

F O U R T H P U B L I C H E A R I N G

before

WELFARE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE OF THE NEW JERSEY
LEGISLATURE, CONSTITUTED UNDER SCR 25 (1959),
RECONSTITUTED UNDER SCR 5 (1960) AND RECONSTITUTED
UNDER SCR 1 (1962).

Held:
February 2, 1962
Senate Chamber
State House
Trenton, New Jersey

MEMBER OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Senator Anthony J. Grossi (Chairman)

Also:

Grover C. Richman, Jr., Esq.

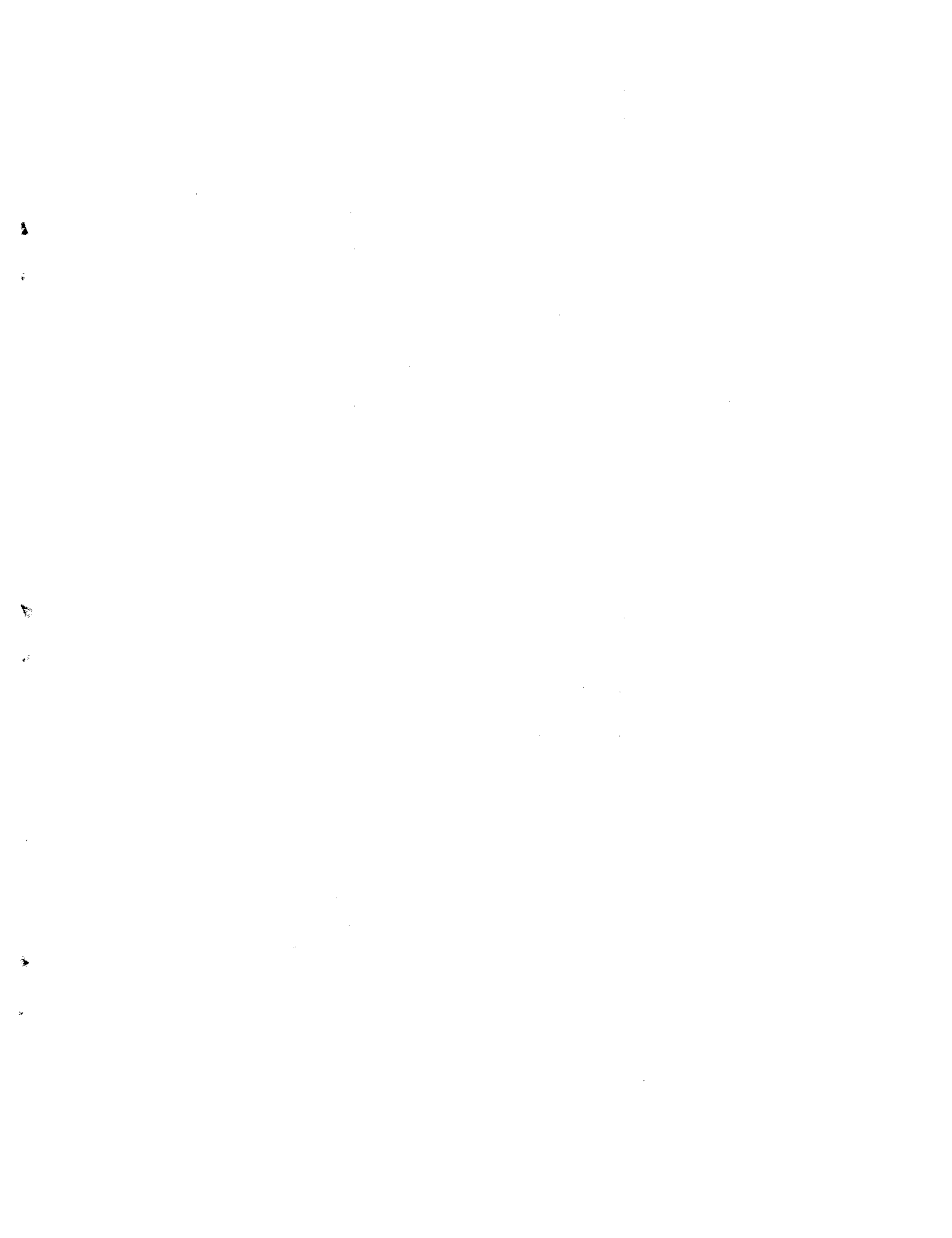
Counsel to the Committee

Leonard A. Coyle

Secretary

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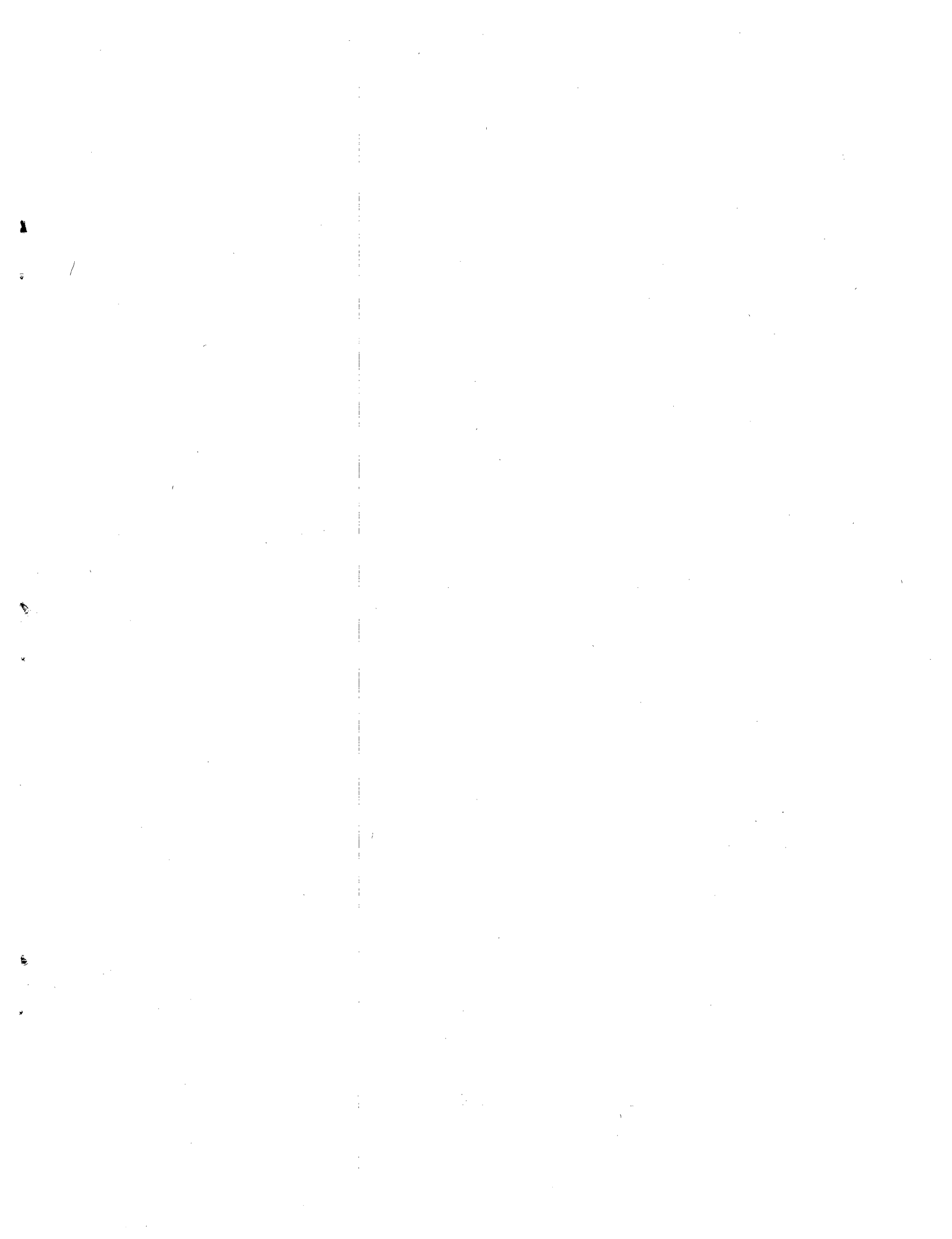
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I N D E X O F W I T N E S S E S

<u>Name</u>	<u>Page</u>
Norman Zalasín	1
Jean Brown	25
Herbert Young	29
Thaddeus G. Kobiela	41
Raymond Dougherty	43

- - - - -



SENATOR ANTHONY J. GROSSI (THE CHAIRMAN): We will call Mr. Norman Zalasin.

Norman Zalasin called as a witness.

SENATOR GROSSI: Mr. Zalasin, this is a duly-constituted Committee appointed by both houses of the Legislature to check into welfare conditions in the State of New Jersey, and the testimony that you will give here will be under oath and the Committee reserves the right to use any or all of that testimony as it deems fit. You will be administered an oath and you will be told about your constitutional rights by our counsel, Mr. Grover C. Richman. Do you understand?

MR. ZALASIN: Yes, I do.

N O R M A N, Z A L A S I N, being duly sworn, testified as follows:

MR. RICHMAN: You understand, Mr. Zalasin, that under the Constitution of the United States and the laws of this State you have a right to refuse to answer any question, the answer to which you feel might tend to incriminate, disgrace, or degrade you. Do you understand that?

