

APPENDIX "H"

BRIEF FROM THE CRESCENT VALLEY

TENANTS' ASSOCIATION

TO

THE SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE ON

POVERTY

The Crescent Valley Tenants' Association hereby presents a brief to the Special Senate Committee on Poverty.

The Crescent Valley Tenants' Association was formed in January, 1970, and presently has 70 paid-up members, and is continuing to enlist more.

The tenants' in the Crescent Valley subsidized housing units are obviously best able to present the problems and inadequacies which they encounter in their housing facilities. Therefore, they have organized themselves in an attempt to have these inadequacies corrected.

The problems cited below, indicate the needs and inefficiencies encountered by the tenants, in attempting to establish an acceptable standard of living for their families.

1. As in other aspects of the welfare system, tenants in public housing are penalized for trying to upgrade their standard of living beyond the subsistence level. The rent structure is such that as the tenants' earnings increase so does the rent on a higher percentage basis, to a level which makes any improvement in living standards impossible. Therefore, there is no incentive for a worker to get promotions in his job, and increase his earnings.

(a) Many of the wives in Crescent Valley have excellent work experience, some in offices, telephone switchboards, hotels, etc. Some would like to work part-time or full time, in order to pay off back debts, get things they need for their homes and families, and upgrade their standard of living to a point of being able to move out of subsidized housing, making room for others. Because their earnings would cause their rents to increase, there is no incentive for them to join the work force, and become independent and more useful members of society.

(b) Parents prefer to have teen-age children, who have finished school and now are employed, remain in the home rather than being on their own without supervision. Here again, the boy or girl's salary increases the parent's rent, thus killing incentives in both parent and child.

There is something wrong with a system when the parents who have encouraged their children to stay in school, and have met considerable expenses in doing so, lose these children as soon as they could be a help financially. This is disheartening, particularly to those on a low fixed income, who feel that they will never be able to improve their circumstances; and it is not surprising that they become very discouraged.

It should be noted that the children, most of whom have a trade or skill, not only move elsewhere locally, but also go to other provinces.

All of this is having a bad effect on the younger children who will graduate in the next few years, and it will give them just another reason to join the 'modern' crowd and leave the province.

If the rent is increased as a result of the above, the alternative is for the family to move—if it can find other suitable accommodation—but since most children leave eventually, the family would then find it impossible to return to low-cost housing, due to the long waiting list.

2. There is no insulation under the floors, making heating difficult in the lower flats.

3. There is no soundproofing in the apartments, and thus absolutely no privacy.

4. House-wiring does not seem to be heavy enough to carry modern appliances. Fuses blow if more than one appliance is plugged.