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1985

PUBLIC HEARING
before
NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON HUNGER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC COMMENT
on
PROGRAMS TO COMBAT HUNGER

May 8, 1985
Birch Auditorium
Essex County College
Newark, New Jersey

MEMBERS OF COMMISSION PRESENT:

Mr. Terry Grove, Subcommittee Chairman
Ms. Marsha Abrams
Ms. Donna Ross
Ms. Brenda Beavers
Mr. William Stubbs
Ms. Leslie Smith
Ms. Kathleen DiChiara
Mr. John Avigliano
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New Jersey State Library

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*Studies, THROUGH THE SAFETY NET: A Citizens' Report on
N. J. Children and Families in Need, and
NOT ENOUGH TO LIVE ON, mentioned on page 82 of transcript,
may be obtained by writing to:
Association for Children of New Jersey
17 Academy Street, Suite 709
Newark, New Jersey, 07102

TERRY GROVE (Chairman): Good afternoon. My name is Terry Grove and I am a Commissioner on the New Jersey Commission on Hunger. This afternoon we are calling to order the fifth in a series of hearings the Hunger Commission is holding throughout the State of New Jersey in order to receive information about the problem of hunger, as you find it, in the State. We will be here this afternoon from 1:00 P.M. to, roughly, 5:00 P.M. taking testimony from people who have come today to share with us.

There have been many calls, and many people have indicated their desire to speak with us today. We hope we will be able to make time for everyone to do that. We have quite a long list of speakers. So, in an attempt to fit everyone in, we are asking everyone to make their comments as concise and clear as they can.

We have been asking people to keep their comments within a 10-minute time frame. That will allow the Commissioners about five minutes for discussion, conversation, and clarification of any points you have made.

The Commission will take a break on the hour for about five minutes, just to clear our heads, move around a bit, and get our blood circulating so we will be fresh and relaxed when we come back. We will then be with you for the entire day.

I would like you to know who the Commissioners are that you will be speaking with, so we will start on my far right and have each of the Commissioners introduce themselves. They will tell you who they are, the name of their organization, and who they represent, so that you will know to whom you are speaking today.

MS. ABRAMS: I am Marsha Abrams, and I am the Executive Director of the Commission.

MS. ROSS: I am Donna Ross, Newark Preschool Council.

MS. BEAVERS: I am Brenda Beavers, The Salvation Army.

MR. STUBBS: I am William Stubbs, Department of Community Affairs. I am representing the Commissioner of the Department, John P. Renna.

MS. SMITH: I am Leslie Smith, The Center for Food Action in New Jersey.

MS. DiCHIARA: I am Kathleen DiChiara, The Community Food Bank of New Jersey.

MR. AVIGLIANO: I am John Avigliano, Middlesex County Board of Social Services.

MR. GROVE: My name is Terry Grove, and I work with Church World Service and the CROP organization in New Jersey.

When you come to give testimony to us, we invite you to come to the table in front of us, sit down, give us your name, spell your name, and then tell us the name of the organization you represent, with your title. If you are here representing yourself, just indicate that you are an individual, representing yourself.

Because we take seriously what you have to say to us, we have the services of the Office of Legislative Services of the State of New Jersey here to record and then transcribe into a written document what is said this entire day. We believe that what you have to say is important. We want to hear it all, and we want to have it as a written record so we can refer to it as the proceedings of our Commission move forward. The two women here with us today are from the Office of Legislative Services. We are very pleased to have them with us. They are professionals, and we have found that the work they do for our Commission is excellent. So, thank you, ladies, for sharing the day with us.

I would now like to invite the first person to come up and give us her testimony. Ms. Franco?

MARLENY FRANCO: Good afternoon. Thank you. I didn't realize I was going to be first. I was hoping I would have a chance to hear some other comments.

My name is Marleny Franco. I am here to represent the Rutgers Urban Gardening Program, The Cooperative Extension Service, Rutgers University.

Basically, I am here to talk about urban gardening. What I would like to say is that urban gardening has a different meaning to various individuals. In suburbia it is considered a hobby, something to come home to in order to relax and enjoy. To the urbanites it is much deeper; it is survival. Seniors and low-income families thrive in

cities, such as Newark, where their income is fixed, or below poverty level. Fresh vegetables are expensive; therefore, they were a rarity on their tables until we came along with Urban Gardening.

There are hidden agendas which go beyond food and nutrition. Gardeners are people of all backgrounds, be they ethnic, social, economic, or age, who are working together to become a community which is self-sufficient, and with new strength.

Gardeners are learning to restore mother earth while teaching city dwellers the beauty of nature and respect for their environment. Young and old alike learn to appreciate land once again as a treasure which must be preserved and maintained, and not just as a commodity which is bought and sold.

As people share and exchange ideas about gardening, new doors are opened and communities once again thrive. The same people clean a vacant lot and restore the lot from a garbage-strewn eyesore to a paradise of flowers and vegetables. In cleaning up, they are not just cleaning and doing things for themselves or for the city; they are the true rebuilders of our cities.

Real cities are made of people like urban gardeners who, last year, produced in the City of Newark more than \$412 thousand worth of fresh produce in over 14 acres throughout the City. Some of this produce was canned or frozen in order to be consumed throughout the year.

Gardening is an opportunity for people to share their knowledge and resources within the community, the old passing on to the young. Seniors have many skills which need to be preserved and passed on to our young.

Cities are fragile when it comes to their food systems. If transportation strikes, oil embargos, political situations, etc. occur, the first to be affected are cities such as ours, which is totally dependent upon these commodities in order to feed our people. But, Urban Gardening has begun to change this. Up until now, this has been done without help from the State.

As we are Federally funded, our funds continuously get cut off every time other priorities are established.

In closing, I would like to say that urban gardening is a way to end hunger, as people learn to feed themselves while taking pride in themselves and their communities. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions?

MS. DiCHIARA: Marleny, I know you mentioned the talents of many of the seniors. It has been my experience that they are talents that could be lost forever. Before seniors lived in the cities, or when there was more space in the cities, they knew about growing vegetables; they knew what to do with them when they grew them. Is it your experience that many of the younger people don't have any experience with growing vegetables, nor even how to prepare fresh vegetables, unless they have contact with programs such as Urban Gardening, or programs that put them in contact with the seniors who do have that kind of knowledge?

MS. FRANCO: That is very true, Kathy. One thing is that most of the seniors came from the South. They all lived on farms, where they knew how to grow their food. They also either canned food or froze it. In some cases, they even dried it. The only thing the youth today know about food is going to the supermarket, and opening up a can. This is the concept they have. There is very little vegetation within the urban environment, so, consequently, to them food is the supermarket.

They definitely do not know anything about growing anything, be it food, ornamentals, or trees. This is why a lot of the tree programs that are established in the cities, with millions and billions of dollars, get vandalized three or four days after they are planted. This is because the kids do not appreciate what a plant is.

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you.

MS. FRANCO: You're welcome.

MS. ROSS: How is it decided who can participate in the Urban Gardening Program? Is there an income level criteria used, or is there some way you decide who can use a plot of land?

MS. FRANCO: Not really. Although we are oriented for low-income, and that is what our major funding is for, we don't turn anyone down. Anyone who contacts us and who wants to have a garden is

referred to the proper channels in order to acquire the land. We then train them from step one as to how to go about cleaning it, what things get picked up by the city, what things get picked up by them, etc., all the way down to the design, layout, and planting of the crops.

MR. GROVE: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: You said you were Federally funded. Is there any kind of State match? Is there any cooperation with funding sources, or is it totally Federal?

MS. FRANCO: There is none, whatsoever, from the State; it is strictly Federal. It was a pilot project, started about six years ago throughout 16 cities in the United States. With the large cutbacks that have occurred in the past few years, we have been seriously affected to the point where this year we may not be funded again.

MS. SMITH: Do you see that if a cutback in this program takes place, it is going to affect a large portion of the population's ability to eat properly?

MS. FRANCO: I definitely believe that. Over one-half of the gardeners we are dealing with are welfare recipients; seniors who are retired and have no real pension plan, but, rather, live on a fixed income; or, just simply mothers with children who are on a very fixed-type of income. In many cases, they just have no way to do anything else but grow their own food. We do supply them with the seeds. We really do supply them with the seeds and they do the planting. They grow their own food, and that is much different than giving them food.

MS. SMITH: So, hunger could increase in New Jersey?

MS. FRANCO: Yes.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Donna?

MS. ROSS: You mentioned that \$412 thousand worth of fresh produce was grown last year. Do you have any sense as to how that contributed to individual families' food budgets? Do you have any sense regarding how people have been able to stretch their own resources because of the contribution of this program?

MS. FRANCO: I can only tell you what gardeners told us when we questioned them during our survey at the end of the year, which is how we arrived at our statistics. Basically, the statement that will stay with me is, a lot of the seniors and the individuals I have talked with told me they haven't had any fresh produce in years. If they are a first-year gardener, they will tell us, "This is the first time I have had fresh collard greens, or fresh turnips, or fresh mustard greens." Not only are these items sometimes not available within the City of Newark, but they are not accessible, or they are accessible on a limited basis.

They have even had the opportunity to expand and grow other vegetables and herbs that are just impossible -- even for middle-class Americans -- to buy and cook with.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? (no response)
Thank you very much, Ms. Franco.

MS. FRANCO: Thank you. I have a written statement with me if you would like a copy.

MR. GROVE: If anyone has a written statement, please pass it to the women at the table over here (indicating). They will be very happy to have your statement.

The next person to speak is Don Clark.

DONALD B. CLARK: By the way, Ron Good will be coming with a slide presentation, if you would like to see it. You will see Market Square in Newark.

My name is Donald Clark, Executive Committee member of Metropolitan Ecumenical Ministry, Legislative Committee Chair of the Essex County Coalition to Save Food Stamps, a Steering Committee member of the Coalition for Human Priorities, a member of the Interface Task Force for Peace, and a few other things.

I need not tell many of you about the linkage between hunger, poverty, and militarism, and, indeed, between and among many of the "isms," such as racism, sexism, capitalism, and communism -- factors and forces in our society and world that impact on hunger, poverty, underemployment, and unemployment.

I hope that as a Commission, you will address these linkages, make the connections between global problems and our problems, and that you will think globally and call for action on all levels needing change. Only in that way can you really address hunger.

For several years, I have served on the American Friends Service Committee, New York Region, and I helped to develop the Hunger and Militarism Guide, as well as other programs which help Haitian and Kymer refugee women cope with living in this area.

After this hearing I will be going to the New Jersey Immigration Policy Network meeting, where I suspect Paul Stagg is right now. I mention this because I am not sure you have, or will hear from refugees, nor learn of their exploitation in this area, and the need to watchdog the Immigration Service. Please invite them to present testimony. They may be unwilling, especially the refugees themselves.

The Hunger and Militarism Guide contains case studies of Ethiopia, the Philippines, Guatemala, and America. It discusses the militarization of foreign aid, the derailing of development by military spending — and that has applications not only in the Third World but also in the third world of Newark and in this country — and what we can do about it.

I would like to give you this kit because we all need to delve into the linkages, to ask ourselves the moral questions, to acknowledge our interdependent world, and to see that what impoverishes a peasant family, making them homeless, also impoverishes us a bit and may be poor stewardship of this earth and its land. Spending \$15 million of New Jersey taxpayers' money on raping, torturing, and killing innocent people in El Salvador and paying for the full cost of the government in El Salvador so the rich can go tax-free, get wealthier and more privileged, while repression increases and export cropping expands from that country, is a hunger concern of yours.

Our society has not accepted the fundamental responsibility of providing for the basic needs of its most vulnerable members. I am sure you have been hearing this. One major reason we have not accepted the responsibility is an exaggerated national emphasis on military power. This growing U.S. militarism directly hurts poor people in two ways:

1. Government programs which assist poor people must vie directly with military spending for funds in the military budget. When military budgets are seemingly inviolate and ever-expanding, cuts are made disproportionately in means-tested programs, in the futile effort to control deficits, or, frankly, to simply punish the victims, those whose rugged individualism and individual enterprise does not seem to be comparable to the likes of General Dynamics or General Electric.

2. Militarism contributes to hunger through the negative economic conditions that are caused by military spending. A faltering national economy hurts us all. But low-income people are particularly vulnerable to negative economic changes. They are hit especially hard by inflation and other adverse economic conditions that are certainly aggravated by military spending.

Military spending costs us jobs. Employment Research Associates has found that military spending creates fewer jobs than most civilian spending. They estimate that each \$1 billion increase in military spending costs the U.S. a total of \$10,700 jobs. In 1982, the Public Interest Research Group in Michigan claimed that we experience, in this metropolitan area, a greater impact than any other area in the country from military spending, and that 2,800 New York/New Jersey people lose their jobs with every additional \$1 billion spent by the Pentagon. The Labor Research Association states that the scheduled increase in military spending in the next five years, if applied to useful civilian job programs, such as teachers, social workers, and so on, would provide an additional 5 million jobs -- that is over what would be lost in the military/industrial complex.

An article by Robert W. DeGrasse, Jr., entitled, The Military: Shortchanging the Economy, is being provided to you for additional impact. (see appendix page 1X)

The impact of the Reagan years on low-income Americans is very well covered and thoroughly documented in End Results. (see appendix, page 5x) This is one paper I am going to give you. I don't know if any of you have received this, or if it has been introduced into the record. If not, I would like to do that at this point. It is called, End Results: The Impact of Federal Policies Since 1980 on

Low-Income Americans. I will introduce that, and I really wish you would read it because it thoroughly documents what is happening to the American public since 1980 because of all these budget cuts. It is documented on the basis of Federal studies. It is additional information for you.

This volume not only deals with the cuts in means tested programs, but it also deals with the redistribution of tax burdens affecting low-income families. The Federal tax burden on families at the poverty level is typically two to three times what it was only six years ago. So, you not only have to look at the cutbacks in their social programs, but you also have to look at the increase in their taxes, Social Security, and income taxes.

On behalf of the Coalition for Human Priorities, I would like to insert into the record a statement that is signed by over 50 leaders and organizations in the State. I have another statement called, A Call to End Poverty in the United States (see appendix, page 49X) which is signed by 36 religious leaders, and I would also like to enter that into the record.

The proposed 1986 Federal budget of the Senate and the Administration is once again a trade-off of social spending in favor of military spending. Social spending goes down, and many social programs get eliminated. Originally, they said they were going to cut out 25 programs entirely. The Urban Gardening Program was one, and all of the Rutgers Extension Services for Nutrition was another. They hoped to save through all of this. Originally, they were going to save about \$39 billion. Now they are talking in terms of taking about \$30 billion away from the poor, which, I don't need to tell you, is about 15 days of spending by the military. If they take away \$30 billion, it is only saving what the Pentagon spends in about 15 working days. That is far less than the waste, fraud, and abuse in the military budget. So, we have all this suffering, when they could have just cracked down a little bit on the military. Even Stockman says he could cut \$30 billion from the military and not hurt them one bit.

The Pentagon has not cut one of its military programs in the last five years. Their so-called cuts have been in reassessing

downward the cost of gasoline, because it went down in price, or other items. That is all they have done.

To save an estimated \$6.6 billion cost-of-living increase in Federal aid programs, where they were proposed, would push another 530 thousand people below the poverty line, to join the other 35 million people. Some money probably could be saved by cutting out the cost-of-living increases to retirees living on over \$50 thousand a year; and, some moderate-income people probably would not suffer on a 2% COLA increase. I say, can't we afford a day's worth of military spending to give all who need it a cost-of-living increase? How about one week's military spending to practically eliminate hunger in the country? A couple of weeks of military spending, repeated for the next five years, would provide enough in resources for appropriate development aid to bring the 500 million people who are most desperately hungry in the world the wherewithal to become self-sufficient.

The way I read the military budget as of now, the Department of Defense -- better named the "Department of War" -- gets \$313.7 billion, and by the time you add in the cost of past, present, and future wars, it will be spending \$493.5 billion in 1986.

MR. GROVE: Don, I am going to have to stop you. You are over the 10 minutes at this point.

MR. CLARK: Okay.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions? (no response) You have been very clear and very helpful. The written testimony that you did not give to us, plus what you did hand in, will become part of the record if you will give it to the reporters. Anything else you would like to share with us should be given to them as well, and they will pass it on to us.

MR. CLARK: Okay. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you.

Our next witness will be Celia Abalos. Celia, we are asking everyone to be seated, give their name, and spell it for us. Please tell us what organization you represent and what your title is. You then have approximately 10 minutes to share with us.

CELIA ABALOS: Okay. Thank you.

My name is Celia Abalos. I am the Director of the Department of Citizen Services for Essex County. Here with me today is Tony O'Flaherty from my staff.

I want to thank the Commission and the members of the Task Force for giving us the time to come before you today and for convening a forum such as this so that we can come before you and share our thoughts with you.

I think it is somewhat paradoxical that we are here today discussing the problem of food shortages, which affect so large a segment of our society, while our farms and commercial food producers are considered to be the most efficient and prolific suppliers in the entire world. We hear about the warehousing of millions of tons of surplus food, subsidies to large farmers in order that they produce less food, and even the outright destruction of surplus products in the name of price stabilization.

All of these are economic concepts, none of which recognize what food shortages mean in terms of human suffering. They do not consider the child who day in and day out, week in and week out, has not had enough milk to drink nor food to eat. For most Americans, three meals a day -- and even more -- are something that we take very much for granted. The feeling of real and prolonged hunger is a condition that we cannot even begin to comprehend.

Here in Essex County, we have a large population of abject poor who lack sufficient income to feed themselves. Every time we shop at the supermarket, we receive a graphic reminder of just how much it costs to feed a family in this area. So expensive is the cost of food that there are 127,000 people in Essex County alone whose incomes are low enough to qualify them for food stamps.

The Food Stamp Program has become the main source of food for many of that number, which includes some 70,000 children. However, the average monthly allotment in Essex County is a meager \$45 per person. That translates into \$1.50 per day, or just 50¢ a meal. Let's stop and think about that. It is little wonder why hunger is a widespread problem, particularly among our urban poor throughout the county.

The Food Stamp Program has not been indexed to consumer prices. As a consequence, one of its fundamental deficiencies is in the area of the adequacy of benefits. We are attempting to address 1980s requirements with 1970s programs. Right now, as I see it, the future is no better. Needless to say, we, in the Essex County Department of Citizen Services, are concerned over the proposed cutbacks in the Food Stamp and other nutrition programs funded by Federal dollars.

In Essex County we account for 25% of the Food Stamp Program for all of New Jersey. AFDC families, the poverty-stricken, the aged, the handicapped, and families whose earnings place them below the poverty level, are benefited by the program. Supplementing the Food Stamp Program in Essex County are several other public and private programs, which address specific problems.

We have WIC -- which is Women, Infants, and Children -- Child Care Feeding Programs, Meals on Wheels, and the Rutgers Extension Services Program, which was just mentioned by one of the previous speakers. I am sure you are all familiar with these programs. In addition, we have the contributions of committed citizens, who, through churches and volunteer organizations, help to reach thousands more of the hungry whose numbers seem to increase daily.

The plight of the hungry in Essex County is not new to us. This is a national problem. It targets the poor, primarily in the inner city, who turn to government as their last resort. They don't want to be on welfare. They don't want to be on food stamps. They just do not have any choice. I would hope that the Federal government reconsiders its position and continues to fund these direly needed, basic nutrition programs. This is where I feel the energies and involvement of your Commission would be most appreciated and best applied. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Kathleen?

MS. DiCHIARA: What do you think, if funded on a greater State level, might also address hunger within this area?

Although we are all pushing for funding on the Federal level, we also want to identify funding on the State level that would allow us to help you.

MS. ABALOS: If we are to experience cutbacks in, for example, the WIC Program because of Federal cutbacks, the State could supplement what the town receives to fund those programs; that would be a tremendous help. Another program which falls into that category is the Urban Gardening Program. I believe the speaker who told you about the Urban Gardening Program stressed the fact that it is an important and vital program.

If the State could pick up the slack we are experiencing due to the Federal cuts, I think it would be most beneficial to the citizens of the county.

MS. DiCHIARA: Since so many of the recipients of AFDC are also recipients of food stamps, if that grant was set at a higher level would that have an impact on hunger?

MS. ABALOS: Absolutely. I think it would. Forty-five dollars per person is really nothing. I go to the supermarket. I have three children, my husband, and myself to shop for, and we do not have a luxurious diet. We spend between \$100 and \$150 per week. I have teen-agers; but, still, to expect a mother to supply a nutritious meal on 50¢ per meal is really nothing. That is what we are trying to do. We do not just want to give them food; we want to give them nutritious food.

MS. DiCHIARA: I have one other quick question, and I do not know if you have the answer to it or not. We heard at other hearings that the Meals on Wheels Programs do not operate on weekends, nor do they operate on holidays, which most often fall on Mondays or Fridays. Oftentimes, this puts senior citizens in the position of going three full days without anything to eat. Is the Meals on Wheels Program in Essex County covered on weekends or holidays?

MS. ABALOS: Tony just told me that as far as she knows they are not covered. I do not think they are either, but I can speak to Lois Hall, who is our Director of the Division on Aging.

MS. DiCHIARA: We have heard the same thing in other places.

MS. ABALOS: Is that what you would like to see us do? We can inquire into what is happening with those seniors.

MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: We have too large a waiting list for the five-day-a-week program right now.

MS. DiCHIARA: Yes. I wondered whether the seniors in Essex County were in the same position we heard about in so many other counties.

MS. ABALOS: You know, we have a large waiting list just for the people who are willing to take the five meals a week. But, we will definitely look into that.

MR. GROVE: I think there is a universal issue here, for the benefit of anyone who is listening to this particular question. Time and time again, we run into problems with many of the feeding programs which seem to operate, or receive funding for only five days a week; they skip holidays and weekends. If you can address yourselves to that, or if you have specifics regarding this problem when you speak to us, we would be glad to have that input because we keep finding that to be a universal issue.

Another universal issue seems to apply to money problems, Celia. What do you find is happening in the supermarkets regarding the pricing of food? When the people buy their food, do they find that the prices are higher at the beginning of the month than they are at the end of the month? Is there a change in price going on in the chain stores? The mom and pop stores are pretty high much of the time, but do you find a price change at the chain stores -- the bigger stores? Do your people talk to you about this?

MS. ABALOS: No, to be honest with you, I have not heard of it.

MR. GROVE: Okay. If anyone else who is going to give testimony has something to share with us regarding that matter, we would be glad to hear about it.

Bill?

MR. STUBBS: I think it is only fair to say to Celia and to everyone here that Commissioner Renna, from the Department of Community Affairs, is very sensitive to the needs of the poor, who are counted among the hungry, and he has been in communication with members of Congress. He has alluded to the fact that the need is far greater than most people realize, and they should do everything possible to at least keep the Federal funding at its current level. If it cannot be

increased, anything lower than its present level would be disastrous. He made his feelings known, from New Jersey to Washington as late as last week, and prior to that. He has also allocated, from his meager budget, additional funds for the hungry.

MR. GROVE: Donna?

MS. ROSS: I have one quick question. I would like you to clarify something you said earlier in your testimony; it had to do with the fact that the food stamp allotment is not indexed to consumer prices. You said they are funding 1980 allotments on 1970 prices. Is this to say that the Thrifty Food Program, on which food stamp allotments are--

MS. ABALOS: (interrupting) I'm sorry; I didn't hear you. Is this to say that through--?

MS. ROSS: (continuing) That the Thrifty Food Plan on which food stamp allotments are based is being compiled, using 1970 food prices? Is that what you meant to say?

MS. ABALOS: No, it is actually two years behind. What I am saying is, the funds we now have are somewhat similar to the 1970 funding level -- not to the penny, nor to the dollar. However, we are asked to do more and more, and there are no increases in the funding for that program.

MS. ROSS: In terms of the way the food stamp allotments are based, they are two years behind current food prices, is that what you are saying?

MS. ABALOS: Yes.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: Yes. Along with the weekend problem for seniors, I am also interested in accessibility to food stamp offices. What has your experience been insofar as people's ability to be processed within a reasonable period of time? For instance, is there any leeway in hours at the food stamp office for people who might work and who might otherwise have to take off from work in order to apply for the program? Are there flexible hours?

MS. ABALOS: Yes, there are. What we have done in order to address that problem is, we open the office at seven o'clock in the morning. Employees come in on staggered shifts. The first shift starts at 7:00 a.m., and I believe the office closes at 5:00 p.m. An attempt has also been made to have the office open on Saturday mornings.

MS. SMITH: Has that been an improvement from your perspective?

MS. ABALOS: Yes it has, because not everyone has to come in at one time. If someone has something to do, say at 9:00, he or she can come in at 7:00. It has been rather successful and, to my knowledge, it has reduced the number of people who have to wait on line to receive their food stamps.

By the way, I have been visiting some of the field offices and the food stamp offices, to see if the information I am receiving is, in fact, what is happening. When I was last at the food stamp office, I believe it was about 10:30 a.m., there were only about one-half dozen people there.

MS. SMITH: I commend Essex County for going in the direction of flexible hours.

MS. ABALOS: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Brenda?

MS. BEAVERS: I am not sure you can answer this at this moment, but perhaps you can get us the information.

MS. ABALOS: We will get it for you.

MS. BEAVERS: Thank you. The State has certain criteria in terms of taking Federal regulations and developing them here in the State for the purpose of administration. Are there any State policies that are more restrictive than the Federal government will allow in terms of the Food Stamp Program? Often, their interpretation of what the Feds want is more restrictive than is necessary.

MS. ABALOS: What does the State require? How about Tony answering that question?

TONY O'FLAHERTY: Last year there was a problem with a decision on which groups were going to be involved in the monthly reporting

retrospective budgeting issue. The State eventually requested waivers, so the only people who are involved in the monthly reporting retrospective budgeting problem now -- meaning the monthly reporting -- are people who are mandated at the Federal level. No one not mandated at the Federal level is mandated at the State level. The problem only exists for those who have income from employment. There is no problem for anyone else.

That is a problem, but, again, it is a Federal problem and we can't get away from it.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? (no response)
Thank you, Celia. Thank you, Tony.

We are now going to take a five-minute break so we can talk for a couple of minutes. Please do not leave the room, we will be right back.

Panel, I just want to grab you for one second. To all the rest of you, we will be right back.

(RECESS)

(AFTER RECESS)

MR. GROVE: If you will join us again, we will proceed with the hearing.

Is Sister Beatrice Ryan here? (affirmative response)
Beatrice, are you in a hurry? May I slip someone in before you; would that be okay with you? (affirmative response) Are you sure?
(affirmative response)

May Elison and Mrs. Clark?

We have added a few Commissioners since we took a break. I would like you to know who they are. At this point, we have a full table here. Starting at the far end of the table, would the Commissioners introduce themselves, please?

BISHOP PARROT: I am Bishop James W. Parrot, Minister of the South Park Lighthouse Temple, 1035 Broad Street, Newark.

MR. GROVE: Next?

MS. BELLA: I am Diana Bella; I am with the New Jersey Department of Energy.

MR. GROVE: I believe you know the rest of the Commissioners.

We are asking everyone to give us his or her name, spell his name, and tell us what organization he is with. You then have 10 minutes to give testimony — the two of you together. Okay?

MAY ELINSON: My name is May Elinson. I am with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. I work as a nutritionist in the OB/GYN area. I also deal with pulmonary and alcoholic patients. Mrs. Clark, do you want to introduce yourself? I will then talk after her introduction.