MR. ZALASIN: I do.

MR. RICHMAN: All right, sir.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Where do you live? A 31 Abernathy Drive.

Q Where? A Trenton, New Jersey.

Q And you operate a business in Highstown, New Jersey? A I do.

Q What is the nature of that business? A Real estate business.

Q And you also operate a bar in Hightstown, known as Steve's Bar? A I do.

Q You own the property at 138 Mercer Street, Hightstown; is that right? A The corporation of Hightstown Realty owns the property. I am one of the members of the corporation.

Q Well, it's your corporation, isn't it? A With a partner.

Q Who is your partner? A Aaron Starr.

Q What kind of a property is this? A Two individual buildings - frame, with concrete outside facing the buildings.

Q How many apartments? A One, two, three, four - five apartments in the two buildings.

Q Are they all occupied? A Yes, they are -- six apartments.

Q Six apartments. Is one of them occupied by a K. May Brown? A It is.

Q What does her apartment consist of? A Three rooms and bath.

Q And how much does she pay? A \$80 a month.

Q Are you sure that's three rooms? Isn't that two rooms and bath? A Katie May Brown?

Q K. May Brown. A Do you have my records? Did I give them to you?

MR. COYLE: I think you put them in your

coat pocket.

A Oh, here they are. Two rooms and bath.

Q Two rooms and bath? A That's right.

Q Now, who is in the other apartment at 138 Mercer Street? A Uh -

Q How about Louise Singleton? A Yes, that's right.

Q Now, what does she have? What kind of apartment does she have? A Two rooms and bath.

Q And how much does she pay? A \$70.

Q How many children does she have; do you know?

A Louise?

Q Yes. A One child.

Q How about K. May Brown? How many children live in that apartment with her? A Three.

Q Now, Rose Lee Johnson also lives at 138 Mercer Street, doesn't she? A Yes, she does.

Q With her five children. A I don't know exactly how many kids they have. I think it's five. If you say it's five, it's probably so.

Q What does her apartment consist of? A Four rooms and bath.

Q Is that on the first floor? A Yes, it is. This is another part of the original building which was added on some years ago to the back of this building - concrete and cinder block.

Q How much does she pay? \$110 a month, with all utilities.

Q What's the state of the repair of this property

at 138 Mercer Street? A Constant repairing; plumbing -

Q Is it in good shape? A In so far as what? Over-all, or individually such as plumbing or electrically or anything of that sort?

Q The condition of the building. It's your building.

A I would say it's in a good condition.

Q Isn't it a fact that in the Rose Lee Johnson apartment, every time it rains it floods the first floor? A It's not a fact at all.

Q It never happened? A It has happened.

Q Is everybody in 138 Mercer Street on relief?

A Yes, they are.

Q And what is your total income per month from 138 Mercer Street? A \$260 per month.

Q What are the taxes on it? A This, I cannot answer fairly because I don't really know offhand. I could give you the exact tax on the building if I had the record on it now, but I don't have the record presently.

Q Do you have any idea what it is? A Oh, I'd say in the vicinity of \$300.

Q When did you acquire this building? A About 4 years ago; it could be a year more or a year less - approximately 4 years ago.

Q Have you made any major repairs to it since you acquired it? A Yes, I have.

Q What? A Bathrooms installed -

Q Anything else? A - and electrical wiring gone over. That's about all I can think of right now as a major repair.

Q Now let's go to 140 Mercer Street. Is that next door?
A Yes, it is.

Q Is that the same type of building? A Yes, it is.

Q How many tenants do you have in 140 Mercer Street?

A Four.

Q How many apartments are there? A Four apartments.

Q Now, there's an apartment on the first floor consisting of two rooms, kitchen facilities and a bath; isn't that so?

A Two rooms?

Q Two bedrooms, a bath, plus kitchen facilities.

A Yes, there is.

Q How many people occupy that apartment? A You're talking about the ground floor now.

Q Yes. A Are we talking specifically about Irene Johnson?

Q Yes. A She has 3 or 4 children, either one, herself.

Q She has 6 children, doesn't she? A This, I cannot say fairly, because I don't know. I know I've seen approximately 4 when I had to repair some work there. It could have been schooltime and the kids were off to school or something, but that is what I observed when I entered the place.

Q That apartment also floods whenever it rains, doesn't it?
A Pardon me?

Q That apartment also floods whenever it rains, doesn't it?
A Not whenever it rains, no. When it rains hard and the sewer out in the main highway gets clogged, it backs up and not only floods that apartment but floods everything on that street, including my tavern and anything else up the

street from there.

Q This is below ground level? A This, I cannot tell you. I don't know the purpose or the reason why it floods that way, but I know that all the properties on that street do flood.

Q How much rent do you get for that apartment?

