

# List Social Services Concerns

WASHINGTON — A joint task force of the Interior and Health, Education and Welfare Departments' Social Services Subcommittee Report for the TT concerned itself primarily with the social service needs of the handicapped, the youth, and the elderly.

The report indicates that an analysis of social services in Micronesia recognizes that in an informal way, many kinds of services are being provided through the government programs, private groups and churches and that a great deal of

assistance is being provided to persons which is not institutionalized and recorded. Nor can the supportive family and clan system that exists in Micronesia be overlooked when analyzing the social service system. The report stated that social services designed for Saipan might be quite different than services designed for people living in Yap or other districts, and that it is important that the Micronesian people determine what their needs are. The report states that new pieces of legislation in the social

service area should include the Trust Territory. It also states that there are ways of adapting already existing legislative programs to the TT through waivers or through changes in the ways in which regulations are applied so that the TT is not required to go through the elaborate planning process required for the states.

It further suggested that it might be appropriate to use the "demonstration route" in the development of a new social service system in Micronesia, as an experiment.

Health needs are apparent, and education is indispensable, but social and rehabilitation services are not considered so essential because they are more difficult to define and require a more elaborate system of delivery, the report also indicates. It recommends that there must be social services to assist families and individuals to meet and adjust to a changing environment and also realize their own individual aspiration, and become productive and contributing citizens of a new Micronesia.

The report deals with the rehabilitation of the handicapped. It indicates that persons ought to be rehabilitated in order that they may perform more adequately the traditional functions that have been a part of their contribution to a larger family and village system. The report brings to the attention of the readers an increasing alcoholism problem and the need for rehabilitation programs in that area. With the influx of tourists, drugs may also become a problem, and possibly a drug abuse program should be initiated. The report discusses various rehabilitation resource centers in Hawaii and Guam that may be utilized.

In youth, idleness is a problem. Problems of alcoholism, minor disturbances and drug addiction are manifestations of a restless young people. The report suggests an organization of youth activities and the need for more land and buildings for

leaders and money for equipment. The report indicates the need for youth to be involved in the development of their own programs. The report suggests that a youth counselor be assigned to the staff of the community development agencies in the districts. In Micronesia, as in other areas, there is a generation gap which is being closed by the utilization of the elderly in the cultural centers.

Among the elderly, the report indicates that the two groups most affected by a culture in transition in Micronesia are the young and the old. In Micronesia, the elderly is considered to be anyone over 45 years of age. The committee recommended community-based development of a social services as a pattern best suited to the various districts to deal with problems of the elderly such as lack of transportation, lack of housing material to improve their homes, inadequate education programs, inadequate health services and poor nutrition.

The Social Services Subcommittee mentions the consideration of a creation of a Department of Social Services to include manpower programs to include vocational rehabilitation; youth services; programs for the elderly; family services; housing and community development; an integrated service delivery approach as soon as professional competencies and leadership are developed and as soon as budget is available through the