HERMA CLARKE: My name is Herma Clarke. I am a Public Health Nutritionist by training. I also hold a master's degree in Public Administration. I have worked in the Newark area for nearly 12 years. I am currently employed at UMDNJ in Newark, New Jersey.

MR. GROVE: Will you spell your name for us, please — first and last?

MRS. CLARKE: My first name last?

MR. GROVE: Your first name and then your last name.

MRS. CLARKE: H-E-R-M-A C-L-A-R-K-E.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much. May?

MS. ELINSON: M-A-Y E-L-I-N-S-O-N.

I have been working in the Newark area for about 20 years, mostly in the prenatal clinic, but also with alcoholic patients and patients with pulmonary disease.

First, I would like to give you some general impressions, and then I would like to talk about pregnant woman and the problems we find with them. I would then like to talk about the children. If there is any time left within my five-minute limitation, I would then just like to say a little bit more about some of the other problems.

I guess the biggest problem we find in general is that the cost of housing is so great for our patients, they have very little money left to buy food. In many places, the appliances are so bad that my patients on the WIC Program cannot take full advantage of the Program simply because of the fact that their refrigerators are very

poor. You know, under the WIC Program, they have to buy so many quarts of milk at one time, so it either goes to waste or they just can't use the checks.

Also, the stoves are not of very good quality. A lot of our patients have to use one-burner stoves; therefore, they cannot take advantage of the very little food they are able to buy.

Going on to pregnant women specifically, a lot of our pregnant women register late so they are malnourished to begin with. When they come to us, many of them are not on welfare. Some of them have come to Newark from other communities, so it takes quite a while for them to get welfare. We try to get them into the WIC Programs fast as we can. A lot of them really don't have enough money to buy food, other than the WIC checks they receive. They stay with relatives who do not have enough money to buy food for them. So, many times, when they come to our clinic, they are really hungry.

As far as the children who come in are concerned, we find that if they come from a large family, the youngest child who can't reach the refrigerator door is the runt of the group. All of the other children can get into the refrigerator, and by the time the youngest one can get help, there is nothing left.

When there is a large family and a lot of money has to be spent on rent, we find that food runs out by the end of the third week, and then the family has very little to eat.

Another big problem, of course, is storage for the food and transportation to bring it home on WIC checks. So, again, many of our patients do not take advantage, or they can't take advantage, of the WIC Program.

One of the things we find in pediatrics is that there is a great deal of anemia and growth retardation. We have, as most of you know, ICU clinics, in which we find a lot of problems with malnutrition. When a child doesn't get enough to eat, his learning and growth are retarded.

Of course, as far as the alcoholic patients I work with are concerned, one of the big problems there is -- as Michael Harrington says -- they are below the poverty level. They have no fixed address,

so they are not even on welfare. We find a tremendous amount of malnutrition amongst the alcoholic because they scrounge, live off their friends, or steal food. We find a tremendous amount of that.

In the pulmonary clinic, we see the same problem of sharing amongst friends; they are not living at a fixed address, so they do not get any type of welfare check.

I will let Mrs. Clarke talk now.

HERMA CLARKE: My report is based on data I obtained through interviews I conducted for a project; it was for a post-graduate course. I was asked to develop proposals for implementation on the Federal, State, and local levels.

Continuous community involvement, as well as voluntary information, suggest how people exist in this community. Many households subsist on high carbohydrates and a high-fat diet, usually potatoes seasoned with fatback. We found five pounds of potatoes for 89¢ in an area called Mulbury Street versus five pounds of potatoes for maybe \$1.20 in the supermarket. Five pounds of potatoes go a long way.

Snacks consist of something called pork skins. These people are our county's and city's welfare recipients, who I understand should not work. In order to be eligible, they should not have a paycheck. The last figure I received was \$124 to \$127 per month. Please do not quote this. I am not sure. I am not involved in this area.

However, they get food stamps. Now, it behooves you to know that they trade some of these food stamps for cash in order to purchase cleansers and supplies for their daily hygiene. Therefore, the food stamps do not go a long way.

We also have female heads of households who have actually gone — I recall one case — a whole day without food. She works. Her children are grown. Her income, when it is broken down, goes towards rent — there is no furniture — transportation to and from work, gas, electricity, and telephone.

We also have some who are hungry and are mentally and physically incapable of reporting to welfare offices in order to find out if they qualify for extra finances. Also, there are those who refuse to go because after their first interviews they report, "Being

humiliated by caseworkers." A few people have actually cried on the phone because I suggested they go to get what they qualify for.

We then come to the alcoholics, those who claim that if they get drunk they qualify for confinement in detoxification centers, where they are treated for seven days and receive three meals a day. After seven days, they are released. They now return to the community and it is a vicious cycle; they get drunk again so they can get food for seven more days.

I want you to know that a lot of the aforementioned reside in abandoned buildings, and they find shelter on apartment stairways.

There is hunger in America. There is hunger in this community. Even through there are soup kitchens, grocery store managers and restaurant managers have to drive the hungry away from garbage bins, where they go to get their nutrition. This food is not fit for human consumption when disposed of; yet, these hungry people fill their stomachs from waste. There is hunger in this community. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions?

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you, both of you. I have a question. From the time a person signs up for the WIC Program-- If you have a pregnant woman come in, perhaps late, and she is already malnourished, from the time she identifies herself, how much time elapses before she is issued a check?

MS. ELINSON: Immediately. As soon as a patient comes into the clinic, we go through a WIC assessment and I fill out the form. She then gets her check the same day.

One of the biggest problems, of course, is that we have a very large WIC Program and by the time I see a patient, the line -- or the number of people ahead of her -- is quite long. A lot of our patients have children who come home from school at 12:00 noon for lunch, and they can't wait. So, some of them don't stay at the clinic. But, they can get the check the very same day. That is one big thing I see to; I make every patient eligible for the WIC Program.

MS. DiCHIARA: What kind of outreach is being done in the area of the WIC Program? I assume that it is like other places, where

many people would qualify for WIC, but they do not know about the Program, or they do not come in because they have to wait.

MS. ELINSON: Well, I will tell you, there are two WIC Programs in Newark. Fortunately or unfortunately, ours is only for our patients. So, our outreach is for the patient. I wish we had an Outreach Program so that women would come in for their prenatal care earlier because I have any number of patients who start their prenatal care with a private physician and then it gets so expensive that they can't keep going; they come to us in the seventh or eighth month with very low hemoglobin counts because they did not have the benefits our clinic has to offer, such as WIC, social service, and so on.

MS. DiCHIARA: I have one other quick question. Does anyone at the hospital document the malnutrition of people who come in, whether it is through the emergency room or through WIC? Is that information compiled anywhere?

MS. ELINSON: Unfortunately, I don't think so. I think there is a certain amount of documentation done on the floor in the hospital. But, insofar as the clinic area is concerned, I really don't know. Do you know, Mrs. Clarke?

MRS. CLARKE: I know in the clinic area we do have something. We do a recall on our assessment; we have contact with the patient. We analyze this data and we give aid, whether the patient meets the minimum requirement or not.

MS. DiCHIARA: Is that on computer? Could someone ask how many people came in in the last six months who were below the minimum required calorie intake? Is there any~~place~~ place we could get statistics such as that?

MRS. CLARKE: The only source I know of would be the patient's medical record,

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions? (no response)

Would either of you know the mortality rate, from newborn to the age of one month, in the City of Newark?

MS. ELINSON: I don't know it specifically, but if you read the newspapers, you will find it is quite high. I think the prenatal clinic we have for teenagers has helped to cut down on the mortality rate amongst teenagers. But, I think it is still quite high in the City of Newark.

BISHOP PARROT: I have one question. In the cutbacks that are going on in Washington, do they plan to touch the WIC Program? Is that in there?

MS. ELINSON: I think it might be. I don't know if they will cut it down, as such. However, even if they don't raise it, they will be cutting it back because food prices have gone up so much. We will have to take a smaller number of patients and cut off at what we consider to be high-risk.

As I said before, I try to get every patient I see onto the WIC Program, but if they start cutting down on the criteria, then I won't be able to get every patient onto the Program. So, there will be a cut even if they don't change the amount of money allocated to the Program.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

MS. ABRAMS: I have a question.

MR. GROVE: Oh, excuse me.

MS. ABRAMS: Do you have any kind of priority system in your WIC Program?

MS. ELINSON: Yes, we do. Right now we have a lot of money, so we are talking everyone, plus most infants, up to at least one year in age. We have received more money just in the last few months, so we are taking post partum women, up to six months after they have their babies.

But, when the budget goes down-- About two or three years ago we had no money whatsoever, and what a difference that made when we counseled patients; it made a big difference because we couldn't tell them to eat eggs, and so on.

MS. ABRAMS: When you have to implement the priority system, who do you remove first?

MS. ELINSON: We remove the post partums first -- post partum women. We then remove the older children. I guess the next removal would be breast-feeding mothers. But, I think prenatal women and infants up to age one, are kept on the Program.

MS. ABRAMS: So, there have been times over the years when you have had to implement this priority system?

MS. ELINSON: Oh, yes. Definitely. At one time, there were no funds whatsoever.

You know, another thing I guess I should have brought out -- and I am glad you brought it out -- is that our census dropped because a lot of women who come to our clinic, come because of the WIC Program, particularly Haitians, Hispanics, and people who are not legally protected, because we don't ask anything about citizenship or green cards; anyone can get onto the WIC Program as long as they qualify.

MR. GROVE: One last question.

MS. SMITH: I'd just like to clarify something that you said. Even if you did get everyone who needs it onto the WIC Program, there would still be obstacles for them once they were on the Program: They don't have transportation to get to the stores; they don't have a stove to cook the food on; they don't have a refrigerator to keep the food cold, or whatever. So, participation in the Program, bureaucratically, does not necessarily mean they can participate in the Program. Is that what you are saying?

MS. ELINSON: Yes, definitely.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

Sister Beatrice Ryan.

SISTER BEATRICE RYAN: Good afternoon. I am Sister Beatrice Ryan. I am a Sister of St. Joseph's of Peace. I am the Executive Director of a Program called, SHARE: Self Help and Resource Exchange. My purpose today is to report on the activities and the experiences of SHARE in a way that may open up the possibilities of what might be done with the information currently available, and cause hunger to end.

SHARE, Self Help and Resource Exchange, is dedicated to providing a method for the hungry to help themselves. It is a channel

through which sizeable amounts of food are made available to those who are in need. It is powered by the vision that begins with the realization that hunger exists which does not have to exist.

There is no scarcity of food in this country; it is a question of distribution. Just recently, within the last six months, a million pounds of beans sat in Nebraska. Twenty tons of avocados were saved from being dumped into a landfill within the last three months. Farmers in California were plowing oranges under, again to stabilize prices. There is no scarcity; it is a question of distribution.

SHARE is not a charity, and it is not a government program. It began in 1983 in the Diocese of San Diego, and it has grown so rapidly that in November of 1984, over 31,000 families in San Diego and Imperial County, California, were served. Also, SHARE exists in Chicago and in Southwestern Virginia, in the Appalachian section. It is currently being opened in the South Bronx, New York City -- particularly in the South Bronx -- and right here in northern New Jersey.

There is no government money involved in the SHARE Program. Share is in partnership with the total community. Host organizations, that is, churches of all traditions and denominations, labor unions, parent-teacher associations, senior citizen organizations, and community centers, all join together and assist in the registration and distribution of food to the people who become participants. The word participant is used very, very carefully because a participant in SHARE is a partner. It is someone who owns the Program, and who takes the responsibility of packaging and distributing the food. In this way, a participant is able to maintain his or her dignity, self-image, and sense of self worth. Since it is not a charity, it is not a giveaway, and no one asks them questions regarding their needs.

Once they own the Program, it takes off. People make the difference in the Program. The participants actually make the Program live through their ownership, their responsibility, and their commitment to not only end hunger for themselves but for their neighbors as well.

SHARE is for all people, and anyone may participate in the Program. There are no means tests. Anyone needing food supplements or food assistance can become a SHARE participant by paying \$12 per month and pledging two hours of community service for each package desired.

Community service is a vital part of the Program and a vital concept in the Program, because it is through the participation by the recipients that a community is created.

I repeat, SHARE is a supplemental food package. Now, the content of the food package varies from month to month; it depends on the availability of foods. However, it always includes meat, fruit, vegetables, and staples, such as beans, rice, and pasta. Frequently, there are some canned goods, such as soup, chili, or tuna fish. Each package weighs in excess of 40 pounds and retails for between \$35 and \$45 in the store.

SHARE is the whole community working together. It is a unique opportunity, and an exciting and challenging concept that can make a difference.

Many times people ask: "Well, how do senior citizens get involved?" SHARE is for senior citizens on fixed incomes. It is for single parents. It is for the temporarily unemployed — perhaps a man who is on strike, or on disability. Maybe he has a house payment, mortgage payment, medical payments, or tuition payments. SHARE is geared to all those who need a food supplement, those people we call "the stable needy," and those people I would call "the invisible hungry," those who are afraid to say, "I do not have enough food to feed my family for the week."

SHARE's food distribution takes place on the third Saturday of each month, at which time it has been said that money is very, very short and food supplies are very low. So, I ask you to keep us in mind. We feel we have a very viable Program, one that needs the help of the community and all the State agencies that can be of assistance to us in helping to eliminate hunger, not only in New Jersey but in the United States and in the world. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. Are there any questions?

MS. SMITH: This is a one-time-per-month package, is that correct?

SISTER RYAN: Yes.

MS. SMITH: So, it requires \$12 per month and two hours of volunteer time. Approximately how long will a package last?

SISTER RYAN: Well, that depends on the number of people in the family, but there is no limit to the number of units a family may buy. For each package they buy, or each food unit they buy, they must pledge two hours of community service. Community service is not voluntary; it is a pledge. It is a commitment and a responsibility.

MS. SMITH: Maybe I didn't ask the question right. If a family were to come in the third Saturday of the month to get a package for four people, or whatever, how long would that package last? Would they be able to get more than one package by paying \$12 for each one? Is that what you mean?

SISTER RYAN: Yes. They may have more than one package.

MS. SMITH: And they pledge four hours of community service?

SISTER RYAN: Right. That depends on the number of people in the family and the size of their appetites. An ordinary SHARE food package — if I may take a moment — in January, February, and March consisted of five pounds of apples, five pounds of oranges, five pounds of grapefruit, five pounds of onions, five pounds of potatoes, three pounds of zucchini, three pounds of avocados, two pounds of cereal, two pounds of rice, Thomas' English Muffins, two cans of country soup, canned fish, five pounds of chicken, and six twelve-ounce packages of luncheon meat. I may have forgotten something; I know I did not list 15 articles there.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Donna?

MS. ROSS: Two questions. I may have missed the answer to the first question. Did you say how many people in northern New Jersey are currently participating?

SISTER RYAN: I wish I could. We are in the process of commencing our SHARE operation in New Jersey, and our first distribution was to have been in May. Unfortunately, we cannot find a suitable warehouse for our needs.

MS. ROSS: Okay. Also -- and, again, I am not exactly sure where this food comes from -- I wonder if your organization is able to accept food stamps as payment for the \$12?

SISTER RYAN: First of all, the food is not donated to SHARE. With the \$12, paid by the participant in order to become a recipient in the SHARE Program, we will purchase food from the growers and the producers, in partnership. They have committed themselves to selling -- remember, these items are perishables; they are meat, fruit, vegetables, and grain -- these items to us at a very, very minimal price. This is their way of becoming partners with us.

MS. ROSS: So, it is sort of a food co-op?

SISTER RYAN: Except for the fact that people do not have a choice in the material, or the food, they pay for.

You asked about food stamps. SHARE is a national organization, and food stamps have been authorized by the USDA in San Diego and in Chicago. We anticipate getting the same permission here in northern New Jersey, as well as in New York City.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MS. DiCHIARA: Sister Bea, may I ask you a question about the food stamps? How long does your organization hold onto the food stamps before the recipient gets his or her bag of groceries, if they use them to purchase the groceries? How far ahead does someone have to turn in their food stamps before he or she gets the food?

SISTER RYAN: Actually, the day we require the host organization to collect the money, or the food stamps, is usually about one week before the food is picked up. It is the responsibility of the host organization -- the church, the community center, the local union -- to collect the food stamps, turn them into the bank, and then remit the total sum to us. So, we do not actually collect the food stamps; the host organization collects the food stamps.

MS. DiCHIARA: But, an individual recipient has to wait a week to ten days from the time he or she turns in the food stamps before the package of food is received?

SISTER RYAN: Possibly, yes.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions? (no response)
Thank you very much, Sister.

Our next witness will be Karen D'Amore.

KAREN D'AMORE: My name is Karen D'Amore. I am really representing two groups. First, I am representing the Archdiocesan Emergency Food Program, not under the auspices of Catholic Community Services. I am also representing MEND, an acronym that stands for Meeting Emergency Needs with Dignity, which is an ecumenical coalition of church-based emergency food centers that operate within the communities of Essex County.

We are a group of 16 pantries, operating in the following communities: Newark, Bloomfield, East Orange, and Orange. In addition, the Archdiocesan Food Program works with parish-based pantries throughout Essex County, including Newark, East Orange, Orange, West Orange, Nutley, Bloomfield, Belleville, and other communities.

Both organizations I represent are supported entirely by individual contributions, and by donated food. The MEND group is composed of Catholic, Presbyterian, Reformed Methodist, Lutheran, and Episcopal churches. Each of these pantries, in addition to the support provided through the organization, has its own individual lines of support through its denomination.

Our basic mission is to provide emergency foods to people in need. Our member groups often offer additional services, such as advocacy and other social services, according to their capacity to provide.

The MEND network has been in existence for eight years, as has the Archdiocesan Emergency Food Program. The MEND network was responsible for distributing 160,000 pounds of food in 1984. Our clients, in the MEND group only, range from about 1,800 to 2,500 per month; that is within the communities of Essex County alone.

We do a lot, but it is really not enough. We are mandated by our mission to provide for the following emergencies. These are emergencies that our covenant group has developed as a list.

An emergency situation occurs when an individual, or a family, is without food because of:

One, lost or stolen food stamps, money, or public assistance checks;

Two, fire victims who are not receiving any form of public assistance;

Three, persons awaiting approval of public assistance;

Four, persons in transition;

Five, computer errors on food stamps;

Six, recent releases from institutions — prisons, hospitals, or psychiatric institutions;

Seven, misappropriation of public assistance funds;

Eight, lack of adequate food because of noncontributing family members in the household;

Nine, inadequate funds for extended family members;

Ten, pending, or expiration of unemployment; and,

Finally, recoupment.

Those are our limitations. We are unable to go beyond them. In other words, we cannot deal with people who just can't make it until the end of the month. We just have no way of dealing with them.

Because we rely heavily on donated food, we cannot seriously attempt to provide a nutritional balance in our food assortment. What we get, or are given, we give. Out of our cash donations, we try to create a somewhat nutritionally balanced assortment of foods, but this is hard when dealing with only nonperishable foods. As it is now, most of our pantries do not have the capacity to deal with refrigerated or freezer foods.

We are a response to a need; we are not a solution. Because our supply of food is limited, our groups must insist on strict referral procedures. These referral procedures are designed to verify an emergency, and to ensure that the appropriate agency is working to provide a long-term response.

For example, a family whose check does not arrive will have to supply a letter from Welfare, stating that this is the case and that Welfare is responsible for providing a replacement check in good time.

Inflationary pressures on fixed incomes are forcing the people we see to make choices between heat, light, and food. Often, food becomes the discretionary item. And, in answer to someone's question, we have found that in the communities of Newark and East

Orange, particularly, we see higher prices at the beginning of the month, when the food stamps and checks arrive.

As I said, food becomes the discretionary item. We see people who are paying high fuel bills, and exorbitant rents for incredibly bad housing conditions; their food stamps are their total budget for food. They are not a supplement; they are the total budget amount.

Across the board, as many as 40% of our clients come to us because they have not received the assistance for which they are eligible. Most commonly, this includes emergency assistance which has not been processed in a timely fashion, replacement funds which are not made available promptly, people who have not received their funds through bureaucratic error or computer malfunction, and, finally, the practice of extensive verification which often penalizes the client who fails to comply because of postal problems, illness, or other error.

We had a lady who did not receive her welfare check because someone who did not wish her well, called the Welfare Office claiming to be the recipient, and stated: "Thank you, but I do not need the assistance anymore." That lady's welfare checks were cut off. I think the remedy to this may lie on the individual, county, or even State level. I am told Federal penalties are levied on states for errors which result in payments to ineligible persons, or to persons who are assumed to be ineligible when they do not meet all the qualifications for recertification, etc. It is a funny thing, but there are no penalties for errors made on the local level which result in the denial of assistance to someone who is eligible. Why isn't there a reverse procedure? Why aren't county Welfare Offices penalized for failure to serve, rather than for failure to deny? The weight of the penalty should clearly be on denial of service, and not on provision of service.

I jotted down a few off-the-cuff recommendations when I heard questions being asked by this panel. I absolutely endorse an increased food stamp allotment. Today's allotment is absolutely science fiction; it doesn't deal with today. It is impossible to exist on 45¢ a meal.

Perhaps there could be a farm surplus program that would bring the produce from the South to northern New Jersey and help us distribute it in a meaningful way.

I have been hearing that organizations providing services don't have money for research in order to document instances of hunger and malnutrition, when both are right before their eyes. Maybe we can get some research done in order to answer people who say they don't know where the hunger is.

Finally, I think we need a statewide hunger hot line in order to tell people that organizations, such as ours, are out there providing assistance, and what assistance is available if one needs it.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions? Bill?

MR. STUBBS: Ms. D'Amore, were steps taken to correct the situation when the woman you mentioned was misrepresented?

MS. D'AMORE: Oh, yes.

MR. STUBBS: With the Welfare Department?

MS. D'AMORE: Yes. She was lucky enough to go to a pantry where she was known, a pantry which was able to provide advocacy facilities.

MR. GROVE: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: I ask this question everywhere we go, and I am going to ask it of you too. A few years back, emergency food providers were called upon to provide food at the "end of the month." At that time, to us it seemed as though that was for between three and five days. In your experience, when does the end of the month happen in Newark?

MS. D'AMORE: In Newark the end of the month can, and has, started as early as the 10th of the month.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there other questions?

MS. DiCHIARA: I have a quick question. Karen, could you address some of the frustrations that the groups who run pantries feel due to the fact that they are dealing with emergency hunger when chronic hunger is growing all around them? You had a list of the emergencies people deal with; yet, it seems the rate of chronic hunger

is growing and swamping centers that had originally intended to just address crisis situations.

MS. D'AMORE: Well, yes, and it also happens the other way around. I was talking to a pantry coordinator in Orange. Now, Orange is not an "inner city," but there are a lot of elderly people on fixed incomes in Orange. This was a church pantry that had just begun. Being good Christians, they said: "Oh, we can't turn anyone away. We must feed everyone. Anyone who comes to us is going to be in need and we have to respond to that need." Well, in two weeks they had their shelves cleaned out four times, and they came to us and said, "We need more food." We were happy to supply them, but we also had to talk to them about maybe changing their mission a little bit, cutting back, and addressing the needs of the community in a more advocacy-minded fashion.

So, a desire to serve everyone, plus the chronically hungry, quickly burns pantry people out and makes them so frustrated that they either turn to an advocacy-based solution, or they just cut it off entirely.

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions? (no response)
Thank you very much.

MS. D'AMORE: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Geraldine Harvey?

GERALDINE HARVEY: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Geraldine Harvey. I am the Executive Director of Newark Emergency Services for Families. NES, as we are known in the area, is a cooperative, emergency service network agency, representing the cooperative efforts of private and public agencies, civic organizations, community residents, and representatives of the business community.

The agency's primary goal is to assist all Newark residents in crisis situations by coordinating emergency services among provider agencies. Our objectives include monitoring emergency service needs, identifying gaps in service delivery, and developing needed services to fill gaps.

We also provide direct emergency assistance when no other agency is available to meet the need. Our agency is very unique and is perhaps one of a kind in this area, and certainly across the country. We perform a multifaceted operation, in that we do planning, informing, or an educational process, and, we provide direct emergency assistance or social case management services.

We have been involved in the issue of hunger, or emergency food services, and each and every one of its components.

In the area of direct services, we have what is known as an essential intake component. This component operates a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week hot line which has been in existence since 1979. Therefore, we are able to tell you that the issue of hunger and the need for emergency food assistance, are things that happen not only during the hours of nine-to-five, but happen at 2:00 a.m.; they happen on a Sunday afternoon; or, they happen on a Saturday evening.

What we have done in order to assist and meet that gap, is to develop a relationship with the local food market through which we are able to authorize, via the hot line, emergency food vouchers. In fact, during the period from May, 1984 through March, 1985, we have been able to assist over 1,000 family units with emergency food vouchers.

These emergency food vouchers are intended to be just that: one-time assistance that will enable a family, or an individual, to meet a critical need, in terms of providing them with some kind of food assistance, supplementing the existing soup kitchens or food pantries. By and large, we feel that this particular need -- and this has been documented -- is one of the top five needs of Newark individuals and families.

In addition to the food voucher system we operate, we distribute, and we have distributed under Federal Emergency and Food and Management Agency funding, food vouchers to two other city service agencies and four churches, as well as funding two congregate meal programs operated by local churches.

In addition to that, we are also the fiscal manager of the first family shelter administered at the YMWCA, and we provide three meals a day, through a food vender, to homeless families.

We feel that is -- again, as other persons have stated -- just addressing a need. By the way, we have defined an emergency as something that may be a potential life-threatening situation which can cause the disruption of a family unit. So, we, in fact, know an emergency, and we attempt to resolve it within 72 hours, generally with food or the other emergency services we deliver. We deal with it within a matter of three to five hours.

As I said before regarding the other component we have, we address this because we are a professional agency and we have staffing. We are able to document the need. We have access, through our hot line, to the number of calls coming in. We don't just keep statistics. What we do is attempt to resolve the problem, to bring it to the attention of others, or to reach out to those individuals who are serving similar constituents. Through our networking process -- and some of you who are sitting here are already members of our emergency food networking service -- we have developed an emergency food and shelter task force, and this too not only consists of NES staff, but staff from other social service agencies, businesses, churches, and communities.

One of the things we did last year was develop what we called a "corporate civic food drive." We elicited the support of companies, such as Mutual Benefit Life, PSE&G, banks, civic organizations, such as NAACP, and a middle school in Newark. There were approximately 16 to 18 companies or agencies who agreed to sponsor, or to adopt this, one month out of the year. They conducted internal food drives. With that food, we networked with our friends, such as Karen D'Amore. That donated food is distributed through the pantry.

Again, we see this as a means to an end and not as a solution. Emergencies, particularly our agency's -- as Kathy DiChiara has indicated -- acute emergencies are addressed. But, we know that over the past three years the need for food has become a chronic emergency because of the cuts in the Federal budget, as they apply to family size. Many 16-, 17-, and 18-year-olds have been disqualified. This has meant that the food stamp allotment has been stretched to the point of disaster. Consequently, families and individuals who have

emergencies are a one-time shot. Yes, there have been instances where food stamps were stolen or lost, or where there was some other kind of personal crisis. However, by and large, everyday, day-to-day management on very limited funds means that an individual is continuously facing an emergency. That is what we call a chronic emergency.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions? Leslie?

MS. SMITH: Yes. I have an observation and a question. What you said has been repeated before: Just because a family is on welfare, food stamps, Social Security, or whatever, does not necessarily mean their needs are being met. They are on a program, but that doesn't necessarily mean they are not still facing emergency situations.