A \$110.

Q Let me go back for a minute to Rose Lee Johnson, 138 Mercer Street. She and her five children live at that address, is that right? A Yes.

Q And that apartment consists, on the first floor, as I think we've already said, of two rooms and a shower; is that correct? A Four rooms, sir.

Q Four rooms. A Four rooms, that's right. Are we talking about Rosalie Johnson, sir?

Q Yes. A That's four rooms and a bath; two bedrooms, a livingroom, kitchen, and a bath.

Q And she shares a kitchen with another of your tenants. She shares a kitchen with Mrs. Singleton; isn't that correct?

A This, I cannot tell you. I don't know.

Q What I am getting at is that the Singleton apartment and the Rose Lee Johnson apartment - both at 138 Mercer Street -

A They're adjacent to one another.

Q And they only have one kitchen for the two apartments.

A This was not rented on that basis.

Q Well, what do you mean by that? A When Louise Singleton took this apartment, she didn't have any children, so there was no idea in renting this apartment for her to have any kitchen facilities at all, Since then she has had

this child and whether she's cooking next door or not, I would not know.

Q Well, have you raised her rent since she moved in?

A Raised who?

Q Mrs. Singleton. A No, I haven't.

Q In other words, this apartment that she pays \$70 a month for was not supposed to have any kitchen? A That's right. But I might add that there is a kitchen and all facilities for cooking being installed at the present time.

Q At 140 Mercer Street, Irene Johnson pays \$110 a month. Right? A That's right. I might add that Irene Johnson for 2 years only paid \$80 a month.

Q How long has she been paying \$110? A I'll tell you exactly. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight - nine months.

Q Why was it raised from \$80 to \$110? A Because of the utilities. She was lagging behind on her utility bills and they were causing the gas heater to be off in her apartment as well as the hot water heater, and we had her bills presented to us and we charged accordingly for the utilities so that we can supply them continually. The pipes were getting frozen up there and every time we would have a cold spell, we would have to have a plumber right after that.

Q All right. Now, also at 140 Mercer Street, you have a tenant now, a Mrs. Copeland. Right? A That's right.

Q What kind of an apartment does she have? A Three rooms and bath.

Q How many people are in that apartment?

A She has three children, herself.

Q Anybody else in there? A Yes, there is.

Q Who? A Well, this one is not on relief.

She has a room away from the other apartment, in the front of the building.

Q Who is this? A I think her name is Gussie Randolph.

Q Let me get it straight. Mrs. Randolph has one of the three rooms in the apartment that you originally rented to Mrs. Copeland; is that right? And I take it -

A Just one minute now. That is not right. Mrs. Copeland had nowhere to stay. I had a call from the Relief one day that this woman had to have a place to live; if I could supply a place for her to live at. The woman's name was Mrs. Curran and she works for the County Welfare. I said I would see what I could do, and I forgot about it. About three weeks later, again from the school itself, I got a call. Mrs. Curran called me as well and wanted to know if I could find a place for her to live, and in turn I rented these three rooms in the rear of the building, and bath and kitchen, to Mrs. Copeland for \$60 a month.

Q And how about Mrs. Randolph? Where is she living in relation to those three rooms and kitchen? A She is in the front of the building. In other words, these three rooms that Mrs. Copeland's got are in the rear of the building, and Mrs. Randolph has got the one room in the front of the building.

Q Actually, what Mrs. Copeland has is a bedroom, a

porch made into a bedroom, and a kitchen, isn't it?

A That's right.

Q And Mrs. Randolph has one - A Excuse me, sir.
A porch made into a kitchen?

Q Made into a bedroom, and a kitchen and a bath. Right?

A I didn't hear the last part.

Q A bedroom, a porch made into a bedroom, a kitchen
and a bathroom. A That's right.

Q And Mrs. Randolph has another room? A That's
right.

Q How much does Mrs. Randolph pay? A \$60 a month.

Q She pays \$16.00 a week, doesn't she? A That
record I don't have, but I know it's \$15.00 a week.

Q So out of these four rooms - and Mrs. Randolph, of
course, must share the kitchen and bathroom with Mrs. Copeland.
A That she does.

Q So out of these three rooms, kitchen and bath, you
are getting a monthly rental of \$120.00? A \$60 from
Welfare and \$60 from the other tenant.

Q Right. Are there any other tenants in 140?

A There is one 2-room apartment downstairs.

Q Who's in that? A Presently, nobody.

Q When was that most recently rented? A That was
about 7 weeks ago when people moved out and I had to do some
repairs there, such as install a shower and a sink, cooking
facilities and a stove.

Q Well, were they relief clients? A No, they
weren't.

Q They were not? A No, sir.

