to read about it and to examine your caseload in the light of this theory. Helping one family in a crisis situation to function more comfortably socially will be an exciting experience. Those of you who have done so, know whereof I speak; those who have this experience ahead have something to look forward to so that we can work creatively in behalf of our clients.

University of Illinois
Jane Addams
Graduate School of Social Work

Institute on
Social Group Work in Special Settings

Allerton House
Monticello, Illinois
August 8 to 13, 1965

This institute is designed for graduate caseworkers and group workers employed in such areas as psychiatric and medical settings, children's residential institutions and school social work services. The emphasis is on methods of direct service to groups.

For further information writes:

Director, Allerton House
University of Illinois
116 Illini Hall
Champaign, Illinois