In Karen's testimony, and in hearing you say you give out vouchers on a hot line basis, we are hearing a lot about direct food relief, which is extraordinarily important, as we all know. As that hot line component now works, is there any group or agency that you know of in this area to which you can refer people for advocacy?

I know some pantries don't have the staff to do this. They are not trained to do it. Are steps, beyond direct relief, being taken in this area? Do you do that?

MS. HARVEY: We are part of The Coalition to Save Food Stamps, which is the primary vehicle for advocacy here in Essex County. We meet regularly, and we advocate on behalf of those individuals through the Food Stamp Coalition, which is our food network in the area of advocacy.

MS. SMITH: As a follow-up question, I agree with you about advocacy, but what I am talking about is the ability to literally teach people to advocate for themselves: What are their rights insofar as food stamps are concerned; what should they bring with them to the Food Stamp Office; or, if they are having a problem with food stamps, are there agencies willing to intervene on a case-by-case basis?

There is program advocacy and there is individual advocacy. I guess I am interested in the individual advocacy component.

MS. HARVEY: From our experience, the Essex-Newark Legal Services, through their Community Education Program does provide some kind of advocacy for the individual.

Also, there are others, and I think Mrs. Grace will speak to them on behalf of the New Jersey Welfare Rights Association.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

MS. SMITH: I'll see a thousand different vouchers that were given out. How many of them were FEMA funds, and how important is it to your organization to get additional funding for vouchers?

MS. HARVEY: There is such a thing as "never too much." Okay? We are talking about an 11-month period right now. We have a very unique fiscal period which just started on May 1st. Just for your information, we received, through FEMA funds, approximately \$15,000 for food during that period. We also received moneys from United Way; that was another \$2,500. But, total funds spent on food assistance, taking into consideration our shelter program with a vender, were approximately \$95,000.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

MS. HARVEY: You're welcome.

MR. GROVE: We are now going to take a five-minute recess. We are running just about one hour behind, and we will be going long past the five o'clock hour. If some of you have appointments and you would like to come back later, we will be glad to change your time, and we will see you a little later this evening.

We will now take a five-minute break.

(RECESS)

AFTER RECESS:

MR. GROVE: I would like to call the hearing back to order, please. I will now invite Ruby Grace to come to the microphone.

Again, I would like to apologize to all of you in the audience and to the Commission for how late this hearing is running. We intend to stay long enough to hear your testimony. If you have been invited, or if you have called us, it will just take us a bit longer than we expected to hear all the testimony.

We believe in your testimony. It is good; we are just sorry about the time it is taking us to get it. However, we believe it is important enough to hear, and we will stay to listen to all of you.

We will try to move this along as fast as possible.

Please give us your name, spell it for us, and tell us what organization you are with, or inform us if you are a private, concerned citizen. You than have 10 minutes to share with us.

The live mike is the one on your right. The one directly in front of you is the one we use to tape the testimony.

RUBY GRACE: I think I talk pretty loud anyway. Good evening to the Commission and the audience. My name is Ruby Grace. I am a resident of Newark, New Jersey. I am representing the New Jersey Welfare Rights and Essex County Chapter of Client Council, speaking before you today about hunger in our State. My name is spelled R-U-B-Y G-R-A-C-E.

I have -- and still do -- worked with clients around these issues for about the past 15 years. Hunger is a human problem that won't just go away. It is a crisis that can cause death to our loved ones and to each of us as well. Hunger causes death and malnutrition to many children, adults, and senior citizens of all races, creeds, and colors in our State each year. Different health and birth defects occur as a result of hunger.

Many resources that were available to the poor, low- and moderate-income families, have been cut at the worst time in history because decent and adequate jobs are not available to our citizens. Therefore, food pantries just can't afford to service everyone, nor can they do so sufficiently.

Food stamps only last the average family about two weeks out of each month; only if they shop carefully can they make them last a month. One must use one-third to one-half of his or her welfare grant, SSI check, Social Security, or whatever means of income he or she may have, if they are even eligible.

We certainly feel that the elderly of this State have been forgotten. We know that the disabled, the unemployed, and single parents have been forgotten for many years. If this is the new deal President Reagan was speaking of, I would have hated to see the old deal.

This problem of hunger is spreading across the nation rapidly. We can't understand how our government can let our people suffer from hunger in the richest nation in the world. If people had decent jobs and were not living so far under the poverty level, there would not be so much hunger in this country.

As inflation increased, Federal policies failed to alleviate its impact on low-income households. Other factors also came into play which supplemented or aided inflation, and ultimately led to the reappearance of hunger. Poverty plays a very important role in the issue of hunger; research has proved that to be a fact. There have been cuts in many of our social programs, such as: the Women, Infants, and Children Program -- WIC; food stamps; school lunches; school breakfasts; and, food pantries. All of these are food programs; and, there still aren't enough soup kitchens.

In this country, we have over 25,000 Aid to Families with Dependent Children clients -- AFDC, many general assistance clients, SSI, Social Security, unemployed, and other clients that are hungry. If the President's bad advisors would come to our State, I would personally show them around and let them see what hunger is all about.

The President's new policies a few years ago made many of the poor ineligible for food stamps, and many other subsidized social programs.

On a previous occasion while speaking with Secretary Block on the issue, he told us to "eat kale soup and raisin bread like he and his family did." If one can't afford to buy these things, he or she is lost. Besides kale soup each day is not a well-balanced meal. Every person, man, woman, or child, in this country should be entitled to three well-balanced meals each day.

Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross, and all insurances save us money. Hunger is a very broad issue, and one that has to be dealt

with. I don't mean experimental programs. Any program that works always gets cut. Once the cutting starts, the future for the program becomes very short. Remember, these programs aid our children, since there isn't anything better in existence at the moment. The WIC Program services mothers and children. Food stamps also service women and children, senior citizens, and low-income people who are disabled for a while.

School lunches service children; the Meals on Wheels Program services the senior citizens; soup kitchens service anyone who is hungry; and, food kitchens service anyone who is in need. Remember one basic factor: All of these programs have certain guidelines. Even the summer food programs, and many similar programs, help the child to eat after the food stamps are long gone.

We are not able to purchase fresh fruits, juices, and milk for our children's bodies, and as a result, our children are not getting all the vitamins and iron they deserve, so they begin to need frequent visits to the doctor.

Frequent visits to the doctor result in increases in the cost of Medicaid benefits. A family receiving Medicaid frequently, will cause an increase in that program. And, if we buy the children a treat once a month, such as other children get, we are criticized for doing so.

The President purchases lobsters at \$14 and \$15 per pound. We can't even treat our children and ourselves to shrimp once a year. Many of our children have never tasted shrimp, red snappers, trout, or any expensive sea food. They can only eat whiting, when we can find it on sale. We have to buy whatever is on sale, and we still can't survive because from the first of the month until about the 15th, prices go up in the area we live in; there is no extra money to absorb the price increases, nor is there any money to allow us to shop in the suburbs.

Stores that have less than 60 employees are allowed to charge whatever prices they like, and reporting them is a waste of time because nothing seems to happen. We suffer and we continue to be hungry; no matter what, we continue to be victims.

We would like your support in obtaining extra food for our families on holidays, and extra food for our sick who need special food for their health. We ask that you support all hunger and social programs without any cuts, and that you tell the Governor we would like his support.

Think of what I have said to you. You know it is true. Remember, you must live with yourselves. We have our parents and our children, as well as our entire futures to look out for. Thank you for your time and for listening to me.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. Are there any questions? Donna?

MS. ROSS: I just have one question. You talked briefly about the money it costs if you want to shop in the suburbs. What about people who are trying to shop for food within the City of Newark? In terms of access, are there bus lines that can take a shopper to the supermarkets? Can one walk to the supermarkets? What is the situation for Newark residents insofar as access to supermarkets is concerned?

MRS. GRACE: Well, in the Newark area, the shopper does not want to shop in most of the supermarkets that are within walking distance; he or she can not afford to. If one goes to a different place -- you know, a place that is far from where he or she lives -- the shopper may have transportation to the store, but he has to pay someone in order to bring the food home. Residents may be able to take a bus. In some areas there are buses and in other areas there are none; the shopper has to pay someone to take him.

MS. ROSS: How much does that cost?

MRS. GRACE: They normally charge \$6.00 from where I live to the Pathmark on Lyons Avenue. That is one way.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: You said that the supermarkets which raise their prices at the beginning of the month have 60 or less employees, and they cannot be mandated not to do that.

MRS. GRACE: Right. Mostly, small stores work with under 60 employees, and they charge whatever price they want to charge. Some of the larger stores "up" their prices on the first of the month. They

run a sale, but the sale might be on something that one does not normally buy -- okay?

Let's say there is a sign saying that Pathmark on Lyons Avenue is running a sale on chicken one Monday, on beef another Monday, and on pork the following Monday. It varies, but the shopper will then find that another product was raised to 15¢ more than it was selling for before the first of the month. So, we are really not gaining; we are still losing.

MS. SMITH: In working with clients, and in doing advocacy for them, what basic changes do you think are needed in the way programs work in order for them to be helpful to your clients? Are there two or three things you can just point to and say, "If only these were changed, it would help?" I am not necessarily talking about benefit allotments; I am talking about the way the programs work.

MRS. GRACE: Well, the first thing I would have to suggest regarding benefits is that more money would eliminate a lot of problems because we could get them to a supermarket. I can't leave that out. They would then not have to rely so heavily on just food stamps because they can't make it with food stamps alone. They have toilet articles and over-the-counter drugs they have to buy. There has to be more money, unless food stamps allow them to buy these things. Some of these items are a must, such as Tylenol or aspirin for their children, or maybe alcohol; there are certain things that have to be used. For instance, I have chronic arthritis and there are a lot of over-the-counter drugs I have to buy. A doctor does not want to write a prescription for them because they cost such a small amount. A prescription makes items cost more -- okay?

MS. SMITH: But, without a prescription it would be covered by Medicaid, right?

MRS. GRACE: Well, it could cover some of the over-the-counter drugs without a prescription. If something costs \$1.25, cash, a prescription would probably cost \$2-and-something. Prescription medicine costs more than over-the-counter medicine. I don't know why, but it does. Sometimes medicines cost more.

One other thing is, people need transportation to and from the markets in their area, or we need supermarkets in our area, large chain store markets, because they can afford to charge less when we get our food stamps, or our checks. Prices would then be cheaper. Or, if they ran a sale, we would be able to take advantage of it. I think that would be a help also.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions? Ruth?

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Do the families that you know of have any problems when applying for school breakfasts or school lunches?

MRS. GRACE: I find the only problem is that a lot of people have been made ineligible due to the cutback in the guidelines. I find a lot of people are dissatisfied because they are asked for a food stamp card, and they do not have a food stamp card. The only card they have for food is their welfare card, which is used for food stamps and welfare. That is an invasion of a client's privacy when he or she has to show a welfare card to a school, because their kids want to feel like other kids. They don't want to feel as though their friends notice them because they are on welfare and they get a free or a reduced-price lunch. A lot of parents don't want to fill out the application because of that; they are now being asked for that identification, and they were not asked for it before.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: The new application requires a food stamp number. Is that easily available?

MRS. GRACE: I am telling you that we don't have a food stamp number; we have a EC number, which is the number for our food stamps and our checks.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: So, you are saying if the income--

MRS. GRACE: (interrupting) I am saying we should not have to give our welfare number to a school.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: All right, not the welfare number. There is a current regulation regarding verification as to whether or not they are on welfare; is that a problem?

MRS. GRACE: Well, before, they would ask, and the applicant would answer yes on the application; however, they are now asking for the applicant's number.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: They are not supposed to ask everybody, you know.

MRS. GRACE: Well, it is on the application of all the parents who are on welfare. I sent a copy of that application to Washington and requested that research be done to find out why clients were being asked to give their numbers, because I am sure they could be verified in some other way.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

I would now like to call Louise Epperson.

LOUISE EPPERSON: I want to say good afternoon to the panel. Thank you for inviting me here to speak to you. My name is Louise Epperson. I live at 303 7th Avenue, Newark.

I came to speak to you about hunger, not in the world nor in the State, but hunger in Newark. I have seen much hunger in Newark. I have worked for the College of Medicine and Dentistry, a University Hospital, as coordinator of patient relations. I can speak, firsthand, about seeing the people who come into our emergency rooms, as well as our wards and hospital floors. They are hungry and sick.

I don't have to use a script in order to talk to you because I know about these things, firsthand. I have seen many people come in. Others say: "Oh, they are just drug addicts, or drunks." Sure, they are drunks, and they are drug addicts too. They are so frustrated that drugs and alcohol make them feel as though they are someone. They know they are no one out in the community, and they want to feel as though they are someone.

They come in. They are dirty and unkept. In particular, they have no place to stay; and, if they were getting food stamps, the food stamps were cut off because they could not give an address.

If a person is on welfare, he or she may be able to get someone to accept the welfare check. However, the landlord, or the landlady, of that residence has to sign a written receipt saying they collect rent from the person when, actually, they do not. If a person does not have a rent receipt to show, he or she is cut off from food stamps. This turns a person into nothing. He or she is hungry and on the streets with no place to go.

If it were not for churches, and places such as Bishop Parrot has— I know about his work. I have been there many times; I have seen the lines with the hundreds and hundreds of people he feeds every day. I have gone to the Mount Carmel Guild. The Presbyterian Diocese feeds many people at the Presbyterian Churches throughout this City.

People are roving like cows, going from one place to the next for food because not every organization provides food each day. Maybe one church feeds on Monday and another church feeds on Tuesday; people are just roving around looking for a place to get food.

Not only that, we are having a problem with the seniors. If Washington or Trenton gives them a raise, it does very little or no good because as soon as they get the cost-of-living increase in their checks, the rents go up in the senior citizen housing projects. So, the seniors don't get access to the extra money the State or the Federal governments have allow them to have, and this goes on, and on, and on.

Talking about people on welfare, I think that everyone on welfare would welcome a job; they would rather be off welfare because they don't get enough to live on. After the 15th of the month, people are hungry. From the first to the 15th is okay. They then start looking for food and they run around from place to place in order to get something to eat. They then become ill because they do not have any food. Many people who are in hospitals actually need to be in nursing homes. Because they don't have anything other than Medicare or the Medicaid, hospitals will not keep them; they get thrown out onto the streets, and they come to us hungry. We do the best we can for them.

I have witnessed these things in this town over, and over again. Many people live in their own homes; however, they cannot afford to stay in them because the taxes are too high. Rents are also high. Some places are renting for \$400 a month. Poor people don't have that kind of money, and the doors are shut to them. These are not luxury apartments; they are just run-down places. People just don't have any place to live, nor do they have any food to eat.

I think Father Nicholas, from St. Morocco's Church, was given a building. I went there this winter to see it. The housing for

street people was just beautiful. They would come in and just spend the night; however, that was not enough. It was like a drop in the bucket. Father would get up and give them their breakfast in the morning.

Some churches have set up what are called pantry houses. I know we have one at my church. If a family suffers due to a fire or something, in order for them to eat -- because they can't wait for welfare to give them something -- they can come to the churches and get enough food for two or three days. However, there may be another fire within the next two or three days and we then have to help the next family out. So, we can't continue to go on, and people get very disgusted.

I just feel that this town should do something about hunger. I think hunger is a terrible thing. I am not talking about hunger in Ethiopia, Biafra, or anyplace else; I am just talking about Newark. We have to start looking after our own own people. We have to provide shelter, and stop taking people off food stamps. This should not be done as a favor to our citizens; it should be a service. That is all I want to say.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Louise. Are there any questions? Leslie?

MS. SMITH: Yes. It seems that throughout all the testimony you gave, you kept referring to people's inability to put a roof over their heads.

MS. EPPERSON: That's right.

MS. SMITH: Seniors have a shelter problem, and the indigent have a shelter problem. Do you see that as one of the strongest links to the hunger problem in Newark?

MS. EPPERSON: I see that, very strongly. Yes, I do. I think if people had shelter, they could get food stamps.

If they don't have a permanent home, nor someone who will give them a rent receipt saying they have a residence, the Food Stamp Program is cut off from those who need it the most.

MS. SMITH: Also, in your hospital work you said you saw people who came in malnourished, or who had not eaten well. In the

process of admitting someone, are statistics or records kept, whereby it is acknowledged that they are malnourished?

MS. EPPERSON: Well, I am sure there must be a record someplace. I was never a record keeper, I was always a coordinator of patient relations. I have seen people sitting in the emergency rooms who were diabetics, believe it or not. They didn't have anything to eat. This town is doing this today: They say: "Be in the hospital at 9:00, and at 12:00 people are still sitting there because the staff is running behind time. These people haven't had anything to eat, and they are diabetics.

MS. SMITH: As far as you know, it is not written down that someone is malnourished when he comes in?

MS. EPPERSON: I think they do write down that malnutrition is present because they have nutritionists in hospitals. I am sure if you check with the hospitals throughout this area, you will find there are many, many malnourished people. I know this, and that is why I was willing to testify before you today.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions? Bishop Parrot?

BISHOP PARROT: Ms. Epperson, would you say, when dealing with people who come to the University Hospital, that some of them are coming there due to the fact that hunger is their main problem?

MS. EPPERSON: Why, of course. Definitely. I would say that over and over again.

BISHOP PARROT: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Louise, thank you very much for sharing with us.

MS. EPPERSON: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Our next witness will be James Blair.

JAMES H. BLAIR: Good afternoon. My name is James H. Blair. I am the Executive Director of the United Community Corporation, which is the Antipoverty Agency for the City of Newark.

We have prepared some basic statements. I am doing this on a general basis, and I would like to do two things. I would like to go into the prepared statement, and then I would like to deal with some of the specifics that I was not going to deal with. I thought perhaps

many of the people who appeared before this Commission would have already brought them out. They probably already have.

Let me go into my prepared statement and then make some observations, if you will.

This hearing is meant to be an occasion for the local people to discuss common problems of hunger and malnutrition by sharing our concerns with you as to where we have been during the past year, and, in some respects, where we are going in the next several years. I am pleased that you invited me to share in these discussions.

First, I am convinced that advocates sharing a common knowledge, value system, and language, can easily fall into the trap of only preaching to those who already believe. I hope this panel is one group that already believes. When that happens, we can easily arrive at the point where we listen but we do not hear; or, we look but we do not see.

Secondly, what binds us together is the fact that we have the same clients: The people in the communities in which we live and serve.

I won't dwell on the programs we run, but I will get to them later. My remarks today are largely reflections based on the many years I have spent in the Civil Rights Movement and in the field of Civil Rights enforcement.

The more we realize that we are faced with very real problems, the more we face the very same human response of being unable to assume the burdens of the world on our shoulders. We are faced not only with the problems of eliminating hunger, malnutrition, and decay in our inner cities, but we are also faced with the problems of improving the quality of our air and water, transportation, and education. The list is endless.

I think most of us who have, and will, testify at this hearing, by the very nature of the positions we hold in our communities, are familiar with the majority of the problems we face in our cities.

I don't think that reciting a litany of social problems, most of which are familiar to you and to the community, will help in

arriving at solutions. Some community organizations are used to dealing with problems, analyzing the nature of problems, and then suggesting workable pragmatic solutions, not only to commissions but also to departments, divisions, and all levels of government.

I am here today because I share with you a very basic belief: The conviction that the system can work and it is worth working for. The time has passed when we can afford to let government or the poor community fail to realize the potential worth of the efforts of community groups. Most of these groups will appear before you today.

We need to have the potential, the talent, the ability, and the resources of community groups to work on problems at every level in this State. There are functions of advice, analysis, and problem-solving that can be performed by community service agencies. I know of no governmental agency in the State of New Jersey, whether it be State, county, or municipal, that could not benefit from these voluntary services.

I think when we begin to acknowledge the complexity and the gravity of these problems, and work at resolving them, we can then begin to solve them.

I can go into problems such as the lack of an equitable tax base, inadequate and unequal educational facilities, the need for more housing units in this State and the new methods of financing this need, and the modernization of governmental functions. All of those are problems peculiar to the poor and to citizens in general. There is nothing sacred about any particular approach to a problem. What is sacred is the right of every individual to be treated with the respect that is due him as a human being. If he is hungry, he should be fed. If he needs a residence, he should have one. If he needs a bed, he should be able to find one.

I am suggesting this is a two-edged sword, and its vigor extends both to the accused who have a right to due process at every stage of our proceedings, and to those who may be victims of prejudice and discrimination. They have an equal right to expeditious justice, and a right to play an equal role in society, regardless of whether they are rich, poor, or hungry. No matter what a person is, he should have a right to all of the "perks" of society.

It has been repeatedly stated that our failure to cope with our poor and their social problems has occurred because we lacked a goal, a plan, or a strategy. I can't say I can propose a strategy or a plan today to eliminate hunger, nor to achieve better nutrition. I don't really know how to create a better urban environment for all our people. We are leaning to the future, into the development of these strategies, hopefully. I can only state that perhaps if we look at what this country has done by spending billions of dollars in research for scientific achievements, and then we look at the amount of money we have spent trying to understand the human being, or to feed the poor, we find it small in comparison.

Those of us who have lived with the commitment have also lived to see a reaction to every action we have tried to take when we challenge the status quo.

Theoretically, that was my basic statement because I thought you would get all of the particulars from the other people who are sitting here.

Let me go into a couple of specifics for you. United Community Corporation runs an Emergency Shelter Program. We house men and women for a period of 14 days, no longer because it is an emergency shelter program. We try to find them a residence, or a place to stay afterwards. We feed them two meals. We feed them breakfast and dinner. We then have to be somewhat cruel. We put them out at 8:00 in the morning. Why? Because we don't have the staff to handle it. Secondly, we don't have a place to keep them during the day.

Sometimes we have had to do this when it was eight degrees above zero, or when it was raining or snowing. It is inequitable. It is not fair.

People say to us, because we are a community action agency and we should have funds for this, "Where do you get your money from? Are you using it equitably?" When it is very, very cold, we have a capacity of 40. We have housed as many as 75. They sit on chairs just to get in out of the cold, but we feed them anyway.

I don't say that we are doing all we can; I am saying we do the best we can with the resources we have.

Let's talk about hunger. We also run a pantry. I must say that the food bank, the county, and the other agencies we work with, have been very, very helpful. They have helped us to maintain our pantry. We feed as many families as we possibly can. When one gets a \$6,000 grant from the county and it is gone in 10 days, something is wrong. Something is wrong because that money is equitably given to families, since we check out the families who come in for the food.

When we ask for funds from other sources, we find that the priorities are not there. If you really want to look at the homeless and at feeding the homeless, there is a bill that came out of the Legislature; it deals with homeless people, but it only deals with rental and home subsidies. It has nothing to do with the individual poor.

You talk about \$127 a month for general assistance; if a person doesn't have a place to stay, that is eaten up in two or three days. Where is he going to go then?

I heard someone mention Father Nicholas' program. Father back and forth from his program to ours. Why? Because they need a Nicholas also runs a program in this city. We find that they bounce place to stay.

Let me go one step further and say this: If this Commission has any effect on the powers that be -- and I don't know whether you do or not because you are only commissioned to study this -- then somewhere, somehow, someone is going to have to find enough money to deal with the hungry and the homeless, not just in Newark, not just in this county, but throughout the State.

When someone tells me that we have something like 8,500 homeless people in the City of Newark, I shudder because I wonder how many homeless people there are throughout the State. Maybe you know; I don't. All I can say is, I don't see one iota of the resources this city needs in order to deal with 8,500 homeless people, and if they are homeless they are hungry.

I wasn't going to get into this because I thought that many of the people who testified before you dealt with these kinds of things. You know, food stamps -- I can go into them also. I can ask:

"How much money is given to a family through food stamps? Is it enough?" Now, if I wasn't on a microphone, I would say, "Hell, no," but since I am on the mike, I will temper my remarks and say, "It is really not enough and someone should do something about it."

What is it that an agency director can do to help the poor to overcome the bureaucratic -- I don't like to call it mess -- foul-up that says someone must live on an amount a bureaucrat knows he cannot live on. How can they mandate just so much money with which to buy food and feed children, when those children have to eat exactly what one can buy with those stamps? The stamps may not even last more than seven, eight, or nine days. It is frustrating, and if I sound bitter, I am. If I sound helpless, I am. I don't know what else I can say to you.

If my prepared statement was general, I made it that way, but my last statements are specific; I am emotional about it; and, something has to be done.

MR. GROVE: James, thank you. Are there any questions?

Kathy?

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you very much. I know of the fine job you are doing, and of the things you are trying to do. What are the specifics you would like to request of this Commission that would help your program, or that would make some of the problems you are dealing with easier?

We are certainly not magic, and I am not foolish enough to think we can accomplish so many things. However, we are anxious to put into the record all the specifics the agencies have regarding where we they feel we can perhaps effect change.

MR. BLAIR: I can give you some specifics now, but I would rather write them out and send them to you.

MS. DiCHIARA: We would appreciate that.

MR. BLAIR: For example: We have less than 400 beds for individual, homeless men and women in the City of Newark. When someone tells me there are 8500 homeless people and we have less than 400 beds for them, something is wrong.

I know the Public Advocate is in the process of suing the City of Newark, just as he did in Atlantic City. It is in court. What will come of it, I don't know. I can state that the city has provided us with \$75,000 to help with our program. I can honestly say we need more. However, we do not -- this is a saying -- knock the group that is trying to help us; we praise them, even though we know it is not enough; at least someone is doing something for us. I'd rather give you a list of things -- provide it for you -- because that is not hard to do. It may cost a lot.

MS. DiCHIARA: Please don't interpret this as though I am saying we can provide answers to things. However, we really are interested in getting as much specific information and requests as we can into our report.

My other question is, is your program threatened with impending Federal budget cuts?

MR. BLAIR: Let me say this in a very general manner: Absolutely, if you want to say that the CSBG portion of our grant is threatened. The President has recommended a complete elimination of the CSBG moneys. Some of us--

MR. GROVE: Excuse me, James.

MR. BLAIR: Yes?

MR. GROVE: CSBG?

MR. BLAIR: Community Service Block Grant moneys that are funded through the Department of Community Affairs. That is where the money goes. There are something like 27 community action agencies in the State. It is our feeling that three-quarters of us may go out of existence unless the State picks this up, and it is awfully hard to ask the State to pick up every dollar the Federal government removes from social programs.

MR. GROVE: Bill?

MR. STUBBS: Mr. Blair, I don't know if you are aware of this, but Commissioner Renna, from the Department of Community Affairs, has been in communication with members of Congress, requesting that the present funding level be continued.

Another thing I would like to say is, it might be helpful if you and the others who feel as strongly about this situation as you do, bring this matter to your legislators because if additional funding has to come from the State, then, of course, it would have to be approved by the Legislature. It would have to be recommended, and then bills would have to be put in — you know, that type of thing. That might be helpful.

MR. BLAIR: We have done that. We have had meetings with both Senators and a couple of Representatives from the Newark area. In fact, I will be very candid, we met with Senator Lipman and Senator Caufield. They are most supportive. The problem they are faced with is that many of their colleagues do not feel as strongly about the individual needs of the homeless as they do. They are doing something about it, but, at this point in time, I can't speak in detail about it.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? (no response)
Thank you very much for your testimony.

MR. BLAIR: Thank you for having me.

MR. GROVE: Matt Martin? Bob Goger, you may come down a little closer because you are next.