Q How much did you get from that apartment when you rented it? A Well, are we talking about relief clients, sir, or are we talking about -

Q Do you make a difference? A Do I make a difference?

Q Yes. Do you charge relief clients one thing and other people something else? A Absolutely not; in fact, relief gets less, charged less, than other clients, but my point is this: I thought we were talking mainly about relief clients. However, I'll tell you what they pay when I will rent it - approximately \$60 a month.

Q Now, you own an apartment building on Extra Road. A Extra Road, yes, sir. E-t-r-a, and that's Cedarville Road. Extra and Cedarville Road. I just thought of that name, sir.

Q And that has three apartments in it? A Yes, sir.

Q Are they rented all to relief clients? A No, sir.

Q How many of them? A Just one.

Q One to relief clients. Who is that? Mr. Gould?

A Mr. Gould.

Q How many rooms does he have? A He's got five rooms.

Q How much does he pay? A \$120.00 a month.

Q You also own a 7-room house on Extra Road?

A Directly across the way, sir.

Q Is that a relief client? A Yes, it is. I think she's on county relief, if I'm not mistaken.

Q How much rent do you get from that? A This would be \$90 a month, sir.

Q And you own another property on Etra Road that you rent to a Mrs. Spearman; is that right? A Betty Spearman, yes, sir, Mrs. - or Miss Spearman, I really don't know which.

Q Is she on relief? A Yes, she is. \$80 a month.

Q Do you have any arrangement with the Relief or Welfare people to send you tenants for these buildings? A Not at all.

Q Well, how does it happen that 90 per cent of your tenants are relief clients? A Well, I would say roughly that 90 per cent of my tenants are not on relief.

Q What do you say the percentage is? I am only talking about the properties I have mentioned. A Oh. In this particular, yes, they would be about 90 per cent.

Q How do you account for that? A I'm just trying to think how I can account for it. I can remember just renting one to a relief tenant and it could be that she's probably told somebody else or told the Welfare and the Welfare called us up and asked us if we had anything else for some of these people that they have looking for apartments.

Q Well, that's what I wanted to get at. Are you frequently in touch with the Welfare people? A Am I, sir?

Q Yes. A No, they call me occasionally when I have empties. It just so happens that I don't have too many empties at present, or haven't had in the last couple of years.

Q Well, they wouldn't know when you have a vacant apartment, would they? The Welfare people wouldn't know that, would they? A I think that they might.

Q Why? A Because these other tenants might tell the investigators when they come down; in other words, a woman

comes down periodically to check on these particular tenants, and it might be told to them. I don't know that it is. I couldn't honestly swear to it that it is, but it seems as though if there is one empty - if an apartment empties out, it doesn't take maybe a week or ten days and I get a call from the Welfare. Nine times out of ten I have been very hesitant lately, because they usually have a group of children and they do a lot of damage to the property.

Q Well, isn't it a fact that whenever a person makes application to you for one of these apartments, immediately one of the first things you ask them is whether or not they are on relief? A Not at all, no.

Q Do you ask them that at all? A Do I ask them that at all?

Q Yes. A Not too many times, no.

Q You make no inquiries as to whether or not they are on relief? A When I finally think they are a suitable tenant, I want to know where my money is going to come from, whether they are working, or what their status is, and when they tell me about it I consider it from there on in.

Q Well, you directly ask them, don't you, whether or not they are on relief? A When you say "directly," in other words, when they walk in, "Are you on relief?" - is that the way you mean it?

Q I mean that some time during your conversation with a prospective tenant, you make an inquiry as to whether or not he or she is on relief; is that a fact? A Well, I ask them what means of income they have and they -

Q Well, let's not be coy about it. A I'm not trying to be coy. I am trying to -

Q Do you ask them whether or not they are on relief?

A I do, yes.

Q Yes. What did you pay for these two properties at 138 and 140 Mercer Street? A About \$20,000.

Q \$20,000. A Approximately \$20,000.

Q And what's your annual rental income from those properties? A Approximately \$3,000 from one, and I'd say about \$3,000 from the other.

Q Approximately \$6,000? A Less the utilities and expenses.

Q Do you supply utilities? A All utilities - very expensive at that.

Q You mean you're not making any money? A If I wasn't making any money, I couldn't stay in business. I think we are all entitled to a profit on our investment.

Q Is it a fact that since you've owned these properties, 138 Mercer and the other properties that I have talked about, you have primarily rented them to relief clients ever since you have owned them? A Every one of the apartments, sir?

Q Yes. A Well, primarily it would be - yes, that's true.

