

Now from our experience over the years in trying to serve families and help them we know that poverty, particularly if it exists over a period of time, has a very adverse affect on family life. We realize that one cannot minimize the economic deprivation that the poor suffer, but we would like to stress in particular cultural deprivation and some of the psychological effects of poverty. We believe that these do more to handicap a person in improving his own situation and in being able to compete on fairly equitable terms with other people.

When it is not profitable for a person to decide to subscribe for a magazine or a newspaper, when it is not possible to supply hockey equipment for children, when it is not possible to go to a concert or a movie, or it may not be possible to let the children have some advantages that others more fortunate than they have; or if they do attempt to provide it it must be at a sacrifice of some of the basic needs; then parents really begin to know and experience the meaning of poverty and get that sense of having failed somehow that makes for people being disheartened and discouraged.

We tend too much in our society to group the poor together in a lump and we label them and we view them with some mistrust and we tend to alienate them. This kind of alienation is compounded by our housing situation. This tends to force people into living in certain areas of the city, or certain parts of the housing projects, and there it is very difficult for a family to maintain the privacy that is necessary to them, to maintain good standard, to maintain human dignity. To make matters even more difficult society places such a premium on material possessions and this contrast between the haves and have-nots is always emphasized day after day by the kind of TV and radio advertising that goes on all the time, along with the constant and seductive kind of pressures that come from finance companies, that come from firms. If parents cannot stand up to this then they slip into all kinds of difficulties and pressures by either having to keep up payment on possessions they have purchased, or the almost uneven struggle of trying to keep up payments on loans and if they miss a payment the interest mounts up.

They are also discriminated against in being the group that is hardest hit by the housing shortage and being the group that is hardest hit when prices rise and inflation

occurs, and when neither welfare benefits nor wages keep pace with the rising cost of living.

Now we have certain recommendations that we would like to discuss with you today that apply to the poor as a group. There are certain services and assistance that we feel would be beneficial to this whole group if this can be provided. Some of these you have heard before and we will have to re-emphasize them.

First of all, I would like to mention the great need for a system of organized legal aid that should be available. This group of poor, more than anyone else, do need this kind of protection. They are pretty ignorant of the law, fearful of the law, and they haven't any idea about their legal rights and the remedies and actions that are available to them.

In this regard too we see Family Courts, which is a resource for even a broader group, being especially needed for these families. The poor feel more comfortable in the more informal atmosphere of a Family Court. Many times the difficulties that they are going about are of a domestic nature or around support and here they do get the assistance that they need in a way that is not available through other courts.

We think too that Family Planning Clinics are very much needed and should be part of our general public health program, and that there should be public education with regard to this. We know of many families with a large number of children who really did not wish to have that size of family and they, along with others, should be able to avail themselves of facilities that would help them to space and be able to regulate the number of their children.

One need that gets overlooked sometimes is when the poor own property there should be some sort of plan that would make aid available to them for repairs so they could if at all possible remain in their own home.

We believe that day nurseries, day care or day facilities is a great need. I know this has been stressed by many groups. There are so many working mothers these days, many in this group we are talking about of necessity, who needs this kind of service and protection for their children. We feel from efforts to try to get this kind of facility established that it can only be established if there is government aid.

Perhaps here we come into the problem about the Canada Assistance Plan and the fact that this is a matching kind of arrange-