MATT MARTIN: Good afternoon, and thank you for inviting me here. My name is Matt Martin. I am here fundamentally representing one group, The New Jersey Interagency Council on Smoking and Health, which is part of a national coalition found in most states. In this State, it is made up of most of the major health organizations. I am also on the Executive Committee of Reinhabiting New Jersey, which Mr. Goger will speak to in a few moments. This is a group which is concerned about the spirituality of the environment, from New Jersey all the way to the Philippines, where American corporations are destroying the environment. The same thing is happening in this State and all around the world that we are inhabiting, and that is a concern.

However, today I want to stay with one specific topic, and that is tobacco and hunger. This may be a different topic under the heading of hunger, but it is one that is not always recognized.

I would like to open with a quote: "We recognized early that ours is a global business and built markets around the world. Our

future is particularly bright in developing areas where income and population are growing." That statement, made two years ago, was made by the Executive Committee Chairman of Philip Morris, showing how they were going to reach out into other countries.

Some statistics: Each year, in the United States 350,000 people die as a direct result of cigarette smoking. That boils down, by the way, to 10,000 in New Jersey. Thirty people will die while you are holding this hearing today. That is more than the number of American lives lost in all the wars fought by this century.

In fact, one thing that is also not always considered is the number of people who die in the fires that are caused by smoking. In fact, there was a hearing held last year on fires, and if you want to look at homeless people, just look at people who have been burned out by cigarettes.

But, I want to go beyond that statistic to another one. The health problem of smoking goes far beyond the deaths which result from smoking. The effect of smoking on world hunger, the use of land, the use of fertilizers, and the use of trees, is also destructive of people.

There is also a third problem with smoking, and that is the problem of tobacco smoking, its effect upon nutrition, its effect upon metabolism, and the greater problem of the use of tobacco during pregnancy, especially adolescent pregnancy, which results in a low birth weight, with all its consequences, for the baby. I gave the same testimony before the Governor's Committee on Mental Retardation regarding the fetal alcohol syndrome, the use of other drugs, especially nicotine, and, the resulting low birth weight. This is a handicap to young children, not just because of mental retardation, but because it causes other consequences.

The Use of Land: I will give you a few statistics. In the United States, North Carolina and Kentucky account for one-half of the national acreage of tobacco, and that is a powerful block.

Six southern states account for about three-quarters of all tobacco acreage.

In the United States we have about 100,000 farms given over to tobacco farming. Why? If you look at the gross income per acre from tobacco, it ranges anywhere from \$3,000 to \$4,000. Compare this with the gross income from corn, which is only \$150, and the gross income from soybeans which is \$300, and you are into economics and the use, or abuse, of land for growing tobacco.

Let me spend a few moments talking about other countries. I know this goes way beyond this State, and maybe even beyond your Commission, but things have to be said. There is a biblical quote about a person asking for bread and being handed a stone. I think we in these United States have been guilty of something much more severe. There are people around the world asking for food, especially through our Food for Peace Program, and when they ask for food, we hand them cigarettes. We spend \$30 million a year giving loans to other countries so they can buy our tobacco products under our Food for Peace Program — scandalous, diabolical, and a shame.

For years, we have subsidized tobacco production around the world. We lend money to other countries so they can buy American tobacco products. We support international tobacco companies that use the fertile soil of other countries to grow tobacco that will kill their people. The use of tobacco has declined dramatically, and the Surgeon General himself announced last year that he wants to see this country smoke-free by the year 2,000. But, that will not happen in other countries in the world.

In South America, tobacco smoking is increasing dramatically, twofold, and in Africa it is increasing threefold. American tobacco companies are now looking to reach out to Japan and China because of their large numbers of people. That is going to be part of your world hunger problem.

What is the problem with tobacco versus food? There is a world battle for the use of land between tobacco and other food. The points are: The use of land for tobacco crops takes away from the use of land for food crops; and, even beyond this, the labor force used to grow tobacco is used during the same time period that cultivation and harvesting is needed for other products.

In Third World countries, as in the United States, there are issues such as capital investment. Money that should be used for food is used for tobacco, research, and technical support rather than for food products.

There is a great problem facing people in the health field, and I work for the Health Department. In my work-day world, I happen to be the chief of drug treatment. Someone talked about seeing hunger amongst drug addicts: It is seen amongst their children and throughout their families. I deal with that problem due to the fact that I treat and service addicts every day.

I also want to spend a few moments talking about tobacco, trees, and food. Tobacco kills through cancer, but it also kills through the destruction of trees. The United States Global Report 2000 identifies deforestation as the most serious environmental problem now facing the world.

Trees are needed to cure tobacco, and one out of every eight trees destroyed, in this country and in the world, is used to cure tobacco. That boils down to seven million acres of land used to grow trees -- acres of land -- to cure tobacco, out of the 20 Ha, or the 50 million acres that are destroyed every year.

The Food and Agricultural Association reported, in 1979, in their report, The Struggle for World Security: "The world's forests play an important part in the protection of agriculture and their progressive destruction poses a serious hazard to future production. The forest is a whole ecosystem; it protects soil from erosion and produces food itself."

Those of you who may have seen David Attenborough's Living Plant saw that trees are as important as the other crops that are grown in the ground.

There are many issues involved with hunger, as you know, and hunger shames all of us. If there is any justice or any equity, we will all be held accountable.

I mentioned that I deal with drug abuse every day. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars in this country promoting one cigarette because it happens to contain nicotine. We spend hundreds of millions

of dollars trying to fight another cigarette because it contains THC. Both of those cigarettes are very destructive, deprive people and children of food, and destroy the health of this country.

If I wanted to say anything to this panel it would be this: Don't be too distracted by self-help and charitable programs. I know the Bishop and other people are concerned about charity, but much more important than charity is the basic concept of justice.

What we do not have in this State and in this country is a social policy. We don't have a social policy on hunger; we don't have a social policy on housing; and, we don't have a social policy on health. You heard all of this today when you heard about hunger. We do not have social policies.

We have a knee-jerk reaction, with a piece of legislation here and a piece of legislation there. If you are going to do anything, step back and don't just tell me about how the good programs are helping through charity. I am not knocking these programs, by the way; they have to exist. Just don't tell me about the church that is doing "this." Talk about the fabric of our society, the lack of justice, the lack of distribution of wealth and goods, and the rights of other people to health, housing, and food. That is much more important.

I have chaired a couple of commissions in this State and those reports are gathering dust; don't let yours gather dust. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Matt. Are there any questions? (no response) Thank you for staying.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Bob Goger?

ROBERT GOGER: Thank you for inviting me. My name is Robert Goger. I am on the Executive Board of Reinhabiting New Jersey, which is an association of interest groups involved in ecological and environmental studies. Periodically, we publish position papers revolving around issues concerning preservation, conservation, and maintenance of a new type of prosperity built on a concern for the environment.

One of our issues concerns food, and I thought I would quote from the position paper, and then I will leave it with you.

The food industry is the largest industry in America. There is a widespread awareness that the present food industry is inadequate, inefficient, and, in many ways, even destructive. Our food is largely grown on a vast monocultural scale, with extensive use of chemical fertilizers; it is transported over great distances; it is excessively packaged; it presents only "pretty" foods and leaves aside, as waste, foods with the slightest external blemish; and, it is often lacking in the nutritional value it should possess. In this context, our food is bound to become more expensive, prohibitively so, for many people in the years ahead.

It is likely that if we are to have good food available at reasonable expense, we will need to grow more of it locally. Kitchen gardens, neighborhood plots, organic vegetable farms with local marketing facilities, all these will be needed. The skills of the gardener and the farmer and the value of lands with rich topsoil will need to be appreciated anew. All of us will need to participate more intimately in the production of our food, as well as in its consumption. We can no longer just earn wages and buy food.

One model of food growing that needs to be taken seriously is the Cheyenne Community Solar Greenhouse project in Cheyenne, Wyoming. This is a project that was developed about six or seven years ago. It started out originally as a youth project that succeeded in growing a significant amount of food for a handicapped person's residence. It has developed, over the course of the last five years, into a greenhouse which covers 5,000 square feet, and it functions completely through solar energy.

This greenhouse was designed and constructed by local talent, mostly on a volunteer basis. It provides acceptable and exciting work for elderly persons, youth, and handicapped persons, as well as skilled personnel. All of this is carried out in a region of the country which has weather far more severe than we have here in New Jersey.

A wide variety of vegetables and herbs are grown year-round, and the amount harvested has continually increased as the dynamics of Greenhouse Gardening are better understood.

The value of the project can be seen in four ways:

First of all, it was a local community taking control of its own destiny. If followed through with additional projects, the Cheyenne community need not ever again be so totally dependent on the wasteful system presently functioning in the food industry of this country.

Second, the response was a community response. As individuals we can and must act more decisively in the future, not only as communities but also as people participating fully. This venture not only emerged from a community response, it also created a community spirit. Its social value can be further appreciated when we consider that the original greenhouse for a handicapped residence was built by 15 youths who chose working as an alternative to going to jail. Even now, the larger greenhouse is a setting in which juvenile offenders are given an opportunity to work out adjudicated sentences.

Third, the local initiative was supported originally by a grant from the Community Services Administration. This enabled the public aspect of the project to develop more immediately and on a larger scale than would otherwise have been possible. This joining of official support with community initiative indicates what might be done throughout this country if only sufficient interest, imagination, and energy emerges from the people.

Finally, this project establishes a human ambiance, a place where a sense of the organic dominates over a mechanistic sense of reality that has, over time, eroded the quality of life in this State as well as in America. Here, the people can meet, work, and enjoy being together in the context of a living, nurturing process.

The Garden State needs to restore its local gardening traditions. For too long a period, the human aspects of the gardening process, as well as the nutritional and economic advantages, have been lost owing to our reliance on agribusiness. The new gardening programs and the small organic farm programs, some of which have already been mentioned today, with local marketing facilities will, however, be quite different from anything known in the past. They will be associated with new and more clearly articulated forms of cultural development. The techniques will be more intensive, and such gardening

will also be integrated more fully with creative waste disposal, so that the life cycle can sustain itself in an ever-renewing process.

This was a first in a series of position papers, built around the new managing and coordinating efforts that will go into projects that have emerged in other parts of the country, and that have begun to emerge here in this State.

The Riverdale Center for Religious and Earth Studies is coordinating these position papers, and in this State they are published through Reinhabiting New Jersey. Thank you very much for your time.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. Are there any questions from the Commission?

MS. DiCHIARA: One quick question. How do we get on your mailing list in order to receive those position papers?

MR. GOGER: Well, I presume we could get the names and addresses of the people on the Commission and send future issues to them.

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

MR. GOGER: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Ron Good?

RONALD GOOD: Good afternoon. I am very glad to have the opportunity to speak to the Commission. My name is Ronald Good. I work for the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division of Markets. My duties and responsibilities, which I am going to speak about today, include roadside markets, tailgate markets, and direct markets. This is something which the Department of Agriculture feels is very important: Getting the food which is produced in the Garden State from the farmer to the individual. I used the words "direct marketing." Basically, that name describes what this is, the area in which I work, and how hunger is, to one degree, abated in the State.

Direct marketers in this State are people who grow produce themselves and sell it to the consumers directly. That is the area I work in. I used the expression "roadside markets." Many farmers in the State, as they find themselves no longer able to maintain their

farms, sell, or work in the wholesale market, want to sell directly to the consumer. They do this by using a stand, or a large building on their farms. The Department assists them in selling their produce directly.

Another area the farmers are involved in, very much so in the last 10 years, I would say, is one the Department refers to as tailgate markets. Basically, this consists of a farmer, or farmers, going to a location within a city and selling their produce directly out of their trucks -- off their tailgates, so to speak. The Department has been involved in this for many years, to one degree or another.

In the late '70s, my predecessor contacted many of the major cities in the State of New Jersey, offering the Department's assistance in establishing a tailgate market in their areas. If there was interest shown on the part of a city, or on the part of community groups, several markets were started. Some are in the Oranges; some are in Camden; some are in other areas.

I am presently working, along with other organizations, to set up some markets in Jersey City, possibly a second one here in the City of Newark, and another one in the City of East Orange.

I guess I should backtrack and tell you that basically these tailgate markets in cities are started due to an interest on the part of the community, be it on a city level, on a church or civic organization level, on a block group level, or whatever. Those people, to one degree or another, contact the Department.

The Extension Service works in this area. I think one person testified to that earlier today. We, in the Department, guide people, direct them, and give them guidelines on how they -- the particular community or church -- can organize themselves and start a tailgate market. Our most recent successful tailgate market is on Market Street. It is called Market Square, and it is sponsored by the Bethany Baptist Church. That one is very successful. The majority of the people who come there to purchase produce are from the four- or five-block area surrounding Market Street. They are retired people. They are people who know the value of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The important thing about a tailgate market is that it contains fresh produce. Much of it is harvested by the farmers, or the people who bring it in that day, or the evening before. Cost-wise, studies have been done by private organizations, by Rutgers University, and they have been done on the national level, regarding direct marketing. Consumers can save 20% or 25% on the cost of fresh produce by buying direct, instead of at the supermarkets in the area.

Basically, the fresh quality of the produce is the most important thing. If one has the opportunity to visit a market, such as this one, it will be very evident to him why it is successful. The people come and talk directly to the farmer; they talk to the person who grew the produce. They realize the value of the fresh produce, they are satisfied with the prices, and if they go back with more valuable fresh produce for their kitchen or pantry, they can produce a healthier meal for their families.

That is the extent of my testimony. I know other people have spoken much longer regarding other areas. I am only here, as I said, from the Department, speaking about direct marketing. Are there any questions?

MR. GROVE: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: Obviously, the first thought we would have, after hearing so much testimony on urban hunger, is that a tailgate market would certainly help with food prices in the inner city. However, I would like to address the question of the local farmers. How do these markets help them? What is their situation with regard to hunger? Do they have something in common with their urban brothers and sisters with regard to having a difficult time?

MR. GOOD: I don't want to speak for the Department on major issues. I can speak on the tailgate situation. Farmers do benefit from this. This morning I spoke with a gentleman. He goes to one tailgate area. He explained he has invested, planted more seed, and purchased larger equipment; if he did not have a market in which to sell, he would lose his farm because of his financial difficulties.

Insofar as the farmers and their association with hunger are concerned, if I understand your question correctly, they -- as I said

-- can lose their businesses. That doesn't necessarily mean they are going to go hungry, but they can lose their opportunity to farm if they are not able to sell.

I use the terms wholesale and retail. When produce is sold in the wholesale market, the farmer has been and always will be, a taker of price. The farmer cannot set the price that his produce costs him. If he knows it costs him \$5 per bushel to raise the crop, and the market only brings in \$4, he has no choice; he has to take that price. So, a farmer is -- I wouldn't use the word victim, but he has to accept a price. If he can go directly to the consumer and sell his produce at a price equal to, or sometimes lower than, the local supermarket, he can definitely do better financially on the retail level.

Of course, only a small percentage of farmers can do this. The vast majority of farms in New Jersey are 150 or 200 acres larger, and those farmers have to sell the majority of their produce on the wholesale market.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

BISHOP PARROT: Does the tailgate farmer take food stamps?

MR. GOOD: Yes, sir, they do. Almost all of them do. It is a very simple process. A gentleman here in Jersey City sends the farmer a packet of forms. Many farmers prefer that because they cannot be stolen. Food stamps, once they are taken-- Money can be stolen from them. So, yes, all of them do take food stamps.

BISHOP PARROT: Thank you.

MS. ROSS: My question has been answered. I would just like to know if you could somehow get us documentation on the 20% to 25% lower price when tailgate farming. I would be interested in seeing that documentation.

MR. GOOD: I believe the address in Cherry Hill is the Commission's mailing address?

MS. ROSS: Rocky Hill.

MR. GOOD: I beg your pardon?

MS. ROSS: Rocky Hill. We have another address.

MR. GROVE: Marsha, will you make sure he has the address so he can send the information to you regarding these prices? This lady's name is Marsha Abrams. (indicating Commission member)

MR. GOOD: Right. I can get copies of that study and have them sent to you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much. Do you have a question, Ruth?

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Can you tell us something about the distribution? For example, is all the produce sold? If not, what does the farmer do with the leftovers? What are the areas of the market? Are they reaching the population that should be reached?

MR. GOOD: As I understand it, I can answer part of your question regarding the distribution system. A farmer, if this is done on a wholesale basis, will take the produce to an auction market, such as Vineland. There are two or three others in the State also. He then sells the produce.

If the market is very low, or beyond his cost-- Say, it cost him \$5 per bushel to grow, harvest, and haul it in, and he is only going to get \$4.50 in the market. He will put a disk harrow on his tractor and disk it under as organic matter because it will cost him more to sell it than it did to grow it.

I don't know if I understand the rest of your question.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: I wanted to make sure there wasn't any waste, that he didn't bring back perishables and discard them when we have so many people who can make use of them.

Surely, he doesn't want to sell under cost, but isn't it worse if he takes it back to the farm and plows it under?

MR. GOOD: I have heard about different organizations in this State. The Department gives them guidelines and helps them to a degree if they know of someone who has excess produce. I know that some of the farmers in the tailgate market will donate the produce instead of taking it back, if they know of a local soup kitchen, a local church, or someplace similar that makes use of it. I have no idea of the exact numbers, or how much of that is done in the State. However, it is done to one degree or another.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

MR. GOOD: You are welcome.

MR. GROVE: Jean Jenkins.

JEAN JENKINS: Good afternoon. My name is Jean Jenkins. I am the Coordinator of Parent Involvement for the Newark Preschool Council. Maddie?

MADELEINE GORDON: I am Madeleine Gordon, Panel Coordinator, Area 6 of the Newark Preschool Council.

MS. JENKINS: Madeleine will speak first.

MS. GORDON: I am here representing the parents in my area. From listening to the testimony earlier in the day, I can only add the parents' point of view.

The problem we and the parents find with the Food Stamp Program is that the food stamps do not last a full month. The parents who live in our area, live in rent-subsidized apartments. For some, their housing cost is so expensive that they have to use the moneys they get from their grants in order to subsidize the cost of food.

The stores within our area are not adequate enough to service the clients we deal with. We are also concerned about parents standing in inclement weather, waiting to get their food stamps.

We are concerned with the lack of increases, so that parents and children can live adequately.

MS. JENKINS: I would like to share with you some of the information we have collected through Head Start regarding our families. We are an early childhood developmental program, and we provide services to three- and four-year-olds.

Each family and child that enters our program goes through a family assessment process. This assessment process identifies the needs we have to work with. Some of the needs that have been identified by our program are as follows:

Adequate, habitable, affordable housing; nutritional needs; employment needs; and, educational needs.

These needs correspond very strongly with the 1983 Census Bureau report, which identified some of the same problems. The report talked about poor housing, insufficient food, inadequate income, and unemployment.

Our program is very concerned with nutrition. Educators have long recognized the link between feeding and educating children.

Presently, our program is being threatened because of the local and Federal priorities surrounding child nutrition programs.

We are very concerned about our capability to continue to provide this very strong component service of our program.

We are also concerned that our Head Start children will join the ranks of those children who are not served by Head Start, and who are going hungry towards the end of the month.

In our program, it has been observed that parents strongly encourage their children to eat on Mondays and Fridays. Staff feels very strongly that the reason why this occurs on Mondays and Fridays, particularly, is because over the weekend there is not much food, and parents want their children to eat their meals on these days to make up for their lack of food on the weekends.

I am not reading my whole statement because many of these things have already been said. I am trying to highlight some of the points we are very concerned about.

Most of the families in our program are headed primarily by a female single-parent. Most families are receiving AFDC, and they use food stamps.

Seventy-seven percent of our families are headed by single parents, and they utilize food stamps. These families report that between the second and third week of the month they run out of food. Very often, they are forced to seek out friends or relatives in order to borrow food. They buy food on credit, and they go to emergency pantries.

Forty-seven percent of our families report that the food only lasts three weeks. Sixty-four percent of our families borrow money to buy food. Nineteen percent of our families ask friends or family members for food in order to feed their families. Twelve percent buy on credit. And, about five percent go to emergency pantries. It should be noted that the emergency pantries are a last resort for our families.

There is another segment of the population we see, and that is pregnant, teen-age mothers. We find that these young women bring some special problems with them, because of their lack of knowledge,

and because of the lack of a financial resource. Very often, we find that the children are born with low birth weights. They may have congenital malformations, mental retardation, and other developmental kinds of problems.

One of the other factors that affect our parents is the high cost of rent in Newark. Each month, many of our families spend 50% to 80% of their awards on rent. They are often forced to choose between paying the rent, paying Public Service, buying clothes, or buying food. This is a very hard choice for many of them to make. Most of the time they pay the rent, recognizing that they must have a place to live.

We are also finding that many single adults are returning to their families because they do not earn enough money to live alone. This is creating a number of problems: There is not enough food present in the household; they are coming back to an apartment that is already too small for the people who are presently there; and, they are also adding another mouth to feed to this household.

I guess, basically, what I would like to say is, we cannot look at hunger in its isolated state. All these factors impact upon a family's ability to eat and survive. They are very busy trying to solve daily problems.

I would like to leave you with a quote from an unknown author: "Life is an adventure to be lived, not a problem to be solved."

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Jean. Are there any questions from the Commission members? Leslie?

MS. SMITH: You said a lot of families buy on credit, and you suggested that prices were high. Has it been your experience that prices in the local stores go up at the beginning of the month?

MS. JENKINS: Definitely. They definitely go up. If they do not go up, the real sales do not happen until about the second or third week in the month, or the last week in the month.

MS. SMITH: I see. Thank you.

MS. GORDON: I would like to add one thing. There is another problem in most of the communities: There are no major supermarkets.

As was said before, many people must pay for transportation. If they spend 80% of their grant awards on rent and then they have to spend \$5 or \$10 of their remaining few dollars in order to travel to and from the supermarket, they are really strapped in terms of trying to have some extra money at the end of the month.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions?

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Are you able to take advantage of the nutrition programs within the schools?

MS. JENKINS: I'm sorry. I am not familiar with them.

MS. GORDON: I am the mother of seven children. I have seven children throughout the school system. I work, but my income is not that high. Therefore, my children do take advantage of those programs. But, if they are not there at a certain time, they do not get the breakfast.

Someone spoke earlier about using Medicaid numbers, etc. Those things do happen. Although they do not want it, children do have a different colored lunch ticket than the children who pay or get reduced lunch prices have.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Where is the school in which you say this situation exists located?

MS. GORDON: This was told to me by the parents.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Oh. That is contrary to the regulations. There should be no distinction. They should not have a different colored ticket.

MS. GORDON: This was told to me by the parents.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: If you check that out, let us know. We can take care of that. That should not be allowed.

I am concerned. The program should be available to parents and to children. Nothing should prevent eligible parents from applying. My concern is, do you have any problems with taking advantage of the nutrition programs that are in the schools?

MS. GORDON: No, there is no problem with that.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Okay. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions? (no response)
Thank you very much.

Carolyn Lane?

CAROLYN LANE: Thank you. My name is Carolyn Lane. I represent the Montclair Public Schools. I have a question. I am accompanied by Mr. Ron Alter of the Deron School. He is representing a principal. May he speak before me? There were two slots available on the agenda.

MR. GROVE: Are there two slots there? (affirmative response) Yes, Ms. Lane, he may speak first.

MS. LANE: Thank you.

RON ALTER: Thank you. My name is Ron Alter. I am Director of the Deron Schools of New Jersey, located in Livingston and South Orange.

I would like to zero in on a specific problem we are having, and I hope that you will take some interest in it.

As you know, 3% of all public schools in New Jersey are mandated to have a lunch program which provides needy children with a nutritious lunch. This lunch may well be the most complete meal the children have during the course of the day.

However, you may not be aware of the fact that there are a lot of children in our private schools for the handicapped -- our schools are also schools for the handicapped -- who do not receive the mandated school lunches because they are enrolled in private schools.

I know over 6,000 youngsters are presently in private schools. Basically, they are placed there through Public Law 94:14-2. In essence, the private schools are an extension of the public schools. Children are sent to the private schools from the local districts because the local districts cannot provide the services they need. There may not be enough multi-handicapped and deaf children in a particular district to fund a program; so, the one or two children in a district who have such a problem are sent out of the district to private schools.

Because the private schools are not mandated to have a school lunch program, many children are being excluded. However, these programs are readily available to all public school children.

I can understand the need for screening. The original intent of the legislation was to exclude non-needy families from receiving free lunch. But, not all families who have children attending private schools are financially able to provide lunches for their children.

I think perhaps when the law was set up, it was not understood that a school such as ours has 100% participation from the local districts. We do not have any privately placed children in our school. There is no cost to the parents in our school; 82% of the children are eligible, and they receive a free or reduced-price lunch. I believe that more parents are eligible, but they do not have their children fill out the forms because the forms are so threatening. I think that is a fact.

Our program, in particular, is a unique program. There is no other private, for-profit school which provides lunches for its students. Just as important is the fact that private schools, profit or nonprofit, provide no lunch for their students. It is really on behalf of those schools that I have come to testify. I am here speaking for those schools that are not providing lunches, and are not able to get this service.

Lunch is a nonallowable expense in State tuition. This is something we have been trying to change. I thought this would be the best possible forum to use in order to try to effect this change.

I would just like to digress for a moment. Lunch can be provided through the Child Nutrition Program, but this is a very cumbersome and difficult operation to get into. A private school with 25 or 30 children would have to go through the same process a district has to go through.

In our case, we have been able to work out a program with the Montclair Board of Education. It is only because of the longstanding relationship we have had with Montclair and with Carolyn Lane that we have been able to provide our children with a school lunch. We fought very long and hard for this program. The State Department of Education said, "If you want to do it, you find another way to do it."

In the past, our students brought their lunches to school from home. It was very disheartening for us to see the kinds of things we saw: Moldy food, two slices of bread with a smear of jelly, and soft drinks rather than milk. They brought in very non-nutritional kinds of food: Candy, potato chips, etc.

When children come to us and we provide their lunch, we can more or less concentrate on what their diet will consist of. When they bring their food, we have no control over their diet.

Essentially, we object to the Federal government preventing private school students from receiving a healthy school lunch, which includes milk. I feel that New Jersey must take a leadership role by making certain all children have access to lunch.

The complexity of the forms, the bureaucracy of government, the exclusion of private school students from lunch programs, many of whom are handicapped, all of these things are incomprehensible to us. All school children, not just those who go to public schools, have the same needs. Change is needed now. In many cases, the lunch many children receive at school is the only nutritional meal they have.

Essentially, I believe that Public Law 94:14-2 is being abrogated at this point because we are not mandating that it go one step further. As I said, 82%, and possibly more, of our children would be, and are, eligible for this food. Some are receiving it. However, I would say there are no other for-profit schools serving lunch. That is a definite fact. And, many nonprofit schools which serve 6,000 children, do not provide nutritional lunches. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. Are there any questions?

MS. ROSS: Just one, to clarify something. Correct me if I am wrong, but my understanding is that private schools which do not charge above \$1,500 in tuition can participate in the school lunch program. You are not disputing that. What you are saying is, the State's 5% needy mandate should be expanded to private schools. You are particularly citing those that are serving handicapped children. Is that the essence of what you are saying?

MR. ALTER: I am not familiar with the \$1,500-- Did you say that was \$1,500?

MS. ROSS: I believe that is true.

MS. LANE: Excuse me. I am shaking my head. Certainly, I am not part of the agency which made up that regulation. Forget the tuition, the last information I received was that no school, as long as it is for-profit, and it will not declare itself nonprofit, is

eligible. It is not the amount of tuition in New Jersey that determines eligibility.

MS. ROSS: Basically, what you are saying is that the 5% State mandate should be extended to private schools, is that correct?

MR. ALTER: I am not sure that is what I am saying.