MR. RICHMAN: That's all.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q These apartments, Mr. Zalasin, at 138 Mercer Street, the two downstairs apartments, they are below the level of the sidewalk, aren't they? A Honorable Senator, I couldn't

really tell you. I think, personally, they are, but I am not an engineer, so if I said so, I would be telling you something I am not familiar with. But it seems as though there is something radically wrong on that particular highway, because if we get a good, steady rain for two hours, we are completely flooded. I'm flooded in the bar, the properties are flooded, my neighbors next door are flooded, and so on and so forth down the line. Now, about three years ago we shoveled water on our street for 18 hours and sandbagged the doors trying to keep the water out. We had a very bad rainy spell for about a week and there was no way in the world we could open up our places or keep the water from coming in.

Q But you do have to go down one step to get into the apartments? A No.

Q You don't have to go down one step? A No. It is right flush - I think there might be about, I'd say, a four-inch step going up into the apartment, into the doorway, the hallway.

Q How do you account for the difference in the homes on Etra Road where you have a 7-room house and you get \$80 a month from Miss Spearman, who is also on relief, with a 7-room house, and then on Mercer Street, where you have the two apartments, the two of them together bring you in \$120 a month, and yet it only has four rooms with a common kitchen and a common bathroom. How do you account for that difference? A Sir, it can only be put this way, that the utilities that I pay in these two particular buildings are very high, only because I bought the buildings the way they are and they don't have a

real good heating system. By this I mean that I have radiators that are heated by gas; also space heaters which are controlled but they are heated by gas, and they don't have blowers on them because they are the older type and are not the type you can attach blowers to circulate the hot air through the building, and the utilities become very expensive in a process of that type.

Q Well, for instance, just to recapitulate: You have this home on Etra Road where you get \$80 a month and it's a 7-room house - 7 rooms and bath. Right? A Yes, sir.

Q Now, on Mercer Street you have these 2 particular apartments, and we are referring now to the Copeland apartment in particular, where she has 2 rooms, a kitchen and a bath, and then there is another room, which makes a total of three rooms, which is occupied by that other family, Randolph. A Yes.

Q And they use the same kitchen and the same bathroom. A Right.

Q So that for 2 families you now have 3 rooms, a kitchen and a bath. That is 4 rooms and a bath in all. Right? A Right.

Q And between the two you get \$120 a month, and you supply the utilities. A Yes, I do.

Q And in the 7-room house you get \$80 a month and they supply their own utilities? A Right.

Q So there's a difference of \$40 a month, and do you feel that there's a \$40 a month differential all year round on utilities? You don't supply heat all year round.

A No. There isn't a \$40 differential, absolutely not. This is only during the winter months when the heat is necessary that we have this additional expense that compensates to what I say.

Q Well, you don't take anything off the rent during the summer months? A No. I'm coming to that. Now, over-all, we figure our cost throughout the year, and on an average it comes pretty close to this rent that we are charging.

Q How much did you pay for that house on Etra Road?

A Seventy-two or seventy-three hundred dollars.

Q \$17,000? A No.

Q Seventy-two - A Seven thousand two hundred dollars.

Q And for 138 and 140 Mercer Street, you paid about \$20,000. A Approximately.

Q Approximately \$20,000. A Yes, sir.

Q And your income - that is, gross income - from 138 and 140 Mercer Street would be about \$6600 a year; is that right? A Well, you also have a tax element -

Q Well, I said gross income. A Oh, I'm sorry, sir.

Q And your taxes on both 138 and 140 Mercer Street are about how much? A I wouldn't say. I could give you in the vicinity of \$500.

Q About \$500? A Yes. It could be more or it could be less. I could get the actual tax bills and present them if necessary.

Q What do your utilities run, do you know? A A year?

Q How much? A Well, between the electric light -

for argument's sake, we will take the apartment of Randolph and Copeland. The heat would run in the vicinity of \$50 a month, and the electric in the vicinity of \$18 to \$20 a month.

Q \$50 a month for heat? A Yes, sir.

Q For four rooms, a kitchen and a bath? A It's astonishing and amazing but it can be actually proved by the utility company and we can present bills to show, sir.

Q And your electric bill is about \$18 a month? A It runs approximately \$18. It could run more in the summertime because they run these big massive fans.

Q It would average about \$20 a month? Would that be a fair average? A I would say so.

Q That's \$240 and \$50 a month for heat is \$600; that's \$840, and your taxes are about \$500? A Yes, sir.

Q That's \$1300. What do you figure on your upkeep and maintenance? A I wouldn't know. I would have to get the bills. It's pretty exorbitant.

Q Well, would you say that your net income from 138 and 140 Mercer Street is about \$4,000 a year? A Oh, no.

Q What would you say your net income is? A I couldn't tell you offhand, but I know it isn't anything near \$4,000.

Q Well, this corporation you are talking about, how many places does it have in its possession? how many dwellings?

A Individual houses?

