

1266 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

back to my house and got some pans, pails and came back and cleaned the whole house and straightened it up. And when he came home that night he was very happy. This was entirely on my own, but because I was a member of the community I felt I should do it. But although he realized that I didn't do it as part of my job, he did realize that I worked in a school and I think this helped. I think he feels much different about school than he did before. He sees the school as wanting to help him and accepting him."

A PROJECT TO TRAIN MIGRANTS FOR NONPROFESSIONAL JOBS (TEACHER-AIDS)

(Sponsored by University of South Florida Center for Continuing Education, Bay Campus, St. Petersburg, Florida)

A long auto ride out of St. Petersburg through delightful scenes of sub-tropical trees and flowers, and along waters that stretch out into the far distance, leads to the camps of the migrant workers. The "better ones" consist of miniature houses, perhaps a line of them paralleling the remote country road, the worst of dilapidated wooden shacks in ramshackle order in which an entire family may occupy only one room. In these, for a season of picking fruit or digging potatoes, live the families of one of the most exploited groups of workers in America. From the ranks of adults who have experienced the wretched, half starved life of the migrant, the participants of the Migrant Teacher Aide Training Program were recruited.

Excerpts from their own descriptions of their experiences describe a few of the tragic facets of the family and group life: "We had to go a mile for water." "In Belle Glade today there are people traveling to and from places, some going up there broke and coming back broke." "There are children that need clothing and shoes in order for them to go to school." "Some live in houses that aren't fit for a rat." "Most of them are afraid to protest because they might wake up in the morning and find out that they are out of a job." "We have seen the plight of the young children, the giving up of the teenager, the acceptance of the grown-up, and the despair of the old people."

The migrant lives in an out group: his culture is not that of the community into which he comes for a brief season, be he Puerto Rican or Mexican, Negro or white. As a consequence there is little communication between his group and those living settled lives in decency and comfort near him. The little schooling migrant children get is begrudged because the migrants are not tax payers, and because of that fact, occasionally are refused any schooling at all.

Many migrants would like to break out of the migrant life style. However the cycle of constant travel, little opportunity for education to learn skills, low wages, constant indebtedness to their employers, and debilitation brought about by poor nutrition and inadequate sanitation tends to make escape impossible. Furthermore, membership in an out group builds strong ties among migrants representing the only security many of them have. Some migrants cite the possible loss of these relationships as a factor which tends to keep them in the migrant community.

In spite of the numerous factors binding migrants to an essentially unsatisfactory way of life, many migrants express the desire to develop skills which would permit them to break the cycle. The need, therefore, for a training program seemed obvious to prepare some of them to perform successfully in nonagricultural and meaningful work—especially fruitful would be training for roles, particularly in the schools and agencies serving migrants in health, welfare and educational fields.

At a meeting at the University of South Florida in February, 1966, in which representatives of the following agencies participated: The Florida State Board of Health, the Migrant Health Coordinator, Marymount College, Community Service Foundation, University of Miami, Florida State Department of Education, and the State Department of Public Welfare, the availability of positions for migrants with the training the University of South Florida had in mind was clearly indicated.

As a result there was first an obvious need for a program of training which would help migrants to cope with the problems of a cultural, personal, social, economic, and educational nature that exclude migrants from anything but agricultural employment. Second, the availability of jobs seemed assured after training had been given. Third, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 offered the likelihood of the necessary funds being available. Fourth,