MS. ROSS: I am sorry if I misinterpreted you.

MR. ALTER: What I am saying is this: If a child lives in Newark and he goes to school within his district, he gets a free lunch, if he is eligible. He goes to Newark; he goes to the Board of Education; he registers, and they say: "We can't serve you. You have epilepsy. You are retarded. You have six other problems. We are going to transport you. We are going to pay for your transportation and your tuition. We are going to send you to a school in South Orange, or Livingston, or whatever." The free lunch mandate does not follow that child. That is really what I am saying.

MS. ROSS: I understand you now. Thank you.

MR. AVIGLIANO: I just have two comments on that. This may be somewhat of an analogy, but it is my understanding that if a student goes out of a district to a private, for-profit school, the parents are entitled to a rebate from the local school district for transportation purposes.

MR. ALTER: Okay.

MR. AVIGLIANO: But, you are saying that there is--

MR. ALTER: (interrupting) No. Under Public Law 94:14-2, the Education of Handicapped Children Act, there is no charge whatsoever.

MR. AVIGLIANO: No, there is no charge; the school district is responsible for tuition and transportation. I understand that. But, in situations where parents choose to send their child to a private, for-profit institution, the parents are still entitled to a rebate for transportation.

MR. ALTER: Right. Okay, let me reiterate--

MR. AVIGLIANO: (interrupting) From what I hear, it seems as though similar relief is needed for the handicapped children you are talking about.

MR. ALTER: Quite honestly, I believe the law is already on the books. It would just have to be enforced.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Has this issue been dealt with by the New Jersey School Boards Association?

MR. ALTER: I personally brought it to Jeff Lasalski, but I don't know if it has gone in that direction, to be honest with you.

MR. AVIGLIANO: It would seem to me that is at least one more area where a formal overture should be made.

MR. ALTER: I just want to make sure that I try to represent my school, and possibly the schools that serve handicapped children, not the Newark Academy or that type of program.

MR. AVIGLIANO: No, believe me, I heard you.

MR. GROVE: Ruth?

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Thank you very much for representing the point of view of the principals, and those of the special needs' schools. I, for one, will be talking to the Bureau of Child Nutrition to see if there are any more private, for-profit schools that fall within the mandate of the 5% needy.

You know, right now, there is a danger of the entire mandate being wiped out in the State of New Jersey if the Federal budget package goes through.

One important thing I wanted to do was to commend Mrs. Lane for offering the services of, and providing a nutrition program for a school such as yours. We would like to see more schools reaching out to do that.

MR. ALTER: I am pleased you gave her that recognition because we really appreciate it. You have to understand the kinds of lunches our children were bringing. The difference we see in our children at this point is phenomenal, really.

We have no control over them receiving a complete and full lunch. We can't even spend a dollar on food for lunch. I am sure there are some schools that are able to do these things. It is put under another heading. What I am saying is, it should be done legitimately. These children are entitled to a free lunch if their brothers and sisters are entitled to it within their district.

MR. GROVE: Carolyn, I would like you to go ahead at this point.

MS. LANE: Thank you. I am a registered dietician, and I am here to give you a bird's eye view of what happens in Montclair. From the intelligence and the breadth of your questions, I see that many of you understand some of the limitations and problems with the School Food Service Program across the nation, as well as specifically here in New Jersey.

For a few minutes, I would just like to talk about what children eat at school. I will limit my remarks to the City of Montclair.

At lunchtime, children have four choices of what to do at lunch: They can buy a school lunch; they can bring lunch from home; they can eat nothing; or, they can leave the building. Those four choices are open to all the children in Montclair.

Depending upon their age, one can estimate pretty much what they will do. For example, in elementary school very few children skip a meal. We supervise, very closely, to see that every child in our dining room eats something. On the elementary level, if children go home for lunch, we are pretty certain they will eat something.

Somewhere in the 50% to 60% range, children will bring a lunch from home, and about 40% of the children eat the lunch that is given to them in the Montclair public schools.

At the middle school level, the emphasis shifts. Today, we have as many as 10% to 15% of the children in the dining rooms who eating nothing; 20% to 40% may bring a lunch from home; and, somewhere between 40% to 50% of them will buy lunch from me. At the middle school level, they are not allowed to leave the building.

Now, at the high school level, what happens on the elementary school level absolutely turns around. With open lunches, at least one-third of them leave the building. Sometimes I think they leave the building and make the vendors in town very wealthy. I want you to understand that from surveys I have done, I find that sometimes they leave the building because they don't have any money. They fast at lunchtime.

Some high school children fast because they think they should be thinner. Some high school children fast in Montclair because they don't have any money. I can't look into a crystal ball and predict for you every reason in the world why children are not eating lunches. However, I am extremely concerned that at least 30% eat nothing at lunchtime.

About one-third of the high school students in Montclair eat, or buy a lunch from me. About 5%, or less -- very few -- bring lunch from home.

On an average, with the statistics I have quoted to you, what I am really saying is that more than half of the kids either bring lunch from home, buy a lunch, or they elect to eat nothing.

Now, I would like you to think for a minute about those lunches that come from home. I guess what I want to do is to ask the question: Really, what is a mother to do? I believe there are two challenges she faces as she prepares lunch from home, at least in Montclair. First, she has to pack things that last at room temperature, from maybe 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. Those of you who cook for someone else immediately know that there will be very few perishable foods in that lunch. Most of the children in Montclair who bring lunch from home have peanut butter on white bread. That indicates to me that the mother is concerned about the cost of lunch.

Frequently, that lunch is combined with jelly, immediately reducing its nutritional integrity. The bread is almost always white, although maybe 5% of my kids will have whole wheat bread. Almost always, that lunch is accompanied by a juice pack. Sometimes it is pure juice. Most frequently, it is colored sugar water in a box. Just about every child brings candy or cookies from home, and probably a bag of Fritos. So, as I look at this lunch from home, I know that one of the things the mother has thought about is, "at least it can stay at room temperature for four hours."

The second thing I note is that she is trying to feed her child the things he or she wants to eat. As a registered dietician, that bothers me a lot. I have come to you today to speak about hunger because I believe we should take a stand and teach children something

about the foods they eat. While I don't think we teach children to eat foods we think are bad, I do think we have developed a philosophy of allowing them to eat only their favorite foods.

When you look at the diet that is being eaten by probably 55% of the children in Montclair, you immediately find it is extremely high in fat because of the peanut butter, and all Fritos, Doritos, or whatever they are, are usually high in fat. The diet is extremely low in fiber. The chances of finding a child who brings in a vegetable from home is very small. Occasionally, we will find a child who brings in an apple, but even those numbers are reducing quickly.

Of course, the lunch will also be high in sodium, and because it has no fresh fruits or vegetables, we can be pretty well assured it is going to be low in iron, Vitamin A, and Vitamin C. It is also usually marginal in calcium. Students are no longer drinking milk in the public schools.

What I would like to say to you is that more and more children, as they eat the lunch they bring from home, are going to risk, in their teen-age years and later years, nutritional deficiency problems, which start in their early years.

I don't mean to sound as though I am criticizing the mother. I think I have to give you some perspective as to why so many of them are packing lunches from home. Maybe the best perspective I can give you this this: When the present senior class at Montclair High School was in the first grade, they paid 35¢ for lunch and 3¢ for milk. Today, my price in Montclair -- I am embarrassed to tell you -- is \$1.25 for each lunch. As you know, it is 40¢ for a reduced-price lunch. And, milk is offered at 25¢. Those are very high prices if one has two or three children in the school.

I wish I could tell you I was a magician and I could make a nutritious lunch cheaper. My goal as dietician is just to attack those four limitations I told you about. I want my meal to be low-fat, high-fiber, low-sodium, and high in vitamins and minerals. It means that at least two of the five foods I offer have to be a fruit or a vegetable. I cannot buy an apple. I celebrate when I can buy an apple for 10¢ to 12¢; I must have enough apples for from 2,000 to 3,000 meals per day.

Milk costs somewhere in the neighborhood of 15¢. Remember, all of the meals I buy must be delivered to my door. I must also include a charge for the cost of delivery and servicing in my price to the children. So, even at a cost of \$1.25 per child, the cost to the Montclair public schools, is more like \$1.85. The food cost of my meals alone averages 88¢ to 95¢. That does not include the cost of labor or serving the meal. So, we are talking about a very high-priced product.

I believe it is worth the money when I compare my lunch of \$1.25 with whatever else is available to high schools students. They tell me I am still a bargain. But, \$1.25 for two kids, five days a week, is a lot of money.

I had to come to you, as a Commission on Hunger, to ask you to consider doing two things to help New Jersey's public school children:

Number one, you really must do something to make the cost of these meals cheaper. Three years ago, when you had some State moneys which you matched with Section 4, we had cheaper lunch prices. I must have cheaper lunch prices. There is nothing I can do without a more reasonably priced lunch. I can only be successful when I serve a lot of kids. Unless most of the kids buy a lunch at school, I truly can't protect the anonymity of a child, and I surely can't ensure nutritional integrity for each child in Montclair. I have to have the numbers. If you don't understand the social beings that children are, then you need to invite me back.

I must have a long line of people thinking the "in" thing to do is to eat that apple. I have been marginally successful with things such as salad bars, but, oh, the cost. So, please consider lowering the price of lunch for all children.

The second problem I feel strongly about is the cost of the 40¢ reduced-price meal. I do not understand why we allowed the Federal government to use a uniform means test throughout the country. No one in their right mind could believe that it is as expensive to live in Puerto Rico or Florida as it is in Newark or Montclair. I do not understand why we have a nationwide means test.

However, here in New Jersey let us at least understand how expensive 40¢ is to the working poor. Perhaps New Jersey should consider paying a higher reimbursement for the reduced-price meal in order to lower it from the present 40¢.

My second request is for you to do anything in your power to initiate strong nutritional standards for anything and everything being eaten in the public schools. I believe we have to fight an all-out war and make an all-out effort to remind ourselves of how important milk, fruit, and vegetables are. We have become very busy fighting other battles -- maybe they seem as important because they are so urgent -- but I don't understand what can be more important to us than making sure that every child has the necessary nutrient stores, or the potential to get the foods that build those nutrient stores. To me, that is absolutely appropriate and important.

I ask you to do these two things on behalf of all the children in New Jersey, by using as examples the children, as I know them, in the Montclair public schools. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. Are there any questions?

MS. ROSS: Yes. Essentially, your message is that the price has to be affordable. Do you know that the proposed Federal budget cuts eliminate subsidies to children who are paying for lunch now, and they freeze the subsidies for free and reduced-price meals? How is that going to affect the Montclair schools?

MS. LANE: We estimate that the price will have to go up 15¢. We believe the price of lunch for the paying child will be \$1.75. Let me tell you that there will be no one in line for a \$1.75 meal. You might as well put up a door with a sign that says, "Free lunch children enter here; everybody else leave the building," or, "Buy at McDonalds or Burger King." To me, that is the worst case.

It also implies a total lack of understanding at the Federal level of the importance of reaching all children and helping them to learn good eating habits.

MR. GROVE: Ruth?

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Ms. Lane, would you please explain for the benefit of the Commission the reduced-price category you mentioned? What does that mean and how do they determine eligibility?

MS. LANE: Ruth, when I am nervous I can't remember the numbers. What I would like to tell you is that there is a financial means test applied to every family that becomes eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Can someone help me to remember the Federal guidelines?

MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: One hundred eight-five percent poverty.

MS. LANE: Okay. Don't we usually talk about \$18,000 for a family of four? Is that about right?

(Whereupon member of audience gives witness an application for subsidy)

Oh, a lady with an application. Thank you, but this is for the WIC Program.

A family of four earning below \$18,870 would be eligible for reduced-price meals. One hundred and fifty percent of the poverty guideline would allow a family to be eligible for free meals. So, we have a complex application process. A family submits its income, verifies the number of people in the family, provides a Social Security number for each person in the family, and we make the calculation, based on this chart, to determine if the children are eligible for free meals or reduced-price meals.

One of the persons who did not come today is a school principal; he will write the Commission a letter. He was very upset by the identification of free and reduced-price eligible children in Montclair this year. In November he was serving approximately 185 free and reduced-price meals. At one point we were assessed as over-claimed because we were inspected and someone said we did not have enough pieces of paper. The school must pay back for these meals.

By mid-February, we had 210 pieces of paper, so in October and November the children he was feeding were really needy; they really wanted the meal. He just could not get the pieces of paper from the family in a timely way. We would get testimony from him regarding families who were in real crises in the Montclair public schools, families who, for one reason or the other, were unable to, or would not, sign the appropriate papers.

This year, as opposed to four or five years ago, if the school knew that the child was nutritionally needy, for whatever reason--

May I suggest that some mothers drink and some fathers have other priorities for their money, but for whatever reason the child comes to school hungry. We were able to serve the child free, based on his nutritional needs. That is no longer possible.

We must get some other public service agency to verify, and that causes us a great problem.

MR. GROVE: Are there any further questions?

MR. STUBBS: Ms. Lane, what was the income level qualification for a free meal?

MS. LANE: Would you mind if I give that to you in writing? I really don't want to quote numbers that I am not sure of. I am sorry. I didn't think. Because those numbers are Federally set, I didn't think that was appropriate testimony for me to give here.

MR. STUBBS: No problem.

MR. GROVE: Thank you both for your testimony. We will now take a recess. For those of you who are still here and are on the list of witnesses, we are going to take a 10-minute break to get our blood circulating again. We will then reconvene and continue until all who are here to give testimony have the opportunity to do so. We thank you for your patience.

(RECESS)

(AFTER RECESS)

MS. ROSS: I think we are ready to start again. I want to thank all of you for staying. I know it is getting quite late.

For those of you who were not here at the very beginning, we would like to reintroduce the Commission members. We will start on my left.

MS. BELLA: I am Diana Bella from the New Jersey Department of Energy.

MR. AVIGLIANO: I am John Avigliano, Middlesex County Board of Social Services.

MS. MOSKOWITZ: I am Ruth Moskowitz, School Food Services of New Jersey.

MS. SMITH: I am Leslie Smith, The Center for Food Action of New Jersey.

MS. ROSS: I am Donna Ross from the Newark Preschool Council. For the benefit of the Legislative Services Hearing Reporters, please state your name and also spell it so that it goes into the record correctly. Each speaker will have 10 minutes in which to present his or her testimony, after which time there will be some time left for questions from the Commissioners. Please be cognizant of the time because we are really going to try to keep within the 10 minutes.

The first person to speak will be Cecilia Zalkind, Association for Children.

CECILIA ZALKIND: My name is Cecilia Zalkind, and with me is Shirley Geismer. We represent the Association for Children of New Jersey, which is a statewide child advocacy group. (see appendix page 132X)

ACNJ has recently examined the issue of hunger in New Jersey in two recent publications: Through the Safety Net, which was an assessment of the impact of the 1981 Federal budget cuts in New Jersey; and, Not Enough to Live On, which was a survey of Newark Head Start families, completed in conjunction with the Newark Preschool Council. (see information regarding aforementioned material on p. 1 of appendix)

We appreciate the opportunity to summarize our findings in our testimony today, and to present these studies to the Commission, both of which we have included for your review.

In Through the Safety Net, ACNJ reported a dramatic increase in the need for food assistance, following the 1981 Federal budget reductions. Requests for emergency food, either in the form of allotments or meals, have increased in New Jersey over the last several years.

After Through the Safety Net, we found that this ground swell of need has not diminished at all. Your own Center for Food Action recently sent us statistics which show that at least 79,500 children were served in emergency pantries during a 20-month period, from 1983 to 1984. We were told that this figure is undoubtedly low since only about 20% of the pantries reported. But, we were most concerned; even 80,000 children in need of free meals in New Jersey -- and this is

emergency food -- signals extreme difficulties and potential problems in terms of their mental and physical growth.

Our Head Start survey, Not Enough to Live On, demonstrated to us that hunger does not only exist amongst those who frequent the emergency food pantries. The Head Start survey was an assessment of the living costs and traditions of Head Start families in Newark, and our findings were based upon a random sample of 500 families.

We demonstrated the following conditions in that survey:

One was that hunger was a recurring phenomenon, experienced by almost all of the families surveyed. Almost 80% of all the families reported that they often or sometimes ran out of food and they had no money to buy more.

Almost one-third of the families received food stamps, and almost one-fourth of those who did not get food stamps always ran out of food, usually toward the last part of the month. Food was also the one necessity families could cut, since other costs, such as rent and utilities, were fixed.

Only one-third of the families we surveyed -- those who lived in public housing -- had expenses that were less than their incomes. All the other families were faced with expenses that far exceeded their monthly incomes.

We also found that food stamp allotments were not supplemental, as was originally intended with the Food Stamp Program. They really comprised three-quarters of what an average family spent on food during the month.

In response to questions, comments, and testimony given earlier in this hearing, we also found that food costs more in cities such as Newark. Food is more expensive, and the quality is not as good, especially in terms of produce and fresh fruit.

We also found that data from our Head Start survey was representative of conditions in the State as a whole. We looked at a 1982 survey, completed at Rutgers, of Middlesex County families whose AFDC grants were terminated in 1981 and 1982. Almost all of these families had been receiving food stamps before termination. Only approximately 40% continued to receive food stamps after the grants

were ended. Hunger was a serious problem for these families too, and they reported similar conditions: Running out of food in the middle or toward the end of the month.

Similar to the Newark studies, many of these families were also forced to cut down on their food budget because other pressing expenses could not be trimmed at all.

Such evidence of hunger is of grave concern to ACNJ because of its serious impact on infants and children. A mother's nutritional status is an important determinant of birth weight. As you know, low birth weight is intimately linked to an infant's mortality rate. At this point, as in previous years, the New Jersey infant mortality rate exceeds the national rate. Our national rate is not good. Recent articles in newspapers and magazines indicate that a baby born in Singapore has a better chance of surviving until its first birthday than one born in the United States, and our New Jersey rate, at this point, exceeds the national rate.

Prenatal care is, of course, important to the pregnant mother, but good nutrition is just as important. We feel that a campaign to eliminate hunger amongst pregnant women may be an appropriate measure to reduce the infant mortality rate.

The Department of Health has started an initiative, "Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies," and we believe this is a step in the right direction; however, at this point it only targets 10 cities in the State and it emphasizes prenatal care as well.

We are also supporting pending legislation that would create an infant mortality prevention program in the Department of Health, but that is also limited. It appropriates \$2 million, and it concentrates on prenatal care rather than nutrition.

We also believe that not only newborns suffer serious damage from poor nutrition. Continued malnutrition can cause a child to suffer intellectual, psychological, and physical problems, making him into an unproductive member of society.

We have also done some research based on statistics obtained from the WIC Program in Trenton. We are concerned that because of funding levels, only about one-third of potentially eligible women,

infants, and children are served by the WIC Program in New Jersey; right now, only Federal funding supports the WIC Program. There is no State support, although there may be some in-kind contributions made at the local level.

From some of our limited research, we found that other states contribute to their WIC Programs, beyond the Federal level. This is of grave concern to us right now because, as you know, there are proposed cuts in the present Federal budget; in addition, this year the Administration has decided to spend \$76 million less than Congress appropriated for WIC. This is a pattern we have seen in previous years. In the budget proposal, there is usually a smaller amount proposed for WIC. The budget that is passed includes increases; and, the Administration does not appropriate that money. In New Jersey this means a reduction of about \$500,000. It also means that in the last five months of the year, WIC estimates that 11,000 women and children who would have been added to the Program in that last five months will not be able to be served.

We are gravely concerned about the situation in New Jersey today. Our limited surveys, and our contract with other community groups demonstrate that there are thousands of children affected daily because of the family's financial inability to provide for their basic needs. Our concern is that the Federal response has been to propose budget cuts that will affect these vital programs once again.

We feel that our testimony and the other testimony you have heard today documents the fact that hunger exists in the United States and in New Jersey, and we hope there is a response to this problem.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. Are there any questions?

MR. AVIGLIANO: You mentioned that the Department of Health has a program which was addressing the problem of infant mortality in 10 cities in the State. Can you elaborate on that?

MS. ZALKIND: I think Shirley could probably answer that question better than I. It is a new program: Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies.

SHIRLEY GEISMER: The program is just getting started. It is called, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies. It is an attempt to lessen infant

mortality in the 10 cities in this State which have the highest infant mortality rate. They are going to attempt to move on a number of fronts. They are going to try to increase the effectiveness of the medical facilities during the birthing process. They are going to try to make sure that women get prenatal care, by giving money to the prenatal clinics in the cities.

They are also going to attempt to get all eligible pregnant women into the WIC Program in those 10 cities. That sounds terrific but one wonders what this will do to the potential for people who live in the other cities of the State to get services. Unfortunately, I did not bring any material with me. I don't know how much money is being earmarked for this project.

It is State money. It is the first time that the State will give money to the Maternal and Child Health Program under the Department of Health. In the past, only a block grant from the Federal government has gone into the Maternal and Child Health Program. This will be the first time the State will be giving money to its own Child Health Program.

It is a terrific initiative, but it is limited in terms of its scope.

MR. AVIGLIANO: I have another question regarding WIC. You mentioned earlier that other states contribute more money to WIC than the State of New Jersey does. I need clarification on that. Are other states' funds addressing the need to staff WIC, versus dollars for food? I am not aware of other states that are putting up--

MS. GEISMER: (interrupting) I know that Texas is giving State money to the WIC Program. I do not know whether the money is going toward food or administrative costs.

MS. DiCHIARA: I have a question. Does the WIC Program promote breast feeding at all? Many of us have been involved over the years in the infant formula boycott in developing nations. I wonder whether basic nutrition for babies would also increase if there was an increase in breast feeding?

MS. ZALKIND: I will look to Shirley to answer that question. She is our WIC expert.

MS. GEISMER: I really don't know. However, the mother would have to be getting supplemental food also if she were going to be the primary source of food for the child. So, I really don't know whether or not breast feeding is being pushed by the program.

MS. ROSS: If I may interrupt, we are going to hear testimony from some WIC people in just a few minutes. So, you might bring that question up again at that time, Kathleen.

MS. DiCHIARA: Okay. Thank you.

MS. ROSS: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: I would just like to commend you folks for the work you do, and for the reports you publish. They are absolutely wonderful. They help us a lot.

One of the things that was brought out in Safety Net was the problem AFDC mothers who are on partial welfare have when they have to make a choice regarding whether or not they are going to continue to work and lose their Medicaid benefits, or stop working and go back on full welfare. It was supposed to be an incentive for people to go back to work. Could you just elaborate on the dilemma AFDC mothers face?

MS. GEISMER: The dilemma involves the decision to work or not work and become dependent again. I don't know whether I can elaborate much more regarding that problem. I can elaborate on what has happened: The findings are that this is not a disincentive to work. Most of the mothers, even though they no longer get their partial supplements, decide to keep on working rather than to leave work altogether and go back on welfare completely.

I was just reading research which was done in Wisconsin by an institute on poverty, and they found the very same thing to be true. It seems that what they found throughout the country was that even though women were taken off the rolls, they continued to work. Their incentive to work was not diminished. They really wanted to work.

However, what did happen -- and all research indicates this -- was that their financial situation became much, much worse.

MS. ZALKIND: I would just like to add one comment to that because what you referred to involves the loss of Medicaid benefits as well. ACNJ has long supported a Medically Needy Program for New

Jersey, and we have been very active in the last two years with the Medically Needy Coalition in supporting this program. In doing research in support of the proposed legislation, we discovered that there are over 100,000 children in New Jersey right now whose families live below the poverty level. This would be a family of four which earns below \$10,000 per year. They are not eligible for AFDC, and, as a result, they receive no Medicaid benefits. They have no medical coverage.

MS. SMITH: Would you suggest to the Commission that we consider -- as a recommendation you would like to see us make -- the legislative proposal and take a closer look at it?

MS. ZALKIND: Yes. The Medically Needy proposal is far along -- hopefully, it is far along now. It was just passed with some amendments, last Thursday in the Senate, which means it has to go back to the Assembly for the amendments to be approved. It then goes to Governor Kean for his signature. He indicated in his budget message this year that he is supporting the Medically Needy Program.

I have alluded to the impact on children. Of course, the Medically Needy Program will also impact on pregnant women and mothers. The present proposal includes caretakers of children, as well as a large segment of the senior citizen population.

Governor Kean indicated that he would support the Medically Needy Program, but recent publicity about the proposed Federal budget cuts on Medicaid have put this in jeopardy.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MS. ZALKIND: Thank you.

MS. ROSS: Annette Clark? While Ms. Clark is coming to the front, I want to introduce the Commissioners who have just joined us. At the very end of the table, on the left, is Bishop Parrot, and to my right is William Stubbs and Kathleen DiChiara.

ANNETTE CLARK: Good afternoon. My name is Annette Clark. I am the Director of the United Labor Agency Information and Referral Advocacy Program.

MS. ROSS: Excuse me, would you repeat your affiliation, please?

MS. CLARK: I am the Director of the United Labor Agency Program. The United Labor Agency is the community service component of the AFL-CIO.

I would just like to read you a brief statement. The AFL-CIO underscores labor's human rights credo: All people are entitled to share in the wealth they create and to human dignity both in the workplace and during the other hours of the day a worker must live.

The basis of the American labor movement's historical and continuing concern with economic and social rights is with human decency and justice.

Due to the cuts totaling more than \$2 billion a year, enacted since 1981, approximately one million poor recipients have been dropped from the Food Stamp Program, and another million poor have had their benefits reduced. The ceiling on the amount of income a working poor family could earn and still be assisted by the Food Stamp Program was drastically reduced, and strikers and their families were barred from receiving any assistance, regardless of need. In 1985, the Administration has continued its attack on the nation's impoverished by seeking an additional \$2.9 billion in cuts through fiscal year 1986.

At Congressional hearings back in September, President Reagan's Budget Director, David Stockman, promised to recommend that programs serving low-income people, already slashed drastically during the first Reagan term, should not be cut any further.

In December, the Administration's budget proposals were leaked to the press. According to an analysis of them, done by the nonprofit Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, this latest promise to our most needy Americans has already been broken.

Under Reagan's proposal, according to an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office: Food Stamp benefits would be cut for 62% of all recipient households, or 4.9 million households. Four out of every five of the poorest households, those with incomes below half of the poverty line, would suffer benefit cuts. One million elderly and handicapped households would have their food stamps cut, losing an average of one-fourth of what they now receive.

Twenty million food stamp recipients would have their benefits frozen while food costs continue to rise. This means less food, and food stamp benefits would fall to their lowest level since the national benefit levels were established under President Nixon, 15 years ago.

Over 500,000 low-income pregnant women, infants, and children at nutritional risk would have prescription food supplements ended due to a proposed 17% cut in the caseload of the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children. That is the WIC Program.

Thus, the same Administration, hell bent on denying poor women freedom of choice, continues to try to make it harder for women to care for their children once they are born. Large numbers of youngsters will be handicapped because their mothers could not afford adequate nutrition and medicine during pregnancy and after birth. This suffering and waste of human potential has especially hit areas of high unemployment because of budget cuts.

Child nutrition programs face a Reagan request for cuts of \$300 million a year, on top of cuts in school lunches and other programs, enacted in 1981. Reagan wants to merge three child nutrition programs targeted for low-income children into a block grant with 29% less funds.

Child nutrition cuts, totaling \$1.5 billion, have particularly hurt children and unemployed workers. The school lunch price for the near poor quadrupled in the year between September, 1984, and September, 1985, and has forced the youngsters of many jobless workers out of the program.