Q In all. Do you have in that corporation dwellings that are not occupied by relief clients? A Oh, sure, definitely, sir.

Q Well, then, just to get back to 138 and 140 Mercer Street - roughly \$500 a year for taxes; roughly \$600 a year for heat, although that wouldn't be because you've got \$50 a month that you don't - A That's right. You've got to remember also that we've been very fortunate there because of the turnover. We've only turned over two or three apartments through the year, but for, I'd say, about 3 years hence we had most of those places empty.

Q Well, now, when do you turn the heat on? Do you turn it on April 1st, April 15th - when do you turn it on?

A Turn it off, do you mean?

Q When can a tenant turn the heat on? A Not in April. They can turn it on any time they get ready.

Q At any time during the year, in other words?

A Probably September. If they want to be real rough about it, they open the windows and keep it on in June, when they go out and want to be cute.

Q But the heating season normally starts October 1st, doesn't it? Isn't that when the normal heating season starts?

A Sure, it would be.

Q So it would run from October to April 1st approximately? A Yes.

Q That would be November, December, January, February March, April. So that's about six months. A I would say roughly six months.

Q Six months at \$50 a month is \$300. And your electric we will say is \$20 a month over the whole year. That's \$240. And your taxes are about \$500. So that's \$1,040 expenses, exclusive of maintenance and repair. Is that true? A Yes.

Q And your total income, gross, is \$6600 a year, according to your own figures. A Not according to my figures, no. It's \$6,000 a year.

Q Well, let's see. You've got Rose Lee Johnson who pays \$110 a month. Singleton pays \$70. Katie May Brown pays \$80. Jule Kelly pays \$60. Irene Johnson pays \$110, and Randolph pays \$60; and Copeland pays \$60. Right? So we have \$180, \$260, \$320, \$430, and \$120 is \$550 a month times 12.

A Do you want to have the exact figure on it?

Q Well, it's a rough figure. But go ahead; you put them down. Rose Lee Johnson is \$110. I'll call off what we have here and if it's wrong you can tell me. Right?

A All right. It probably won't be wrong.

Q Rose Lee Johnson is \$110. Louise Singleton is \$70. Katie May Brown is \$80. Jule Kelly is \$60. Irene Johnson is \$110. Copeland is \$60. And the family that lives with her, Randolph, is \$60. A I think we have too many figures there now.

Q Well, those are the figures that we have here, and if they're not right we will be glad to correct them.

A One, two, three, four, five, six. Well, we'll just take this roughly. \$550 a month.

Q \$550 times 12 would be \$6,600, wouldn't it?

A I guess so. You're a little faster than I am on figures.

Q So, exclusive of maintenance and repair, your net income would be \$4560 a year on the basis of those figures. That's your net income. A Yes, sir.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Hasn't anybody from the Welfare Department ever suggested to you that these rentals are too high and that they should be reduced? A Uh, upon trying to rent the apartments, yes, they have.

Q Who has done that, do you remember? A Mrs. Curran.

Q But you have not made any reductions? A No, I don't think I have.

Q Of course, the tenants are not interested because they are not paying the rent anyway, isn't that so? A Right.

Q You haven't had too much controversy with the Welfare Department about how much these rentals should be, have you?

A No.

Q No. Now, in fixing these rentals, did you take into account the fact that due to this grade condition some of these properties are flooded during rainy periods, and also did you take into account the fact that the heating equipment was antiquated and the baths were shared, the kitchens were shared in one instance? Was that all taken into account in fixing these rentals? A In one instance, yes.

Q And even in view of all these facts, is it your opinion that these are fair rental prices for these properties?

A According to my investment, yes, I feel that way.

Q Well, you have a knowledge of what properties are worth. You're in the real estate business. A Yes, I am.

Q Do you think these are fair rentals that you are charging for these properties? A I do, with a lot of views in mind, particularly the abuse that these properties have to take under these circumstances.

Q What do you mean by "under these circumstances"?

A Well, I feel that where the parents are not together and the mother is there alone, there is somebody missing in the family to keep these children from actually abusing these properties. A lot of times we find plumbing ripped from the walls. I don't think it's right, but these kids somehow or another get involved and the plumbing is off the walls. The actual properties themselves are not kept too clean on the inside; there's constant repairs to be made as far as painting and papering is concerned, and so forth and so on, so actually a property rented under these circumstances actually dis-integrates itself from the original value after you start renting in that fashion.

Q Then you are saying, in other words, that you do not apply normal rental standards to these properties because of the character of the people who occupy them? A Not at all. No, I don't mean that at all. I say under the circumstances of people renting these properties and the abuse that they give these properties, I think that the rents are pretty fair.

