

APPENDIX "A"

BRIEF ON POVERTY AS SUBMITTED JOINTLY TO THE SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE ON POVERTY BY THE SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL OF GREATER SAINT JOHN AND THE UNITED FUND OF GREATER SAINT JOHN, INCORPORATED, SAINT JOHN, N.B.

August 3, 1970.

Brief on Poverty as Submitted Jointly to the Senate Committee on Poverty by the Social Services Council of Greater Saint John and the United Fund of Greater Saint John, Inc.

March, 1970

The Social Services Council of Saint John and the United Fund, upon the request of the Senate Committee on Poverty, hereby submit a brief for the Committee's consideration.

The best analysts of the welfare system are the recipients, themselves. The following is an interview with seven welfare mothers who reside in the Crescent Valley Development of the Saint John Housing Authority.

The interviewers were:

Mr. Henry E. Stegmayer—Executive Director, United Fund of Greater Saint John Inc.,

Miss Catherine Gale—Executive Secretary, Social Services Council of Greater Saint John.

Those interviewed readily agreed to this, and are part of a group of the Homemaker Services Program conducted by the Family Services (Inc.), Saint John, with Mr. Larry Gallant, M.S.W., assigned to the project.

The locale of the interview was in an upstairs apartment made available by the Saint John Housing Authority as a focus for "out-reach" programs for community and citizen development.

The reader is asked to be aware of the meaningful insights projected by those interviewed, and the depth of their understanding of the complexities surrounding them.

The histories which follow are written almost in their entirety, and with little editing as they were recorded.

The points that stand out in the interview emphasize the need for a revision of the welfare system to remove the stigma that the recipients feel, and to remove the penalty of

having payments slashed if the recipient or members of his family earn additional money to raise their standard of living beyond the subsistence level.

This should include day-care facilities to encourage mothers to be self supporting. It also points out the need to increase and upgrade the quality of staff in the welfare offices so that the workers are people with sensitivity and insights who treat their clients as human beings. A whole change in attitudes is indicated.

Mr. Stegmayer: Would you tell us something about the Winter Carnival?

Mary Jean: It's the Crescent Valley Winter Carnival and it's the first one we've had down here—they have them in every other end of town, but not as elaborate as ours has been planned. Friday is the starting-off point, with their teen dance, "The Killer Apes" is the most popular dance band in the Maritimes right now, at least in the N.B. area, anyway. The Killer Apes is a dance band for teenagers from Saint John. They are having their own crowning of their carnival king and queen at this dance, they will reign until next year. They will also have a prince and princess from the first drop-in centre which is from 9 to 13; the second is from 14 to 19 and up.

Mr. S. Mary, is this the first Winter Carnival you ever organized in the Valley?

Answer: It is the first carnival of any kind at all at this end of town actually, and it's the first really organized community effort that we've had that could and should involve everyone in the Valley.

Mr. S. Who is going to be involved?

Answer: It is being organized by the people of the Valley, for the people of the Valley. The drop-in centre, which is City Recreation, is involved and the Crescent Valley Homemakers are involved to a point...but the people of the Valley are doing the work themselves.

Mr. S. Do you have various committees working?

Answer: Yes we have. The teens are working jointly with the adult committee. They have made a quilt, and have sold tickets on it to raise money. The teenagers made the quilt.