Labor called the Food Stamp Program the nation's principal defense against hunger for the poor, destitute, and jobless, and termed "cruel and misguided" the administration's budget cuts that have reduced the availability of the stamps for millions of poor families, and instituted discrimination against strikers.

In addition to preventing many of the elderly, disabled, and chronically poor families from receiving badly needed food assistance, few of the nation's unemployed are able to receive any assistance from the Food Stamp Program due to the unreasonably harsh imposition of

asset and resource limitations. There is a Federal law which states that a striker cannot receive any food stamp benefits unless he is eligible for them before he goes on strike.

The AFL-CIO will continue to champion the cause of the needy and hungry by strongly supporting the child nutrition and WIC Programs. We urge the Congress to resist efforts to further slash the Food Stamp Program, rescind actions already taken which eliminated or seriously reduced benefits to millions, and remove or, at the very least, relax the unreasonably harsh asset and resource limitations that bar the vast majority of unemployed workers and their families from receiving any assistance.

In 1984, our agency documented the number of cases of people who came in seeking food assistance. As a result of our documentation, we saw a need and tried to meet it. Some 20 local unions were asked to make contributions to the Thanksgiving and Christmas Fund.

They came through gallantly with over \$4,000 in contributions. These moneys were used to purchase and provide bulk food and turkeys to members in Newark and Essex County, as well as provide them with \$10 and \$20 food vouchers to be used at local supermarkets.

As a result of this, over 500 families were assisted over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

The United Labor Agency, and labor, have committed themselves to assisting the hungry, and we are working toward expanding our Thanksgiving and Christmas Fund.

MS. ROSS: I have one question. Are the families you documented as needing food assistance the same families who received assistance over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays?

MS. CLARK: Yes.

MS. ROSS: Do you have any figures which indicate, on a regular basis, how many people are in need?

MS. CLARK: Do you mean monthly?

MS. ROSS: Are they available?

MS. CLARK: I can get that information for you, yes. I can give you an approximate number.

We have about 25 to 30 families, or mothers, who come in and request emergency food assistance. That does not take a long strike into account. If there is a strike, we then have hundreds come in for food assistance.

MS. ROSS: These are people who are not eligible for food stamps because of the reasons you mentioned?

MS. CLARK: Right, strikers are not eligible. We have a liaison with Ms. DiChiara's food bank. Our food purchases come through the community food bank. The moneys are donated by the local unions.

MR. STUBBS: Ms. Clark, has your union engaged in lobbying Congress?

MS. CLARK: Some of the unions have. I think most of that has been done out on the West Coast in California; it has not actually been done here as yet.

MR. STUBBS: That would be a good place to make yourselves heard.

MS. CLARK: I will take that thought back with me. We have some large unions and we can do that.

My message to you, if you can get it across to the Governor and to some of the Federal people, is that eliminating strikers from benefits does not mean that these people are not hungry. These people are without jobs. In some cases, if it is a strike that is going to last for a long period of time, their mortgage payments have to be made. There is child care which, in some instances, they cannot have.

Then, when they go to the Food Stamp offices, they are told, "You are not eligible, and you are not eligible because the Federal government says you are not eligible." Basically, it is a form of strike-breaking. So, it not only affects the hungry, it affects what is happening to labor unions.

MS. DiCHIARA: Annette, may I ask a question?

MS. CLARK: Yes.

MS. DiCHIARA: Are you suggesting that not all strikers should automatically receive food stamps, but that the law should at least be open, so that strikers who are in situations of need--

MS. CLARK: (interrupting) They should be eligible.

MS. DiCHIARA: (continuing) --should be processed just like anyone else who is in need?

MS. CLARK: Right. As it stands now they cannot. The Federal regulations say they cannot apply. They are not eligible because they are strikers.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MS. CLARK: Thank you.

MS. ROSS: Our next speaker will be Eleanor Orr, WIC Program.

ELEANOR ORR: My name is Eleanor Orr, and I am from the UMDNJ Hospital WIC Program. I would like to thank the Commission for this opportunity to inform you of the service gap that exists in the Newark area.

The WIC Program is a supplemental food program. We service a low-income, high-risk population of women and children. We service infants who have need of special formulas for medical reasons, special formulas that are categorized as formulas which are sold in drug stores and not in supermarkets.

Some of the reasons these infants are in need of these formulas are for PKU, prematurity, renal or heart disease, impaired fat absorption, lactose intolerance, hypoglycemia, severe malabsorption and food allergies, protein allergies, diarrhea, and assorted other illnesses.

MS. SMITH: Could you tell us what PKU means?

MS. ORR: I'm sorry; I can't.

MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Phenylketonuria.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MS. ORR: I ask your intervention in closing a specific service gap that exists: If a mother has need of a formula -- remember, WIC is supplemental -- in-between the time her checks come in, she can generally come into the WIC Program and we issue emergency formula -- regular formula -- such as Enfamil, SMA, or Similac. But, if a mother has need of a prescription formula, we do not have that at the WIC center. At present, within the Newark area, there is no agency I can send that mother to in order to get the needed formula. Prescription formula costs about \$13 and it lasts about two and one-half days.

Again, WIC is a supplemental food program, so what does that infant, who is medically sick already, because he requires a special formula, do for the rest of the month when his mother's checks have run out? We don't need hungry infants.

BISHOP PARROT: Do you think your lack of funds could be somehow contributed to the infant mortality rate?

MS. ORR: I can say that WIC has positively proven itself as having a positive impact on the infant mortality rate. There is no one thing we can say will stop it, but we can tell you there has been a vast improvement.

MS. DiCHIARA: Excuse me, may I ask the question I asked before regarding breast feeding? Certainly, the children who have many of the conditions you listed would benefit from mother's milk.

MS. ORR: It is one hundred times better.

MS. DiCHIARA: Lactose and all of those types of things, if a mother nurses here baby—

MS. ORR: We have spent three generations telling mothers that what was in the bottle was better than what was in the breast. We are presently trying to turn that around. It took us three generations to get it into the bottle; it may take us three more to get it back into the breast, and I am not being facetious.

MS. DiCHIARA: Do you have sufficient staff? Does part of the WIC budget, either from the Federal perspective or locally, say, "This is really important for the nutrition of our children, and we are going to assign 'so much' of our budget in order to do outreach by talking about breast feeding, promoting it, and making it easier?"

MS. ORR: Every local WIC Program does that. There is not one program in the State of New Jersey that does not have an outreach program which is affiliated with breast feeding in one way or another.

We have to tell those mothers when they are pregnant, "Believe me, what is there is better than what you are going to get out of a bottle." There are many reasons why mothers don't breast feed: It is not what their mothers did; they are planning to go back to work; they don't understand that if they breast feed for five days they are better off; or, they don't know that their baby has an allergy

until it is already on the formula, and by that time one cannot reinstitute breast milk.

So, there are many reasons why we have not been as effective as we would like to be, but we are going to continue to plug it.

Basically, we need to have food vouchers issued to pharmacies where these special formulas are available, rather than to supermarkets.

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: This might sound very weird, but if a baby has a disease or a medical problem, and the answer to the problem, or the medicine for it, is a special formula, is there any way the formula can be covered under Medicaid?

MS. ORR: If the family is Medicaid eligible, and if they meet all the requirements, yes. Pity the family who does not meet the requirements if they only have two and one-half days' food supply for the infant and it costs \$13 per can.

MS. SMITH: I know. We have been asked to supply formula to people who are in that situation.

So, it is possible to have that covered by Medicaid, isn't it?

MS. ORR: Yes, as long as the family meets the Medicaid eligibility requirements. But, they are not going to receive supplemental aid when the need is not present.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Can you explain for me the interplay, or the coordination between your WIC Program and the Newark WIC Program?

MS. ORR: We are sister programs within the same city. Basically, at UMDNJ we service a population that uses the UMDNJ hospital services and clinics. In addition, we have the capability to theoretically service State residents because we are hooked up with a State organization.

Every WIC Program has a geographic service area and some other requirements for service. Theoretically, for UMDNJ it is the State. That is not really feasible because our average food package costs us about \$34 per month. For someone living in Boonton, it would not really pay, financially, to come to Newark in order to pick up his checks and shop.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Both programs in Newark cover the same geographical territory?

MS. ORR: I'm sorry. Theoretically, UMDNJ covers Newark and/or the State. The Newark WIC Program covers another service area.

MR. AVIGLIANO: But, it is still possible for neighbors to be on two different programs?

MS. ORR: Oh, yes. Right.

MS. DiCHIARA: May I ask one more question?

MS. ROSS: Yes.

MS. DiCHIARA: One of the problems that sometimes comes up when people are referred to a WIC Program is the length of time they have to commit to waiting in line when they go to emergency pantries, or whatever, or the length of time it takes for them to have their children seen. Is it a staffing problem, or is it a funding problem when it takes someone a long time to be helped?

MS. ORR: It is staff. It is space. WIC is not a program that generally stands by itself; it is always an adjunct program, and we don't generate funds for adjunct agencies. So, based on that, we get space and we get staff, but we just don't have enough of it to service the on-the-spot needs.

But, if a mother can't wait on a specific day, we can generally give her emergency formula and ask her to return. We have certain Federal mandates we have to meet in order to determine eligibility.

MR. STUBBS: Ms. Orr, I have two quick questions. Regarding the breast milk, do you recommend a special diet for the mother when she is breast feeding?

MS. ORR: Of course, if we have a breast feeding mother, we want to keep her on the WIC Program. We can service a breast feeding mother as long as she has eligibility after the birth of her baby, up to one year. The most important thing about WIC may be the immediate need that we satisfy, hunger; but, we also educate participants as to the proper foods they have to eat, so they consistently have a nutritious diet. That is an education they have for the rest of their lives, and they pass it on to their family, and their family passes it on to the next generation.

MR. STUBBS: So, in or out of the WIC Program, you would recommend a special diet for the mother who is breast feeding?

MS. ORR: Yes, just so she gets adequate nutrients since she is a breast feeding mother.

MR. STUBBS: My other question is, what is the probability of taking the milk from the mother's breast and then giving it to the child while the mother is at work?

MS. ORR: Oh, that does exist. There is no problem with that. It does entail a little work. A lot depends on where she works and how much cooperation she can get from her boss in order to run to the bathroom, pump, and store the milk. She then has to be sure it gets to her home within a reasonable length of time so that it can be kept.

Unfortunately, mother's breasts are not milked twice a day; they have to be milked more often in order to provide an adequate amount of breast milk.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MS. ORR: Thank you.

MS. ROSS: Our next speaker will be Susan McElroy.

SUSAN McELROY: I am Susan McElroy. I am with Our Lady of the Valley Parish, in Orange, New Jersey. I just wanted to come to tell our story.

We don't have a great deal of facts or requests. At this point, we have no money from the State. We don't have any need of the Federal government. We are just a small beginning effort, trying to approach hunger in our own community.

I think some of you may know, or you have recognized in your own churches, parishes, or synagogues, that many times churches have existed apart from their communities; they really only basically served their own constituency. But, we have found in the last several years in our own parish that we have begun to reach out and be very concerned through our Social Concerns Committee.

We started, about six years ago, gathering food. There was a food bank in Orange, and it would be depleted quickly. As we gathered food for others, we began to see more and more people come to the

parish. That was not a practice years ago. The parish was sort of separate from the Valley community. The Valley community in Orange is very, very demographically similar to the Central Ward of Newark. I think we tend to ignore some of these areas. It is almost hidden poverty, but it is real, it is measurable, and it is demographic if we can see it.

What happened is that we trained ourselves a little so that we could approach the problem and not fall on our faces by being ill prepared. We certainly did not want to be unwelcoming and cold. We did this as a human effort and as a service effort.

We have a food pantry which has been approved by the Community Bank Program since December. Our food pantry has grown from the few people we used to see come in the door to about 79, in just three months.

We also started a soup kitchen, and it is open on Saturdays because that is when we can get volunteers. This has grown from two to 25. Not Enough to Live On, which was done by the Association for Children in New Jersey, indicates that very few people who really need help come to food kitchens. If 25 is an indication, we are just hitting the tip of the iceberg.

As I said, we are just getting started. We haven't advertised at all. We haven't made any big deal of it; we just decided to get our feet wet slowly. As it turned out, "slowly" may move a lot quicker than we thought.

I would just like to let you know we are there. We have seen the problem, and I am sure it has been there for a long, long time. It is just that we decided to reach out for it.

I chaired a committee of the Essex County Advisory Board on the status of women, and that committee studied the economic status of women in Essex County. I brought a copy of that report with me. You may have it. We did not discuss hunger in that report, but the implications of hunger are there.

In the analysis, we point out that women in Essex County are in severe economic distress, and we factually demonstrate this throughout our report. It is not a Newark problem; it is an Essex County problem.

The growth in women having the sole responsibility for families, which has been a dramatic change in the last several years, combined with the tenuous labor force status of women and low wages for even full-time work, has resulted in many women and children living in poverty in Essex County. We have seen the emergence of another large group living very near poverty, if not in poverty. These are Essex County figures. I will leave this report with you. It is relatively new, based on a study done for us by Michelle Cahill of the Women's Education Institute of New York.

MS. ROSS: Are there any questions? Leslie?

MS. SMITH: As a point of personal privilege, I would like to suggest to Susan that she talk to Adele LaTourette. We are the Center for Food Action and we try to keep in touch with all the people who are doing emergency work in the State. We try to help people as they start getting their feet wet. So, if you want to, please talk to Adele and give her your address, that might help.

MS. McELROY: We would be delighted. We have decided to exist on our own as best we can because it has generated some good will in the parish. There are teams of eight who work every Saturday, and it has been great, quite frankly. So, we are doing it alone for a while.

We would be glad to network for good ideas.

MS. SMITH: Yes, that is my suggestion.

MS. McELROY: Great. Thank you.

MR. STUBBS: Ms. McElroy, just a thought. Have you been in touch with the Director of the Division on Women?

MS. McELROY: Under which hat? Under the hunger category?

MR. STUBBS: Either hat. I just heard you talking about women and their problems.

MS. McELROY: Yes. We invited Joan to come when we presented this at a forum last October. She was not able to come, but she sent a— Yes, we have been in touch with her.

MR. STUBBS: I know she would be concerned and she could probably be helpful.

MS. McELROY: Yes. We are following up on this study by planning a forum on comparable worth. We are trying to find out how some of the negatives we see can be addressed and how we as a board can help in some way.

MS. ROSS: Thank you, Ms. McElroy.

The Reverend James Allen will be our next speaker.

REVEREND JAMES ALLEN: Good afternoon. My name is Reverend James Allen. I am the Food Service Program Coordinator at the Lighthouse Temple. We are located at 1035 Broad Street in Newark, right across the street from Symphony Hall, downtown Newark.

We feed the hungry. We give them meat. To those who are thirsty, we give them a drink. For those who are naked, we clothe them. For those who are sick, we visit them. And, to those who are in prison, we go to them.

Basically, we serve free hot lunches four days a week. That is a hot lunch -- no sandwiches, no soup. We have a staff of about 15 people who volunteer their services for this program. On an average, in the beginning of the month we feed between 250 and 300 people. In the second half of the month, between the 15th and the 30th, we serve approximately 500 people per day. We serve free hot lunches four days a week to approximately 2,000 people per week.

As I said, we have a staff of about 15 people, and we minister to all their needs. We not only feed them, we have a volunteer social worker who tends to their social needs.

Out of the 500 people per day we serve, I would say 25% are homeless. Now, what is homeless? Some people are homeless for a day; some people are homeless for a week or a month; some people are homeless for a year; and, some people are permanently homeless. We do not have any statistics on that, but in an average day, about 25% of these people are homeless.

How can we tell they are homeless? We can tell by the way they smell because homeless people who live in an empty lot have a fire, and when they stand around a fire all night and they come to our free hot lunch program, they smell like smoked ham. So, we know who does not have a home and who does have a home.

Now, earlier, I heard someone say there were 8,000 homeless people in Newark. I do not know what statistics they used, but I heard the same person say there were 400 beds for the homeless in Newark. We say, "Where are the rest of these people?" They are sleeping in abandoned buildings.

For instance, I don't know if you are familiar with the building downtown. It used to be the Military Park Hotel, at 20 Park Place. About 20 years ago, they changed it into an office building. Recently, they changed it into a Video Plaza, or something like that. They then closed the building down. There are 200 people a night living in that building. It is boarded up, but there are 200 people living there. We say, "Well, why are they living there?" It used to be a hotel and there are still beds in there. They go there every cold night.

Now, the warmer it gets, the more people find shelter outside. But on a cold night, there are at least 200 homeless people living in the former Military Park Hotel. Now, if you think that is odd, we will go one block further. In the middle of Military Park there is a statute. It is about as big as this platform, and it has about 30 figurines on it and two horses. Under that statute, there is an enclosure. There are 20 people sleeping under that statute per night — 20 homeless people.

Where are the places they stay in? They stay in old abandoned buildings down on Broad Street -- downtown. We may say, "Well, why are they all downtown?" Downtown is where they go because it is not a neighborhood. A homeless person may get harassed in a neighborhood, but downtown belongs to everyone. They feel comfortable downtown.

I know this because we minister to these people every day, on a one-to-one basis. We do not just give them food and have them walk out the door. We serve them. They come in and they sit down. We have our staff deliver hot food to their tables. We talk to them. We know their problems. They have social problems.

A person was talking to me today about a social problem he has regarding getting a drink of water. A homeless person, if he is

homeless for five days, looks homeless. This homeless person can't go into a restaurant and ask for a glass of water because they won't give one to him; he does not look presentable. A homeless person cannot ask to use the rest room; they will tell him it is broken: "You can't use it; we don't have one." Now, they wouldn't tell you or me that, but they will tell a homeless person that.

So, a homeless person has social problems which lead to other problems. Many of them have testified to me that they wanted to go home -- maybe down South -- but they just could not get the money to go. You see, we have ministers down there who minister to the people. We don't just see them; we talk to them in order to find out what is going on in their lives.

I don't really know the numbers of homeless people in Newark, but I know that there are many homeless people, and I minister to them at the Lighthouse Temple. We serve hot lunches. We have volunteer workers. They do not get paid. I do not get paid. We volunteer our time. We serve from 12:00 noon until 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

We are going into our third year and we have so much respect in our community, that in two of the three years since we have been serving these people -- some of them on the other side of the law -- we have never had a fight because they respect our church. We are trying to minister to their needs.

I do not know who else is doing this work, but I do know there are hungry people, and the message we want to relay to this Commission is that there are hungry people in Newark; there are homeless people in Newark; and, they are dying.

Every now and then someone comes up to me and says, "Do you remember "so and so," and I say, "Yes, I remember him." He then says, "Well, his building burned down." In another instance someone will come to me and say, "Do you remember the guy who used to sit in the corner all the time? Well, he froze to death." I do not have any statistics on this, but I am sure we can go to hospitals and find out who died from exposure. When one dies from exposure, he must be homeless. One is not going to die from exposure if he is walking home from his job. Do you know what I am saying?

So, there are poor people in Newark; there are homeless people in Newark; and, there are hungry people in Newark. Out of the 500 people we serve daily, 25% are homeless. They can't even get water.

There is a Fire Department on Mulberry Street which allows them to go in the back of the building in order to wash and get water. In the cold, they are outside taking a shower. Sometimes they go to Penn Station early in the morning in order to wash up. They can't hang around in Penn Station anymore; they don't allow homeless people to hang around there anymore.

Some homeless people go as far as New York for the night because they are not as hard on homeless people in New York as they are in Newark. Let's say they are more compassionate in New York.

I would like to say to this Commission that we are trying. I am not trying to put the blame on anyone because we can always pass the buck; we can always attribute things to politics. However, I am a man of God, and Jesus said the poor will be with us always. So, I am not going to put the blame on anyone. I just want all of us to do our part in trying to help these people. They are people and they have souls. I believe we are going to have to answer for this one day.

MS. ROSS: Does anyone have any questions?

MR. AVIGLIANO: Reverend Allen, can you give us a breakdown of the 300 to 500 who come daily? Are they men or women? You also mentioned that the numbers increase towards the end of the month. Is there a difference in the makeup of the people who come in towards the end of the month?

REVEREND ALLEN: Yes, there is. The ones who come at the beginning of the month are the permanently homeless, or they have no income. They do not receive food stamps, so they come in for the whole month. The ones who receive food stamps come toward the end of the month because their food stamps run out about the 15th of the month. That is why we have a heavy intake at the end of the month — the lack of food stamps.

What was the other part of your question, sir?

MR. AVIGLIANO: I asked about a breakdown in the numbers of men and women. Is there a difference in those numbers as the month progresses?

REVEREND ALLEN: No, there is not. I would say 20% are women. Now, maybe 1% are women with children. But, 20% are single women.

MR. AVIGLIANO: One other question. What is the source of your food?

REVEREND ALLEN: We have donated food. We go to the food bank for some things, not everything. Those are our main sources of food.

MR. STUBBS: Reverend Allen, you may not be able to answer this question, and yet you may. I am just curious. Is there any reason why, since statistically there are more women than men, only 20% of your clients are women and 80% of them are men?

REVEREND ALLEN: Well, it is easier for a woman to get services in Newark. A woman can always go to live with a man who has an income. You know, we all know that women can go to welfare and get services quicker than men can. This is why we have a social worker. There are a lot of men who do not know how to get welfare or Social Security. We have a lot of disabled people, and they just do not know where to get help.

MR. STUBBS: One of the reasons why I am going into this a little deep is because I suspect -- I am obviously wrong -- that women are constitutionally stronger than men and they are more industrious, more aggressive, and more self-sufficient. Am I wrong?

REVEREND ALLEN: What I would say would only be an opinion. (laughter) Women can just get over better than men. You know, we have women down there who are homeless. They stand up, look around and find a man who has a home, and they go to live with him until they can do better.

MR. STUBBS: Thank you.

MS. BELLA: Reverend Allen, are many of your people senior citizens?

REVEREND ALLEN: Not many. I would say maybe 7% of the senior citizens are receiving benefits. We have senior citizens who are not receiving benefits, but maybe 5% or 7% of them are receiving benefits. This is just a supplement for them.

MS. BELLA: Thank you.

MS. DiCHIARA: Reverend Allen, I just want to say that I have had the opportunity to visit many soup kitchens throughout the State and, clearly, one of the finest of all is the soup kitchen you work in. Everyone who has ever been there has been impressed with the dignity with which you treat people, and the concern you have for their dignity. I just want to go on record and applaud all of you for what you are doing.

REVEREND ALLEN: Thank you very much. This is the reason why we do not have any trouble: They respect us. They know we are trying to help them.

I would like to invite all the members of the Commission to come down, anytime, and visit us to see who's who; to see who is homeless and who is not; to see how much they need; and, to enjoy a meal with us because we eat the same food they eat. You can eat it too. It is a good, nutritious meal.

MS. DiCHIARA: Reverend Allen, if the Commission members did go down to the soup kitchen, how would the people react, insofar as their being interviewed by us in order to get their stories is concerned?

REVEREND ALLEN: A lot of them are hungry to tell their stories, even if they are lies. They are hungry to tell a story to whomever will listen.

MS. ROSS: Thank you, Reverend.

The next speaker on our list is Caride DePole.

CARIDE DePOLE: My name is Caride DePole and I work at La Casa Don Pedro, which is right here in Newark. I am originally from Hudson County, so I can talk about hunger there too.

I do not have statistics, nor the very valuable information I should have with me, but I think it is important to ask the Commission if they could put in a word for a very special group of people. I am

representing this group of people today. They are Hispanic women, especially those who are entering the work force. Again, these are displaced homemakers who we are so eagerly trying to train in the new programs established in Essex County and Hudson County. We are trying to train these women in order to get them back into the work force. I am not too sure I want to encourage them to go back into the work force or not because of -- as we have discussed before -- the illogical and ridiculous guidelines that have been set in order for these women to get assistance. This creates a disincentive to go back to work.

Now, correct me if I am wrong, but I had a situation with a mother and child. She was working, and she made \$8,000 per year. I could not get her any aid because she did not qualify for aid within her guidelines. This was in Hudson County.

I called the Welfare Office. I called everybody and they all said, "Yes, I know what you are going to say; this doesn't make sense." The only salvation for these women are the food banks and food pantries because they can go to these places and supplement what they have.

Of course, this food is important because it helps them to exist.

Another thing is the guidelines. If they are not changed, why are we stimulating or even training these women to join the work force? The poverty levels they reach when they work are ridiculous, really. It is really sad.

This particular group of people, who are caught in the middle and who do not qualify for anything, should be looked at. I have been one of those people myself. This morning, I locked my keys inside the car. Today, to leave my house it cost me \$60. This is not refundable by Blue Cross or Blue Shield. It is not refundable in any way, shape, or form. My job is not going to give me back this money, so where am I going to feel the loss of that money? I am going to feel it when I feed my husband more sandwiches this week.

When we come down to it, what is a sandwich? It is bread. It is starch. That is why we are all overweight and not well fed. We are eating the wrong food. That is another problem with hunger, malnutrition.

So, these people are caught in the middle, especially the woman who is by herself. At least I have a husband to whom I am going to feed sandwiches for the rest of the week. But, what happens to the woman who has to cope on her own if she locks her keys in the car, or if she has an emergency — a medical emergency? Let's say she has a medical plan at work. It is going to take time for that woman to get reimbursed. She will have to lay out the \$50 or \$80 for the bill.

This group of people is really suffering right now. The displaced Hispanic homemaker is suffering more because she is not as qualified, and her job is not the best paying job one can get. These are clerical jobs. These people have a language problem, so they are not really being used to reach their full potential. Even if they are great executive secretaries from San Salvador they cannot use their abilities. They are working for very low salaries to supplement their needs and their rents.

That is what I am here for today. I am representing that missing link, this group of people who are really in need.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. Are there any questions? (no response) Thank you. This was a group of people we had not heard from.

MS. DePole: Thank you.

MS. ROSS: Is Pearl Webb present? (affirmative response)

PEARL WEBB: Good evening. My name is Pearl Webb. I represent a community of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service, Nutrition Education Program of Essex County.

I would like to cite two case studies:

Mrs. "R" has three children, ages seven, six, and two. She receives \$443.00 from welfare, and \$80 in food stamps. Her rent is \$300 a month. She has to supply heat and utilities, which average about \$90. Her son has sickle cell anemia, and he is bedridden. Because of this, she is required to have a phone.

To feed her family of four, Mrs. R averages about \$3 per day, for three meals. It sounds impossible; yet, she knows it has to be done. She doesn't eat breakfast while her youngest child drinks sugar and water with a slice of toast. Mrs. R's main concern is getting her

childrens' stomachs full. Their diet consists of rice, potatoes, and bread.

Case study number two: Mrs. "C" has five children and she receives \$557 a month. Her food stamp allotment is \$165. She is paying \$450 a month in rent. She also has to supply her utilities, which are now discontinued. It was a choice between eating and paying utilities. Two months ago she decided it would be more important to feed her family. They have to pay more for food now because they can only buy prepared items at the corner store. Mrs. C realizes that this cannot last. Her son suffers from allergies, especially during the summer months, and he needs air-conditioning and a humidifier.

Mrs. C's meals contain mostly carbohydrates and fats. Biscuits and syrup sound like a side order for breakfast; add salt pork and this is her dinner.

I have just cited a few case studies of families that my co-workers and I are confronted with every day. Some cases are better; others are worse.

The Nutrition Education Program helps people in 10 of New Jersey's inner cities, and in areas of rural poverty. In Essex County, our target is Newark. We are an educational program, developed to help families and youth to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and the changed behavior necessary for nutritionally sound diets. We also contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family's diet and nutritional welfare.

