

worker and asked for some assistance. I didn't have a job at the time. My mother couldn't keep me going because there were twelve at home as it was. So the social welfare asked me—he said, "If you had a boy friend, you could live common-law." Now this is the truth. I didn't have much respect for him right away. I didn't know how to take it. I said, "Well I don't have that interest thank you, I'd just as soon live the way I am." So he agreed that he would give me a certain amount of money for groceries a week, and this was all. Just \$15 for groceries to cover my three children and myself.

*Mr. S.* Yet you were completely eligible for total assistance if you wanted to push the case. He used his authority in a very arbitrary way to tell you what you could have, because he was almost playing God with you.

*Answer:* This is the way I do feel. I would love to have stayed home with my three children and got my own apartment, but this was impossible. I didn't have any furniture, and I thought if the welfare is going to think this way, I'd just as soon go out to work and live the way I am living now. This is another problem. There are four bedrooms and fourteen people in the house. I have to sleep with my three children in a large bed. This is the way that I have to live, and I can't afford to give any more money to my mother from my salary.

*Mr. S.* Are you working now?

*Answer:* Yes.

*Mr. S.* You're not on social assistance now?

*Answer:* No, I didn't stay on it very long.

*Mr. S.* How long were you on it?

*Answer:* About three months. Another experience—I had gone to town to get a grocery order, and my brother gave me a lift home, and the social worker called me in to his office and told me that I had been seeing a car—that he himself, saw me get out of the car. He followed me.

*Mr. S.* He also suggested that you should live common-law, and yet he turns around and chastises you for being seen with a man who actually was your brother.

*Answer:* My brother is married and lives in town, and was giving me a lift.

*Mr. S.* He didn't even ask you who it was you were with?

*Answer:* I told him that this is my brother who drove me home.

*Mr. S.* Did he believe you?

*Answer:* No, he just laughed. So I wasn't going to be belittled. I was too mad.

*Kathy:* Yes, but when you have three children, it makes a difference.

*Theresa:* I'm more fortunate than a lot of others—I have my parents. As I said, I'd rather live the way I am now than the way I was before to begin with. If I weren't staying with my parents, I'd have to stay home and take all this.

*Mr. S.* But then your children are also suffering, are they not? They're with your parents who also are not that much interested in the children.

*Answer:* They are very good to them.

*Mr. S.* They're good to them, but there must be conflicts there.

*Answer:* There are a lot of conflicts. My mother isn't as young as she used to be. I have a brother who is six months younger than my oldest boy who is five. She's never been out of diapers really. She deserves a rest. I feel guilty a lot of times about this. She does have a heart condition, so we try to pitch in at night, and get all the petty work done. But then there is the bathroom—this is with any household, but with fourteen people—when can you get in there? If you're going out to work in the morning, it's hard. When you come home at night, especially if you're used to a little bit of peace and quiet, you can't get this because the family—all boys—and boys are going to play. There's so much noise. There's no insulation, and this noise comes back as an echo.

*Miss Gale:* How many rooms do you live in with fourteen people?

*Answer:* Four bedrooms, living room and very small kitchen. It's quite crowded. We take turns eating. Mum feeds the children before the school children come home, and I have a brother who goes to school and goes to work. This is another thing about the housing too. I might suggest at this point, that he has tried to put himself through school and get some education, and yet the Housing is putting up the rent because he is working part-time to buy his clothes and his books. This is the way it's working.

*Miss Gale:* Could you afford to have an apartment of your own?

*Answer:* No, because I'd have to get the children looked after, and I wouldn't be able to afford this.