

desire to get out off welfare and be free to call my life my own and set my children free.

The Chairman: Would you elaborate a little?

Senator Hastings: You said "practical help". Could you tell us about that?

The Chairman: I am trying to get her to elaborate a little. In what respect, who had confidence in you?

Mrs. Whipple: I think it started with the welfare workers. Mr. Finnegan at the time was my welfare worker and he encouraged me. I didn't get any help with further education. I tried hard for that and didn't make it. Our parish priest helped and then there were social workers, at that time the Catholic Welfare of Saint John and then the Family Services took me on and were willing to train me with people who have their Masters in Social Work. I have been working and training for three years at the same time as a community worker. If these people didn't have faith in us and were willing to gamble on us, we would not have had the chance.

The Chairman: How many more were there?

Mrs. Whipple: Three of us all together.

The Chairman: Have you all made your way?

Mrs. Whipple: We are making it.

The Chairman: Have you improved your position as you went along?

Mrs. Whipple: When you go from nothing up you have to improve.

The Chairman: Was your salary improved as a result of your experience and as a result of the work you did?

Mrs. Whipple: My salary on the whole—I should say I am considered the working poor, but with the work I am doing now the future, of course, is a lot brighter. There is hope for the future. Before there was no future, no out. You had someone's foot in your back all the time.

The Chairman: You see a better future for yourself and your children?

Mrs. Whipple: For myself, yes. Certainly for my children. I have four teenagers and it is pretty hard to be told all your life "you can't work because we will lose the money off

the welfare cheque. You are not helping yourself or me. No, you can't join the Boy Scouts because I can't afford it. It is for the middle class. No, you can't take music lessons because we can't afford it. No, you can't do everything, you can't even work for yourself."

This is the difference between welfare and freedom.

Senator McGrand: Most social workers are graduates of social science courses at a university and many of them, while they are very familiar with poverty, have never experienced poverty at their personal level. Some of the poor who appeared before this committee have been critical of the social workers. Now it occurs to me that some social workers could be recruited from the ranks of the poor who by hard work have made their way from poverty to a sense of security and their return of freedom, as you expressed it. What do you feel about the professional social worker being recruited from people such as yourself?

Mrs. Whipple: Do you mean social workers trained without diplomas or social workers who have their MSW?

Senator McGrand: Lead up to it.

Mrs. Whipple: I think it is all in the individual personality. If they are suited for a social worker I don't care where they come from. If you come up from the school of hard knocks and whatnot you can be the most miserable social worker and you can feel "I done it, why can't they?" You can come from a well situated financial background and have much more sympathy. I think it is the individual and not necessarily where they come from.

Senator McGrand: There is the opportunity. Some ten years ago people who went through what you experienced would never have aspired to being a social worker.

Mrs. Whipple: No.

Senator McGrand: This is a phenomenon of the last few years and we find this everywhere, people who have gone through the school of hard knocks and are doing their best to help others out of it.

Senator Fournier: I understand that you are living in this new development, these new buildings developed by CMHC.