This is accomplished through home visits as well as group meetings in homes, health clinic waiting rooms, community rooms, schools, and rehabilitation centers -- wherever space and community cooperation is available. In addition, volunteers are recruited and trained to provide program support.

Our program participants learn nutrition basics and improved living skills through lessons tailored to their individual needs. Topics, such as How Food Affects You, Learning Key Nutrients, Planning Economical Meals, Food Shopping Techniques, and Food Safety and Storage are taught. The exchange of information on local resources and other nutrition programs is also given. In short, our program participants

learn how to achieve maximum nutrition for family members. This is what we are presently doing with Mrs. R, Mrs. C, and over 500 homemakers who have been enrolled in our program.

Although our main goal is education, hardly a day goes by when we do not find ourselves searching for a source of food for a family who has nothing to eat. The family, living on a fixed income and sometimes no income, confronted with trying to survive with just the bare necessities of life -- food, shelter, and clothing -- is threatened by hunger daily. These bare essentials must be taken care of before an individual can learn to become self-confident.

Many of us here today go to bed at night after a nice balanced meal, awake in the morning and say, "I'm hungry; let me hurry up and fix a good breakfast." That is not hunger. Hunger is waking up in the morning with a pang in your stomach because you haven't had anything to eat in the past couple of days and you wonder if today will bring something other than a glass of water; or, hunger is a family fighting over the last piece of cheese or can of beans in the house. Is there hunger in New Jersey? I say, yes. I see it every day.

Yes, there are food banks, food pantries, and other resources, but they have their limitations and guidelines. What happens to the family afterwards? Our aim is to improve the family's nutrition and food management skills. Our homemakers look to us for assistance referrals and a way out of the dilemma. This is not an easy task, and sometimes, without the use of these food resources, it cannot be done. This is why it is important to not only maintain, but to increase the support and funding for food banks and nutrition programs available to the needy.

I have worked with the Nutrition Education Program for 15 years, and I can truly say that with the increased cost of living the situation has not improved much, but we keep trying.

Over the past year, we taught 543 homemakers and 346 youths nutrition information by using our specialized lesson series. Dietary and food behavior changes of enrolled homemakers were measured by food recalls and food behavior check lists. Of the 543 homemakers enrolled, 111, or 20.4%, achieved the level of gained knowledge, improvement in

their diets, and changed food behavior, to qualify them to graduate from the program. Others are making progress toward this goal.

Youth gardens located at two sites in the City of Newark provided the youths involved in the Nutrition Education Program with an opportunity to learn nutrition basics. The youngsters were very enthusiastic about their knowledge of vegetables, and they have learned about gardening and growing the vegetables which are major parts of their diets. Youth garden participants were assisted by the Urban Gardening Program.

Seventeen youths from Ad House, a therapeutic center for troubled adolescents, participated in a specialized series of lessons tailored to meet the needs, interests, and educational levels of program participants. Upon completion of the nine-lesson series on basic nutrition, the youths received certificates at a special recognition program. These are but a few examples of what we are doing to help combat hunger.

I am sorry to say that our program has been targeted for elimination in the President's 1986 budget. The loss of Federal funds for our program will mean the loss of more than \$1 million for New Jersey, 40 to 50 jobs for Rutgers Community Assistants throughout the State, and a loss of access to these families and children who need help to make their food dollars stretch.

I am here today not only to request your support in helping to eliminate hunger in New Jersey, but also to ask for support for our program, the Nutrition Education Program, and our quest to help people to learn by doing. By changing their food shopping, food spending, and food eating habits, by planning nutritional meals and trying low-cost substitutes, by participating in Federal nutrition programs and making the most of family resources, by watching, listening, and doing, they can become self-confident.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on hunger in New Jersey, an issue that is important to me, the residents of our State, staff, and the volunteers I represent. If I can answer any questions, I would be happy to do so.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. Are there any questions?

BISHOP PARROT: You said "by participating in Federal nutritional programs," what kinds of nutritional programs does the Federal government have?

MS. WEBB: They have Food Bank Programs, they have the programs which feed children at school, and the WIC Programs.

BISHOP PARROT: Those are Federal programs?

MS. WEBB: Yes.

BISHOP PARROT: I see.

MS. ROSS: Ruth?

MS. MOSKOWITZ: Yes. I want to commend you, and I want to thank you for bringing that report to our Commission. I know you are providing good service. I also want to commend you for the work you are doing. We recognize the fact that you are making the food dollar stretch.

MS. ROSS: John?

MR. AVIGLIANO: I just have a few comments, and then I would like to ask you a question. In the case studies you mentioned earlier, if I remember correctly -- and you don't have to check this, this is just from recall -- in the first case, you mentioned there were seven children in the family, and I think one of the children was two years old. In that particular case, you didn't mention that the family was receiving WIC benefits; yet, they were receiving AFDC and food stamps.

MS. WEBB: Okay.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Let me just complete the thought, all right? In the other case, you mentioned that one of the children was ill and he needed air-conditioning during the summer months, but there was no mention made of the Home Energy Assistance Program that would provide air-conditioning if there was documentation to prove the child needed it.

You also mentioned that in both cases, both mothers were eligible for AFDC grants, and you gave the amounts; however, there was no mention made of child support incentive checks, which would be an addition to those two grants.

You deal with nutrition education. Do you recognize an overall breakdown in available services, or a lack of education for people who are in helping professions?

MS. WEBB: Yes, sometimes a lot of our clients are not aware---

MR. AVIGLIANO: (interrupting) I am not talking about the clients. I can readily understand clients not being aware of these services, but are the professionals who are in the helping field -- the people we have heard from all day today -- aware of these services? I am asking your opinion. Do you see a lack of education on the part of the various groups who are involved in their own organizations but not in others?

MS. WEBB: Perhaps networking together would be better. Knowing what resources each program has would be better. However, I know about most of the resources.

I said that one family had three children, aged seven, six, and two. I don't believe this family is on WIC because at the time they applied, the WIC Program did not have an open enrollment. These types of things jump up in situations of this sort. So, this mother did not have WIC.

If you have ever called Public Service Electric and Gas Company, trying to get on the Lifeline Program-- Perhaps they did not tell this woman that she qualified for this Program. I told her.

MR. AVIGLIANO: No. I am not referring to the Lifeline Program. I am referring to another program, run by the Board of Social Services.

I am asking if you have a feeling that we need more education for the people who are in helping professions.

MS. WEBB: Of course I do. It would always help.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Thank you.

MS. ROSS: Thank you very much, Ms. Webb.

Debra Jones?

DEBRA JONES: Good evening. My name is Debra Jones. I am the Acting Coordinator for the Newark WIC Supplemental Food Program, and I am also a nutritionist. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Commission for allowing me the opportunity to present our case in reference to hunger in the City of Newark.

I would like to give you some background information. I guess most of you are cognizant of the WIC Program's rules and regulations. As you are well aware, the WIC Program was initially created for women, infants, and children: pregnant women, lactating women, infants and children, up to the age of five years, who are nutritional or medical risks.

The reason why the program was established was because of numerous studies that had been conducted throughout the United States on maternal and infant care. As a result of the studies done, it was found that women suffered from malnutrition during pregnancy, and they and their unborn infants were likely to have health and nutrition problems.

The Newark WIC Program provides supplemental food to our participants. Currently, the Newark program has a participation of approximately 7,500 people who reside in the City and the surrounding communities.

Our program is a sister program of UMDNJ. We service the Newark residents and also residents who live outside the City limits of Newark. Those residents who live outside the City of Newark are referred to us by private physicians. We get about 60% of our population through referral. In addition, we subcontract with health agencies within the City of Newark -- hospitals and health care centers.

As you are aware, the WIC Program is adjunct, ongoing health care, meant to increase adequate nutrition for women, infants, and children.

I think our primary focus here is to address the un-met needs of women and infants in the City of Newark. Since the inception of the WIC Program, infant mortality has declined. The nutritional needs of the service population have been met to a certain extent, but there are nutritional needs which are not met, and they have to be addressed.

In reference to that, I am speaking of the un-met needs of our service population. We are not reaching all the eligible pregnant women and infants who are residing in the City of Newark.

There were approximately 4,025 pregnant women in the City of Newark in 1983. The Newark WIC Program only serviced 40% of those 4,025 women. The WIC Program only serviced about 80% of the infants who were born in 1983. Our goal is to reach 100% of the targeted population: The eligible people in the City of Newark and the surrounding communities.

As a nutritionist, I am talking about the fact that diet is a very important element in the prevention of certain diseases associated with the nutritional status of women, infants, and children. Approximately 60% of our participants are certified for the program because of an inadequate dietary intake. Most of our participants are low in iron, calcium, Vitamin A, and Vitamin C. Forty percent of our enrolled participants have hematological and other abnormalities, meaning anemia, low birth weight babies with malabsorption syndrome, and other things that are associated with inadequate nutrition.

In closing, I would like to say that of the 7,500 participants the Newark WIC Program services, at the present time, 64% are children, 16% are women, and 20% are infants. So, I appeal to the Commission to familiarize themselves with the funding situation in the WIC Program, and with the proposed cuts. As the last person who testified said, a child was eligible for WIC but he was placed on a waiting list because the funds were not available.

So, the target population is there, but the needs are not being met due to the lack of funding.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. I think we have some questions. Leslie?

MS. SMITH: I don't know whether or not you can answer this question, but we were talking about funding, and the fact that a child was not eligible because there was no funding. At one point, we also talked about reaching the entire target population.

I know, basically, what WIC is about, but I have also heard that in some areas in the State of New Jersey WIC funds have had to be returned because they were not being used. I would really like to find out how that happens.

MS. JONES: Well, that is not true in the City of Newark.

MS. SMITH: Can you tell me why? I didn't expect that it would be, but can you tell me what the scenario is that would cause funds to be returned?

MS. JONES: There has to be a concerted effort made on the part of all agencies, organizations, and health care providers in the State of New Jersey to come up with an intervention program, and interact cohesively so that funds cannot be returned, and the service can be provided. New Jersey has needy people, but they are not being reached.

In the rural areas of New Jersey transportation is a problem. There are certain factors involved which do not allow eligible people to come for help.

MS. SMITH: Certain funding is allocated to a particular district for WIC, and if the eligible people are not enrolled, then whatever is not used has to be returned, is that correct?

I am trying to get a sense of this because we are trying to fight for WIC, and we we get answers, such as, "Well, there are areas where people return money." I want to have an adequate answer that would help me to respond to that allegation.

MS. JONES: Okay. I cannot give you an adequate answer to your question, although I can attest to what Newark WIC does for its clients.

MS. SMITH: If you had more money, you could serve more people, right?

MS. JONES: Definitely.

MS. SMITH: All right.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Ms. Jones, do you have sufficient food dollars right now?

MS. JONES: Right now, we have sufficient food dollars. Presently, we receive additional food dollars; they have been earmarked for our infant population.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Do you have sufficient administrative dollars?

MS. JONES: Do I have sufficient administrative dollars?

MR. AVIGLIANO: There is a difference, and I want to make that distinction for the record.

MS. JONES: I know; there is definitely a difference. I have a staff of 29, including myself, and we service 7,500 participants on a monthly basis.

Yes, we do need additional administrative dollars; that holds true for basically every program in the State.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Does the City of Newark contribute in-kind or financially?

MS. JONES: The City of Newark contributes in-kind.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Anything financial?

MS. JONES: In reference to the building?

MR. AVIGLIANO: Do they provide a nurse? Do they provide a nutritionist?

MS. JONES: Through an in-kind contribution from the Newark WIC Program, yes, we do have child health conference nurses. We subcontract with hospitals and health centers which provide an in-kind contribution by way of nurses and nutritionists.

MR. AVIGLIANO: Does the City pick up any part of the tab, administratively?

MS. JONES: Do you mean insofar as a match to what the State has already appropriated is concerned?

MR. AVIGLIANO: Does the City put up any dollars at all?

MS. JONES: No, just the in-kind contribution: The building and the space.

MR. AVIGLIANO: An in-kind type of contribution rather than dollars?

MS. JONES: Yes, rather than actual moneys.

MR. AVIGLIANO: In the last fiscal year, 1984, did the Newark WIC Program also purchase computers? I know there was a directive from the State office for the WIC Program to purchase computers. I just wonder if the Newark Program purchased them?

MS. JONES: Yes.

MR. AVIGLIANO: They did?

MS. JONES: Yes.

MS. ABRAMS: Kathleen?

MS. DiCHIARA: In the breakdown of who you serve, it seems as though you are serving a smaller number of pregnant women than children, even though that is a vital time to reach women. To what do you attribute that disparity?

MS. JONES: When looked at from the total perspective of the program, this is attributed to information not being forwarded to eligible participants in the community. However, at the close of fiscal year, 1984, women's participation was approximately 14%. So, over the past four months we have been actively engaged in an outreach program to enroll women in our program.

MS. DiCHIARA: Would you say that many women become aware of the program after they have had their babies because their doctors refer them, or the Welfare Department refers them? They may not be on welfare until the child is born.

MS. JONES: There has been a lot of misinformation in the community concerning the eligibility criteria for participants. They think if they do not qualify for food stamps, they do not qualify for the WIC Program, and that is not always the case.

In addition to that, if a physician feel that a particular woman does not need the benefits or the services of the WIC Program, they are not referred. However, recently we contacted our physicians to make them aware of the fact that they should refer all pregnant women to the program, and then let the program make the decision as to whether or not they are eligible to receive benefits.

MS. DiCHIARA: Thank you very much.

MS. ROSS: Thank you for your testimony.

Father Nickas? Thank you for being so patient, Father.

REVEREND JOHN P. NICKAS: I am the Reverend John P. Nickas from St. Rocco's Church in Newark. St Rocco's sponsors a shelter for homeless people, a food pantry, and a soup kitchen.

I think I would like to start by mentioning the connection on every level between shelter and food -- between housing and food. Starting on the poorest level, we receive people at our shelter who have no food and no place to stay. Some might be on welfare. Many are not on welfare and they are not receiving any aid. A few might be disabled, and they might be receiving Social Security.

Basically, these are people who are disconnected from their families. They are disconnected for many different reasons: Social reasons. They are people who have just come out of jail. They are people who have alcohol or drug problems. They are young people who just basically have no families and have been brought up through the DYFS system; they are foster children who are about 18 and are on the streets. From the age of 18 to 25 they kind of bounce around trying to find themselves. So, we have that whole range of people.

In the month of February we had 95 people at our shelter. We had about 30 people from ages 18 through 30. From age 30 to 54, we had about 30. Then, from ages 54 through 65, we had very small numbers. Actually, I would say they were about 45 year old. Then maybe there were a few older people.

There was a question asked before regarding why more women were not at shelters. My answer is simply that most women are getting welfare or aid for children, so they have some kind of steady financial source. Most single men do not have a source of income if they are not working. That is why I think the numbers break down the way they do.

People who receive welfare receive \$127 per month, and they cannot find a room in Newark for less than \$40 per week. So, what they do is, they live in the street, with a friend, or someplace else for a week or two; they then end up back on the street. But, they have no stable place in which to stay. If they do have a stable place in which to live, they have to spend all of their \$127 towards the rent. In addition, if they are lucky enough to get food stamps, they will sell their food stamps and pay part of their rent with the money they receive from the food stamps. That is the situation at that level.

We had a program last year. Throughout the county, we were helping people who were on the verge of being evicted from their homes. We would hear stories about people whose money did not stretch far enough for them to pay for food, shelter, and utilities. What they ended up doing was, they ate and paid their utilities, but they ended up getting put out of their homes; or, they paid their rent and they did not eat.

So, the basic problem is, there is not enough money to go around. These are working people. I think a lady mentioned working people and the difficulties they are having. I think when we think of hunger, we think of people on the street. We think of people on a food line. But, there are many people, even homeowners, who do not have food for their children. I think that is an issue which no one thinks about.

So, when we talk about homeless numbers in Newark, they are made up of all kinds of numbers, according to how you are counting. If you are counting the numbers of people who are going to the shelters, or the desperate ones -- the people who have nothing at all -- that is one number. Then you have hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people where there are two and three families living together. They pay the rent by living with a sister, an uncle, or a bother on a temporary basis. They will tell you, "I live there, but I can't eat there. I am taking enough from these people by living there; I can't eat there also." So, these are people who do live someplace but they cannot eat there. That is a real problem.

The problem of nutrition, of people not eating proper food, is taken for granted. They will eat anything they can get. So, the question of hunger runs much deeper than is seen, although it is visible. In answer to this problem, we see a program started, such as the Housing Assistance Program. That is a State of New Jersey program for \$1 million. All that money is already gone. They have already stopped the program, and one wonders how people have survived as long as they have survived due to this situation.

People are living on a survival level. I guess I have to say there is a connection, because rents are so high in this area, especially in Essex County, that people can't afford to live. People pay \$300, \$400, and \$500 in rent, and this is for places we really wouldn't want to live in. What happens is, we help people with rental assistance. We know that where they are going to live is worse than their previous residence. They might have been burned out and they had to move. The place they are going to is just as bad, and they have to pay a high rent for a place that is not going to be helpful to them for very long.

I think that is all I want to say.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. Are there any questions?

MR. AVIGLIANO: Father, are you supported by the Diocese?

REVEREND NICKAS: No. We get some money through Catholic Community Services, which comes through the State and Federal money -- the FEMA money. We are supported mainly through private contributions. We get food from the food bank and places such as that. We have been getting county and State money for the homeless, which has been very helpful. The problem is it is too sporadic at this point; it is not done on a long-term basis. So, we may get money for six or nine months, or we get so little money that it is all gone in three months, even though it is designated for a whole year. It is not really enough, but it has certainly been helpful.

Our shelter is run by the homeless people, so our costs are very low. People who have been homeless run the program themselves and they receive a small stipend, so we don't really have a large administrative budget.

MS. DiCHIARA: Father, we see so much abandoned housing in Newark -- entire sections of projects, or whatever. Do you see any way of recapturing the housing that is presently here? I also see housing and hunger as being tied together. Is there a community effort, a State effort, or some way that we can recapture the livable space that is here?

REVEREND NICKAS: There are a few things that can be done. We have received money from the Department of Community Affairs to renovate our shelter, and we are working with them to salvage a home -- a permanent kind of place -- for people who might be on social security and who are long-term residents.

One of the problems with the shelter is that it is supposed to be short-term; however, it is really long-term because there is no place for people to go, especially the disabled. So, they end up staying with us for a long time because there is no place else for them to live.

Just to answer your question, these are very small kinds of things, and what is happening is that housing in Newark is going faster

and faster since Reagan has been in office. There has been a cutback on socialized housing, and there has been very little housing going up. Those that are going up were planned maybe five years ago and they are just now coming to fruition.

I basically have a feeling that people really don't want to get involved. They don't get involved because it such a needy population that people kind of make believe it is all going to go away.

I agree about the abandoned housing projects in the City. This is probably good in one sense, but, again, it is contributing to the lack of housing and more hunger. This abandoning process goes on and while, supposedly, there are plans for new housing. One can feel a gradual abandoning going on, and, at the same time, hear about high technology and the big salaries people are getting. People are growing further and further apart. The wealth is concentrated more and more in area, and the poor are getting further and further away. I feel there is a great breakdown.

Another area I didn't mention is the whole area of mental health. People are hungry because of mental health problems. They do not have a steady income and even if they do have an income, they don't know how to use it. The money is either lost or it is not spent well. So, a number of people who have fallen under some type of emotional sickness do not have permanent housing and they do not know how to get it. They do not know how to get on welfare. They do not know how to get food stamps. They do not know how to get on Social Security, or SSI. So, these people not only need added food services, they also need social services in order to get some kind of referral system assistance.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. Are there any further questions?

BISHOP PARROT: Do you offer any type of social service, Father, other than yourself?

REVEREND NICKAS: We do referral for welfare and we do food stamp referral. We are doing job referral. But, we really do not do as much as is needed. It is far from what is needed. We are trying to develop some of those resources, but it is very difficult. Many of the people who come in do not have the necessary skills.

We have had people with master's degrees living at our shelter. One had a degree in Business Administration from Rutgers. He was a fine student who lost his income; he had no income at all.

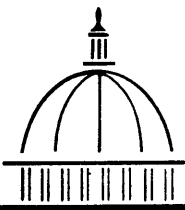
One funny thing: I visit many places and I find people in these places to whom I have given help. These people are in pretty good positions in the work field right now, and it is interesting to see how far up the need goes. You know, we insulate ourselves and say, "that kind of person," but many, many people get into problems and there is no place for them to turn. They need help.

MS. ROSS: Thank you very much for your testimony and for being so patient.

The hearing is now officially concluded.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)

APPENDIX



Interfaith Action for Economic Justice

110 Maryland Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002-5694

Phone: 202/543-2800 800/424-7292

A CALL TO END POVERTY IN THE UNITED STATES

"Let justice flow like a stream
and righteousness like a river that never goes dry."
Amos 5:24

More than thirty-five million people in this country live in poverty. They include single mothers and their children, people who lost their jobs during the recession, wage-earners on low-wage jobs, youth who have been unable to enter the job market, the disabled, the elderly and others unable to participate in the economy. They lack sufficient income and resources to provide adequate food, shelter and health care for themselves and their families.

Without a concerted national effort, the next generation will be caught in the same trap. Already, one in four children under age six lives in a poor household; one half of all black children live in poverty. Their future begins now.

Out of our faith grows the conviction that no one - child or adult - should suffer the debilitation of poverty. We must seek justice; we must protect the vulnerable. Poverty in this country can and must end. We call on members of Congress to commit themselves to this challenge.

We suggest that there are at least five ways to begin reducing poverty. In each of these five areas, specific solutions can be fashioned to respond to the needs of the poor in the 1980s while taking into account the huge federal deficit and changing industrial and family patterns.

Create Jobs in the Public Sector Create jobs for teenage and re-entry job seekers and for the long-term unemployed in carefully designed programs linked to economic growth efforts. Since each percentage point of unemployment costs the federal government \$25 to \$30 billion dollars, this would be an excellent investment in deficit reduction.

Develop Jobs in the Private Sector Develop economic growth strategies that reach communities not affected by the recent economic recovery. These strategies could include technical and financial assistance to small minority-owned businesses (especially to new businesses), and development assistance to depressed urban and rural communities.

Remove Barriers to Employment Create and enhance support programs which enable employable people to join or return to the labor market. These include job training programs linked closely to growth industries, child care development and subsidies, and job placement services. Support and enforce civil rights laws to assure fair access to available jobs.

Strengthen Income Assistance Preserve and strengthen income transfer and in-kind assistance programs (such as food, housing, energy and health care assistance) to meet the needs of those unable to earn an income, and to supplement the earnings of those whose wages are inadequate to care for their families. Support cooperative community-based self-help efforts to meet basic human needs.

Anna K. Juhnke
Chair
Mennonite Central Committee, U.S.

Marjorie Tuite, O.P.
Chair
National Association of Religious
Women

Arie Brouwer
General Secretary
National Council of Churches

James Hamilton
Associate General Secretary
Washington Office Director
National Council of Churches of
Christ in the U.S.A.

Joseph R. Hacals, S.J.
Director
National Office of Jesuit
Social Ministries

Nancy Sylvester, IHM
National Coordinator
NETWORK,
A Catholic Social Justice Lobby

James Andrews
Stated Clerk
Presbyterian Church, USA

Marshall Lorenzo Shepard, Jr.
President
Progressive National Baptist
Convention, Inc. and
President
Partners in Ecumenism

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman
President
Synagogue Council of America

Rabbi David Saperstein
Union of American Hebrew
Congregations

O. Eugene Pickett
President
Unitarian Universalist Association
of Churches in North America

William F. Schulz
Executive Vice President
Unitarian Universalist Association
of Churches in America

Sandra Mary Caron
Moderator
Unitarian Universalist Association
of Churches in North America

Loretta Williams
Director, Section on Social
Responsibility
Unitarian Universalist Association
of Churches in North America

Robert Z. Alpern
Director, Washington Office
Unitarian Universalist Association
of Churches in North America

Reverend Avery D. Post
President
United Church of Christ

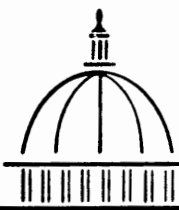
Rev. Yvonne V. Delk
Executive Director, Office for
Church in Society
United Church of Christ

Rev. C. Shelby Rooks
Executive Vice President
Board for Homeland Ministries
United Church of Christ

Rev. D. Curtis Minter
Chair, World Hunger Working Group
United Church of Christ

George E. Ogle
Director, Department of
Social and Economic Justice
General Board of Church and Society
The United Methodist Church

Dr. Patricia Kutzner
Executive Director
World Hunger Education Service



Interfaith Action for Economic Justice

Members of **Interfaith Action for Economic Justice** are the mission boards or program units of national religious agencies working together for just and effective US food and agriculture, health and human services, and development and economic policies.

- American Baptist Churches, USA
- American Lutheran Church
- Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs
- Bread for the World
- Center of Concern
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
- Church of the Brethren
- Episcopal Church
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Jesuit Social Ministries
- Lutheran Church in America
- Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
- Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
- Orthodox Church in America
- National Council of Churches of Christ: Church World Service network
- Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Reformed Church in America
- Union of American Hebrew Congregations
- Unitarian Universalist Association
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- United Church of Christ
- United Methodist Church
- World Hunger Education Service

Interfaith Action for Economic Justice, continuing the work of the Interreligious Taskforce on US Food Policy, speaks for itself and not its member agencies.

Paul Kittlaus
United Church of Christ,
Chair

110 Maryland Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002-5694
202/543-2800

800/424-7292 (legislative updates)

September 1984

Dear Colleague:

In our view, one critical measure of any society is how it treats its most disadvantaged members. Each local congregation of those religious bodies that participate in Interfaith Action has to make moral judgments about the condition of the disadvantaged in its own parish. And they must decide what their responsibility is in light of those judgments.

Interfaith Action, operating in the public policy arena in Washington on behalf of the social policy of its sponsoring bodies, must make moral judgments about the current and proposed decisions and programs of the federal government as they affect low income people both in the US and elsewhere. And Interfaith Action must and does participate in a program of action to influence US policy. It puts advocates in the middle of policy debates and it informs local members of congregations who want to participate in the debate themselves with their elected officials. We seek to be an instrument of the religious community known for its effective advocacy on behalf of the poor.

We are pleased to publish this study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in our continuing effort to make available usable data on the affects of government policy on low income Americans. We asked the Center to do this study to help us understand the real effects and the real policy choices that lie ahead. The Center, now in its third year, has sustained a reputation for providing concise, non-technical analysis of complex issues. About it columnist Carl Rowan has said, "...the nation must be thankful for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and a few other groups who care enough to dredge the truth out of the mountain of budget documents, charts and graphs that are supposed to confuse the public and Congress to the point they can't figure out who is getting shafted."

Interfaith Action will be happy to respond to inquiries regarding its program or additional data on federal programs affecting the poor.

Cordially,

Paul Kittlaus

Paul Kittlaus

New Jersey State Library

STATEMENT OF THE COALITION FOR HUMAN PRIORITIES

We believe that the 1986 budget proposals of the Reagan Administration, by requiring elimination or reduction in essential human needs programs while continuing a massive shift of public resources into a dangerous and wasteful military build-up, threatens to lead our nation to disaster and economic hardship.

These dangerous proposals can only serve to undermine the ability of the government of the United States to carry out the essential purposes for which it was created under the Constitution--to establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty.

Among those specific rights essential to the general welfare which will be seriously jeopardized by the Reagan budget are the following:

- **the right to meaningful, socially useful work under safe and healthful working conditions -- jeopardized by proposals to end the Job Corps and the Work Incentive Program for welfare mothers as well as the program of Urban Development Action Grants for community development.
- **the right to a nutritionally adequate diet -- jeopardized by proposals to reduce funding levels for the supplemental food program for infants, women and children, which would result in the termination of this essential program for 100,000 low-income pregnant women, and the proposed freeze on school breakfast and lunch programs.
- **the right to decent housing -- threatened by proposals to bar construction of low-income housing units for the next 2 years, despite long waiting lists for such housing in cities all across the country.
- **the right to accessible, comprehensive, and quality health care for the elderly -- which would be curtailed by proposals to double the cost of Medicare premiums to be paid by the participants in the program over the next 5 years, from \$186 to \$380.
- **the right to a quality education -- which would be seriously curtailed by proposals to substantially reduce eligibility for college student loans as well as a general retraction of the federal commitment to public school subsidies.
- **the right to a safe and healthy environment for this and future generations -- critically threatened by curtailment of the Superfund, which requires funding at a substantially higher level than proposed merely to clean up toxic dumps already identified as health hazards to surrounding communities, including many in New Jersey.
- **the right to equal access to justice -- a right which would be little more than a mockery if the administration finally succeeds in its four year old proposal to eliminate the National Legal Services for the Poor program.

In contrast to the administration's apparent objective of abdicating federal responsibility for protecting the quality of life for all our citizens , it is our shared belief that the federal government must protect and preserve these "inalienable rights" by:

- **implementing investment, economic and employment policies which directly and democratically address the long range needs of our economy and society and which benefit all people, not primarily corporations and wealthy individuals. (Particular attention must be given to more vulnerable populations such as low income persons, youth, older people, racial minorities, women, disabled persons, and others.)
- **adopting budget and spending policies which ensure the provision of necessary social supports and services (to all members of our society).
- **adopting equitable tax policies that are based on a taxpayer's ability to pay without favoring and subsidizing corporations and wealthy individuals and without burdening future generations.
- **adopting military policies that ensure the defense and security of the country by means that promote peace not war, that do not undermine the strength of our domestic economy and society, that halt military budget increases and that freeze and reduce nuclear weapons and end the arms race.
- **strengthening and enforcing civil rights and affirmative action policies -- to eliminate all distinctions of income, race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, political views and physical or mental condition.
- **adopting agricultural policies that preserve the family farm, conserve resources, and help provide world food security.
- **strengthening and enforcing environmental policies that clean up our environment and protect present and future life.



Newark Pre-School Council, Inc

FULL YEAR HEAD START • GRANTEE AGENCY
155 WASHINGTON STREET • NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102
621-5760

JACQUELINE ROCKER-BROWN
Executive Director

ESTELLA JOHNSON
President

PUBLIC HEARING
HUNGER IN NEW JERSEY

TESTIMONY

MAY 8, 1985

SUBMITTED BY:
P. JEAN JENKINS,
COORDINATOR OF PARENT
INVOLVEMENT
NEWARK PRE-SCHOOL COUNCIL, INC.

Ladies and Gentlemen I am here today to speak on behalf of the families that I have worked with in the Head Start Program. We are charged with the responsibility of proving a pre-school educational program for three and four year olds. Within Head Start is a comprehensive Parent Involvement Program that addresses social service needs parenting skills and community awareness.

Head Start is committed to giving the more than twenty -two hundred (2200) children we serve an educational "edge" that they might not otherwise get. We are further committed to helping families improve the quality of their lives. As we honor our commitment to the "total family" we have the potential of touching all age groups with an array of human needs and conditions.

Each child and family that enters the Head Start Program must go through the family assessment process. The information gathered during the family assessment identifies family needs such as:

- adequate, affordable, haitable housing needs
- nutritional needs
- employment needs
- educational needs

In 1983 Newark was number one on the Census Bureau list of poor cities in the nation. Some of the problems facing Newark families were and still are poor housing, insufficient food, inadequate income, unemployment. Most family dollars are spent on survival needs. Our family needs assessments reflects the problems identified in the report.

Nutritional needs permeate our program on a number of levels. Educators have for some time recognized the link between feeding children in order to foster education. Based upon the idea that children will learn better if they are not hungry the Nutrition Component of Head Start was put in place. The Nutrition Component provides out children with one third (1/3) of their daily nutritional requirement. We feel that our program supplements families ability to stretch their food dollar or food stamps. New local and federal priorities are threatening our capability of adequately feeding children. We are concerned that Head Start children will join the ranks of children not served by Head Start in going hungry especially around the latter part of the month when food stamps have run out. Staff has observed that Mondays and Fridays late in the month, parents instruct their children to eat all of their food. It is strongly felt that the extra encouragement given by parents to the children at this time indicates that there may not have been enough food in the house over the weekend. We believe it is time for local and federal officials to make a commitment to adequately feed the children, because they are our future.

Who are the hungry in Newark? They are those single adults who receive \$109.00 plus food stamps monthly. They are those single parents who spend most of their AFDC on rent and their food stamps run out between the second and third week of the month. Seventy seven per cent (77%) of our families are headed by single parents and utilize food stamps. They are those wage earners whose income is insufficient to feed their families. They are the "street" people and "bag" ladies who find their way into soup kitchens and homeless shelters. They are the chronically unemployed. They are the unsupervised retarded and mentally ill.

Date collected by Head Start indicates that many of our families shop in neighborhood stores because of the unavailability of supermarkets. One problem associated with shopping in small grocery stores is the high cost of food. The unavailability of neighborhood supermarkets force families to use some of their already limited cash to pay transportation cost to and from supermarkets. Forty five per cent (45%) of our families pay supermarket transportation costs each month. A ride home from the supermarket with groceries may cost between \$5.00 and \$10.00 a trip depending upon the distance and number of packages.

Forty-seven per cent (47%) of our families report that food stamps last three weeks. When families run out of food stamps they feed their families by:

1. Borrowing money to buy food
2. Ask family/friends for food
3. Buy on credit
4. Go to the Emergency Food Pantry

Sixty-four per cent (64%) of our families borrow money to buy food. Nineteen per cent (19%) of our families ask family/friends for food. Twelve per cent (12%) buy food on credit, while **only** five per cent (5%) go to the Emergency Food Pantry. It should be noted that going to a food pantry appears to be the families last resort.

All people regardless of income have basic needs which are necessary for survival. Maslow a psychologist devised a system or hierarchy of human needs to help people understand which needs must be met first. According to Maslow, peoples' most basic needs are:

- physiological: food, clothing, shelters and health
- safety needs: job security, environemntal safety and civil rights

He goes on to discuss three other levels. However, basically his message to us is that survival needs must be satisfied before people can move to other levels of achievements.

Alarming statics regarding teenage pregⁿancy are appearing in the media more and more. We see some of those teenage mothers in our program. Pregⁿant teenagers and teenage mothers bring with them special problems. We have more than 5,000 mothers between the ages of 13 and 21 receiving AFDC. An important component of prenatal care is good nutrition. Very often, because of lack of know how and financial resources these young women do not eat properly. Poor nutrition can be attributed to these young women running the risk of having a low birth weight baby, congential malformations, mental retardation and other developmental problems.

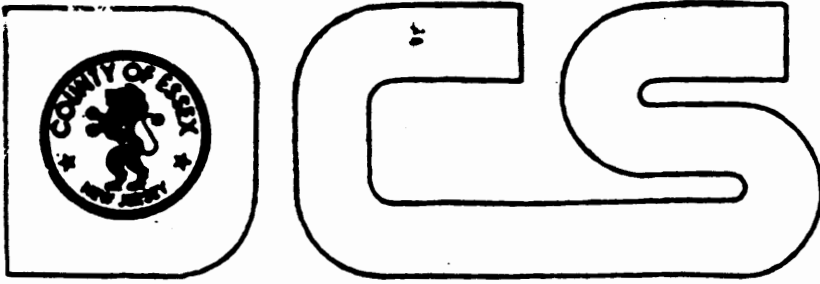
Low income families at one point were encouraged to budget 30% of their income towards housing. That percentage is no longer realistic. Families in Newark who do not live in subsidized housing may be spending as much as 50%-80% of their AFDC grant earned income on housing. Rent on a three room apartment in Newark may range between \$225.00 - \$325.00. The possibility that the housing will be substandard is great. The City Council in Newark voted to allow landlords to increase rent in vacant apartments by 25%. The proposal was vetoed by the Mayor this time. Heads of households are often put in the position of choosing between paying rent, paying public service, buying clothing or buying food.

Some of the ways in which families are attempting to cope with the problem of inadequate income is by sharing apartments and splitting the rent. It was also noted in some articles in the Star Ledger that some families who could not afford to pay rent are sleeping in homeless shelters. More and more single adults who do not earn enough to live on alone are moving back home with parents or extended family members. These adults return to apartments that are already too small to accommodate present family members.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with a quote by an unknown author;

"Life is an adventure to be lived - not a problem to be solved.

PJJ/oh



DEPARTMENT OF
CITIZEN SERVICES.

PETER SHAPIRO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

REBECCA DOGGETT ANDRADE
DIRECTOR

Essex County Advisory Board on the Status of Women

Bernice Mayes, Chair

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN IN ESSEX COUNTY
A STUDY

Prepared by:

Suzanne McElroy
Michelle Cahill
Women's Education Institute
853 Broadway
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For Information Call:

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(201) 678-4501

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN IN ESSEX COUNTY

The purpose of this study is to determine the economic conditions of women in Essex County, New Jersey. It is hoped that an empirical picture of such elements as women's incomes, labor force participation, employment patterns, educational levels, and housing conditions will serve as a base for both organizing efforts and public policy formation.

While the national public focus on women and poverty influenced the initiation of this study, the purpose of the study is not to set up a competition of poor women and poor men to determine whose situation is worse. Rather it is to look at the changing economic status of women and their children to determine the factors which may be contributing to deterioration. For example, a very important and specific consideration is that an analysis of the impact of sexism does not and should not ignore the impact of racism. Poverty in America has historically disproportionately affected Blacks and is currently impacting deeply in the Black communities of American cities. Nationally the largest percentage of Black men are unemployed in twenty-five years. Yet for the 41% of Black families headed by women it is not only the absence of men that is making them poor but also the fact that the average wage of Black single mothers is \$6907 per year. As Robert Hill, author of the National Urban League study "Economic Policies and Black Progress" states: ... Black families headed by women are poor "not because they do not have husbands, but because they do not have jobs."

Several questions structure this study:

1. What do we know about women and poverty on a national level?
2. Where do women and female-headed families in Essex County fit in relation to national norms?
3. What are the levels and sources of income for women in Essex County? What is their relationship to the labor market?
4. Are women in Essex County facing economic distress that is specific to their gender? If so, what are the contributing factors?
5. Finally, does the economic status of women in Essex County point to the need for policy changes and organizing efforts?

WOMEN AND POVERTY

This investigation produced a picture of women in Essex County that demonstrates significant economic distress. However, prior to presenting the data it is important to situate it in the context of national norms of women's economic status. In 1970 the adult population in poverty in the U.S. was approximately equally divided between men and women. By 1980 2 out of 3 poor adults were women and 75% of the country's 34.4 million poor were women and children. In 1981 households with women heads had poverty rates of 68% for Blacks, 67% for Hispanics and 43% for whites. Minority women's incomes are so low that a family with a Black woman as a sole supporter is 10.5 times more likely to be poor than the family of a white man. Why has this occurred in our society and what are its implications? There are at least three explanations for the growth of poverty among women and their children in the 1970's and 1980's:

The Changing American Family - The American family has experienced rapid changes over the past fifteen years. Households headed by women are now the fastest growing type of family and make-up 15% of all households. Separation and divorce often mean severe economic distress for women and their children. Chances of getting alimony and/or child support are small. Only 59% of the 8.4 million divorced, never married and separated with minor children were awarded any child support according to the Census Bureau's Spring, 1982 data. The Urban Institute calculated in 1976 that 40% of ex-husbands contributed nothing towards their children's support. Of the remaining 60% nearly all paid less than \$2000 per year. The NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund reports that "only 14% of the 14.3 million ever divorced or separated women were awarded alimony; for those who received payments in 1978 the average was only \$2850 for the year. In 1981 the Census cites the mean alimony award as \$3000.

Women's Employment and Wages During the past two decades women's wages as a group have actually dropped in relation to men's. In 1980 women who worked full time earned on the average only 59¢ for every dollar earned by men. Median income figures clearly demonstrate the dual impact of gender and race on poverty. Median income in 1980 for all families was \$21,023 while for female headed families it was \$10,408. White families had a median of \$11,908. The median income for all Black families was \$12,674 and for Black female headed families it was \$7,425. For Hispanic families the median was \$14,717 and for Hispanic female headed families it was \$7,031.

Women's Occupational Segregation Most women workers are employed in 20 out of 420 occupational categories listed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. These "women's work" areas on the whole have lower salaries and include such jobs as secretaries, typists, cashiers, food service workers and health service workers.

Is this picture true for Essex County? This report examines demographic data, income, educational, employment, labor force participation statistics, and housing conditions to answer this question.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Many Women Are Single In 1980 of the 659,355 persons over 15 years of age in Essex County 360,465 were female. 30% of these women were single and never married; 6.1% were separated, 5.1% divorced, 13.8% were widowed, and

and 43.9% were married and not separated. In Newark 34.3% of women were single; 11.7% were separated, 5.7% divorced and 13.3% widowed. 35% were married and not separated.

Women Outnumber Men in Essex County Below age twenty females and males are equally present in the Essex County and Newark populations. Yet at ages 20-29 females become 53.6% of the County population and 54.8% of Newark. This picture continues throughout childbearing years. For example, for ages 30-39 women are 54.6% of the Essex County population and 56.5% of Newark's population. By 1985 New Jersey state demographers expect the 25-29 age group to be 54.7% female and the pattern to continue. Where are the men? Some proposed answers put forth by policy analysts suggest:

1. Men are harder to count because of their looser relationship to children and household.
2. Men who are without employment are difficult to count. The census error for working-age Black men is estimated to be 10% compared to 1% for white men. (This does not amount to the entire percentage difference however.)
3. Men are away in the Armed Forces, transient work and imprisonment in larger proportions than women.

With the exception of the military all of these explanations suggest a marginal relationship with the economy. The implications include a gap in terms of men available as potential economic partners to women of childbearing age in Essex County.

Many Women in Essex County are Heads of Households In 1980 there were 56,038 families with female householders in Essex County including 31,685 female householders in Newark. (Essex County had 150,632 married couple families and Newark counted 42,922.) These single female householders are overwhelmingly

mothers. 34.2% of the 219,671 children in Essex County (75,282) live in families with mothers as sole householders. In Newark more than half of all children (51%) live in families with mothers as sole householders. In the balance of the county 26% of children live in this type of family. All of these statistics are significantly higher than national rates for both all families (15%) and for Black families (41%). Many of these women are single due to divorce. The Organization of Women for Legal Awareness reports that there were six times as many divorces in Essex County in 1980 than in 1970. Unmarried motherhood also accounts for a significant number of female householder families especially among younger women. The 1980 Census reported that 57% of the children of mothers aged 15-24 were born to never married women in Essex County.

INCOME DATA

As women are now increasingly responsible economically for both themselves and their children, it is important to examine the kinds of incomes they have. What are women's incomes in Essex County? What are the incomes of single mother families? Are they disproportionately poor?

Income statistics often come in two forms. Median income means that half of all persons being counted are above a particular number and half are below. It tells us a mid-point. Mean income refers to an average. It is found by dividing all the incomes for a certain group by the number of persons.

In the 1980 Census women in Essex County were seen to have very low incomes: The median income for women who had incomes was a very low \$4,813. For those women who were employed full-time the median income was \$11,175 in Essex County and \$9,592 in Newark. This latter figure is below the poverty line for a family of four. In contrast the median income for men in Essex County was \$18,054,

and in Newark it was \$13,370. The median income for all families in Essex was \$12,452. For married couple families the medians were \$26,659 for whites and \$19,850 for Black families. Single family householders had median incomes of \$14,133 for whites and \$7,412 for Black women. The mean income for female householders in Essex County was \$9,639 while for married couple families it was \$21,439.

In 1980 89,802 women in Essex County had incomes below the poverty line representing 60% of the poverty population. With the statistics indicated above it is not surprising that 70% of all Essex County families with incomes below poverty are female-headed --- half of even full-time working women had incomes below poverty for a family of four. Correspondingly when we look at Essex County families with incomes 125% of poverty and above we find only 16.9% are female-headed. For female-headed families without wage income and dependent on public assistance we find the mean public assistance incomes in 1980 to be \$2993 for whites and \$3118 for Black households. Many of these families make up the 24% of Newark's and 11.7% of Essex County's population of families with incomes below 75% of the poverty line. The conclusion is inescapable that women in Essex County are disproportionately poor.

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

Women's incomes cannot be explained by educational levels since male/female educational levels are very similar in Essex and Newark. For those persons 18-24 years of age in 1980 the median years of school completed was 12.5 for Essex County males and 12.2 for Newark males. It was 12.6 for Essex County women and 12.3 for women in Newark. For adults over 25 educational levels

for men were 12.5 Essex County, 11.2 Newark. For women they were 12.3 Essex County and 11.3 Newark. These represent, especially in the over 25 category, a relatively high educational level for an urban county in New Jersey. They do not explain the low incomes, and since they are not disproportional they do not explain the lower economic status of women in Essex County except as they reflect national statistics the women college graduates earn about as much as a man with an eighth grade education. To understand this and relate it specifically to Essex County it is necessary to examine the relationship of women in Essex County to the labor market.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Key determinants of economic well-being for adult women and their children are (1) relationship to the labor force (labor force participation rate); (2) unemployment rate for those who are actually in the labor force, and the concomitant measures of frequency and duration of unemployment; (3) type of employment, for those who are employed -- are they year-round full-time workers, or do they work irregularly or for less than 35 hours a week; and (4) wages of those who actually have jobs. On all these counts women in Essex County and Newark and their children are at extremely high risk of poverty or economic distress when compared to other groups.

Labor Force Status Women have a tenuous relationship to the labor force in Essex County. 45% of women in Essex County (50% in Newark) were not in the labor force in 1979, compared to 24% of men in Essex County (31% in Newark). When women do seek and find jobs these tend to be unstable. Women in the labor force have a high incidence of unemployment. 22% of Essex County women in the labor force in 1979 had some unemployment in that year, as compared to 19% of Essex County men (28% in Newark). When the figures are taken together, only

43% of women in Essex County were employed with no unemployment during that year (36% of Newark women), compared to 62% of Essex County men (50% in Newark).

Usual Hours Worked Per Week and Weeks Worked Women in Essex County who worked were much less likely than men to hold jobs where they worked 35 or more hours per week for 50 or more weeks per year. The figure for Essex County women is 46%. 56% of Newark men who worked, 64% for Essex County, worked this much.

Labor Force Participation, Marital Status, and Presence of Children
The economic plight of women and children in Essex County comes in part from the intersection of the marital status and labor force categories. Women with sole responsibility for children are also those who are likely to be out of the labor force. 51% of the single, married with husband not present, or separated, widowed or divorced women in Essex County are not in the labor force. In Newark, 54% of women in these marital status groups are not in the labor force. When this group is analyzed by presence and age of own children, some important figures emerge. 73% of Newark women in these marital status categories with children under 3 are not in the labor force (69% for Essex County).

OCCUPATIONS

Women in Essex County predominate in Managerial/Professional; Technicians, Administrative Support, Sales; and the Service categories. What does this mean?

22% of employed women in Essex County work in Managerial/Professional occupations as compared to 27% of men. On the other hand 13.5% of women in Newark are in these occupations compared to 11% of men. The women working in these jobs appear to be concentrated in health occupations and school teaching. 12,108 women are teachers, librarians or counselors and 6,652 women are health care workers out of 36,488 in the Management/Professional category. Another 5,000

women are office managers, whereas there are only 20 women who are architects, 321 lawyers and judges and 141 self-employed managers.

Women outnumber men nearly 2 to 1 in the Technician/Sales/Administrative Support category. In Essex County 47% of women workers are in these occupations, (40% in Newark); whereas men hold 21% of these occupations in Essex and 16% in Newark. Women's predominance in this category appears to result from a heavy over-representation in Administrative Support (36% Essex County, 32% Newark) as compared to men's representation (9% Essex, 10% Newark). Administrative Support is a predominantly clerical category which includes secretaries, stenographers, typists, bookkeepers and other traditionally female occupations. In the sales category women in Essex County tend to be clustered in such job categories as commercial and retail sales persons and cashiers.

Service jobs, the fastest growing job category in America, are jobs held by many women in Essex County. 15% of women in Essex are classified here (19% in Newark) as compared to 12% of men (Essex County) and 15% of Newark employed men. This appears to result from a heavy over-representation of women in Food Service Occupations, Health Service Occupations, Cleaning/Building Services and Personal Service Occupations. Men are much more heavily represented in the subcategories of Police and Firefighters, Guards and other Protective Service Workers.

Finally, men are more heavily represented by a factor of from 1.6 to 2 to 1 in the Operator/Fabricator/Laborer category. The men vastly outnumber the women workers in the subcategory of Motor Vehicle Operator, Transportation occupations, Construction Laborers, and Freight/Stock/Material Handlers.

HOUSING ISSUES

While housing is not strictly an economic issue it is a necessity which has been increasingly consuming a large percentage of income for American families. Housing costs have increased dramatically since 1970 nationally and the construction of housing for low and moderate income families has been declining especially since 1980. This has created for many families and especially low income families a housing crisis of both affordability and availability. Is this true for Essex County and especially for women and their children? While it is difficult to determine the housing status of women separately from men there are several factors which are important:

1. 70% of the 40,000 Essex County households with incomes under \$5000 (28,390) paid 50% or more of their incomes for rent. Approximately 70% of these households are female-headed.
2. The median gross rent in 1980 in Essex County was \$247 and \$215 in Newark.
3. Female householders are overwhelmingly renters-- 45,074 out of 56,038 householders.
4. Median household income in Essex County in owner occupied housing was \$26,248 and \$18,408 in Newark. For renter households it was \$10,873 in Essex County and \$8,359 in Newark.

The implications of this data are that women and their children are often occupying or seeking housing which is costly in relation to their incomes and that they are in a housing market with families having significantly higher incomes. They are therefore dependent on the least expensive housing and government subsidized housing. The loss of existing housing in Essex County is a factor which would increase their difficulty in finding adequate and affordable housing. This is a phenomenon which is occurring. In 1981 Newark had 1005 housing unit demolitions and 1535 in 1982. At the same time only 65 units were added to the housing stock. East Orange added 128 units but demolished 143. Irvington

added 1 single family unit and demolished 47 housing units. No new units were added in Orange but 16 were demolished in 1981 and 38 in 1982. There has also been a decline in the number of publically subsidized housing units. In 1979 1044 units were authorized while in 1982 there were only 203.

ANALYSIS

Women in Essex County are in severe economic distress. The growth of women's sole responsibility for families combined with women's tenuous labor force status and low wages for even full-time work have resulted in many women and their children in Essex County living in poverty. Another large group is living near poverty. Why are women so tenuously related to the labor force? A key variable is generally agreed to be their primary responsibility for children since women also work in the home with both their families and the economy dependent on this unpaid labor. Increasingly the proportion of women in the paid labor force in Essex County, especially lowering the figure of 70% of mothers of children under 3, requires the provision of decent and affordable childcare for working mothers. In addition we have seen that work available to women in Essex County is often unstable (seasonable or few hours) and low paying. Given this it may not appear to be economically beneficial to work outside the home. This results in a large number of women who are not in the labor force in Essex County being dependent on some type of government assistance. This corresponds to the 1980 median income for women in Essex County who had incomes of \$4,813. Obviously a significant amount of poverty in Essex County is related to the levels of social security, public assistance and other government programs. Since the budget cuts from 1981 have resulted in a national growth of 28.2% in the number of families in poverty we can expect at least that percentage rise for Essex County. While a county does

not have jurisdiction over these policies this analysis does point out the impact on citizens in the County and points to the need for opposition to cutbacks and in fact strategies for reversal of this trend.

Women in Essex County face a sex-segregated labor market. While women have educational levels corresponding to men's they do not overall have similar jobs. There are several strategies proposed nationally to break into this pattern including: comparable worth legislation which would move toward equalizing salaries for corresponding jobs; job training for non-traditional jobs so that women would receive training in the more lucrative "male" skills rather than such service jobs as food service; and affirmative action policies.

Finally, women's economic status is related to overall public policies in social areas such as housing. If communities do not keep a stable amount of low cost housing, then the housing situations of women and their children will deteriorate. These community-wide problems pose specific hardships for women and especially single parent families. Localities need policies to conserve their housing stock as well as renew it for low and moderate income families.

Women's economic status in Essex County is not dependent on only one variable. Low wages, types of jobs available, responsibility for children and the need for childcare, and low levels and ineligibility for government assistance are all factors in the picture of economic distress. Organizing efforts and public policy decisions need to consider these and focus on a multi-faceted approach that , for example, helps women find not just jobs but jobs that pay decent wages, and at the same time creates decent childcare so that women can take and keep the jobs.

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TESTIMONY BY FREEHOLDER JEROME D. GRECO
TO THE NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON HUNGER

Having taken an active interest in the Hunger problem in our area for many years, I am most gratified that the Commission on Hunger has chosen to hold public hearings on this overlooked problem.

Let me say at the outset that there is very little evidence of outright starvation in Essex County. However, that is only one small aspect of the problem, for poor nutrition, a real problem in Essex County, is a key factor in health problems among the needy, especially infants and pregnant women.

The elderly, particularly, often miss out on aid programs because they lack transportation or are too sick to travel to relief agencies.

It is ironic that in this robust economic recovery we hear so much about, the number of Americans receiving private food assistance is rising. I just don't believe we in local government can wait for the federal government to come around and address this tragic problem.

Hardest hit, are the elderly, the unemployed, immigrants and the mentally and physically impaired.

Now I believe it is admirable to send food to the needy overseas, but let's face it, charity begins at home.

That's why I am offering a simple, low-cost hunger assistance plan.

My proposal is not a new, massive spending program, since it relies heavily on food donations from the public as well as other voluntary efforts.

Under my plan, the public would donate non-perishable foods for the needy at special bins to be placed in area supermarkets.

With the assistance of a county-operated Hunger Hotline, the food would be distributed where it was most needed. The delivery process could be undertaken by the county as well as local service and civic organizations. State money would be used to help coordinate these efforts.

Testimony for Hunger Commission
May 8, 1985

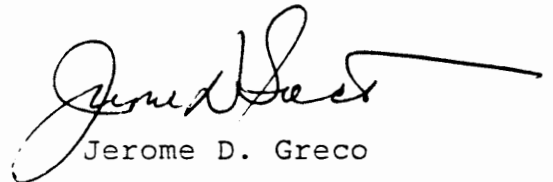
Similar programs have worked well in other parts of the country and there is no reason it couldn't work here.

I offer this proposal to help spark a lively debate on the hunger problem. Moreover, I am prepared to sponsor before the Board of Chosen Freeholders any and all legislation needed on the county level to get to the root of this debilitating problem.

In a nation as rich as ours, both financially and in the generosity of its people, there is no reason for hunger to fester. I am confident we can solve this problem.

The Commission on Hunger is to be congratulated for holding this hearing.

As always, I am prepared to do whatever is needed to put a dent in the hunger problem in our area.



Jerome D. Greco