Q Well, let me restate it another way. I think we're both talking about the same thing. In other words, because you are renting to people on relief who generally have domestic difficulties, you fix a different rate of rental than you would if you were renting to somebody else. A Not necessarily, no.

Q Isn't that what you just finished saying? A In other words, you took in the fact that I raise rents in the case of Welfare because of the circumstances, and then you also said that ordinarily other people wouldn't pay this. Is

that what you said?

Q I didn't say that. A Well, then, I misunderstood you. I'm sorry.

Q I asked you whether or not, because these were rented to welfare clients, you fixed a different rate of rental than you would if you were renting to someone other than a welfare client. A Not necessarily.

Q Well, what do you mean by "not necessarily"? Do you or don't you? A Well, let me put in an over-all situation - renting to these particular people itself is a hardship on the actual property. It disintegrates the property. And taking these things in view, where you buy a property and five years later the property becomes half in value worse, you also have to take that into consideration when you charge rent there for it.

Q Then you and I are saying the same thing, that because you rent it to welfare - A Well, over-all, you say welfare; I say over-all in general.

Q You mean if you rent it to anybody, they are going to tear the property apart? A Well, particularly an older property of that nature, maybe they would.

Q Then what you said originally, that these rentals are justifiable because they are occupied by people - these properties are occupied by people who have domestic difficulties, you don't mean that then. You mean, you would do this no matter who occupied them? Is that right? A Regardless of who occupied them, yes, sir.

Q In other words, you say this is a fair rental value regardless of who occupies the property. A As far as our

operation is concerned.

Q And you retract your other statement that the rentals here were based upon the standard that they were welfare people. You retract that? A I do.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Mr. Zalasin, how much have you spent in 1961 for the maintenance, upkeep and repair of 138 and 140 Mercer Street?

A Mr. Senator, I could actually give you every dollar and cent - if I had my records I would give them to you. My accountant, Louis J. Seale, State Street, has all my ledger books. I submit all my bills to him and he has a thorough record of all these expenses.

Q You wouldn't know roughly even what you spent?

A It would be hard.

Q Do you paint these rooms periodically? A Oh, yes, I do.

Q How often? A I'd say on an average of at least once a year.

Q Once a year you paint the rooms? A Yes, I do. Where I don't paint myself, I submit the paint to the tenant.

Q Oh, you give the paint to the tenant and he paints them himself? A Where I don't get my own painters to do it, that's right.

Q Well, isn't that quite unusual, to paint rooms once a year? Do you do that in any of your other properties?

A Yes, when they come in. They come in approximately once a year and ask me for a gallon, two gallons, or three gallons of paint. Usually it's three gallons of paint, and I feel

that the properties will be kept cleaner.

Q Do you own any apartment houses other than these that we have under consideration? A I don't own any apartment houses. I haven't got to that stage.

Q You don't own any apartment houses? A No, sir.
BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Will you make those records available through Mr. Seale to this Committee? A Would I make them available?

Q Yes, will you direct Mr. Seale to make that information available to this Committee? A I would have to discuss the matter with Mr. Seale.

Q Well, when will you do that? A Well, he comes in at the end of the month.

Q You could see him before the end of the month, couldn't you? A Well, there would be an additional charge if I did it.

Q What I am suggesting is that if you are not willing to make those records available - A Oh, I'm willing to make the records available, Counsel.

Q - to the Committee, we will, of course, ask Mr. Seale to come in and bring them with him. A Well, I'll make them available. I mean, there is nothing to be hidden. It's all in the books.

Q All right, then we'll be in touch with you, the Committee will be in touch with you for this information.
BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Is there anything that you would like to say to the Committee, Mr. Zalasin? We are not asking you to say something, but if there's anything on your mind or if there

is something you think we should have covered that we didn't that you would like to be heard on, you may say so.

A No, Senator, I haven't anything else to say.

Q All right. That will be all then. A Thank you very much, gentlemen.

MR. RICHMAN: Now, Mrs. Brown.

J E A N B R O W N, called as a witness.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q What is your full name and address? A Jean Brown, 455 West State Street, Trenton.

Q Is it Miss Brown? A Mrs. Brown.

Q Oh, Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Brown, you have heard the opening of our legislative hearing here, so you know what I said to the previous witness and, of course, you have rights too under the Constitution, and our counsel, to make sure, after swearing you in, will apprise you of those rights that you have, and your testimony will be under oath, as you know.

J E A N B R O W N, being duly sworn, testified as follows:

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Mrs. Brown, you understand that under the Constitution of the United States and the laws of this State you have a right to refuse to answer any question, the answer to which might tend to incriminate, disgrace, or degrade you, but that you must make that objection to the particular question at the time it arises. A Yes, sir.

Q All right. Thank you. Mrs. Brown, where are you employed? A Mercer County Welfare Board.

Q What is your job there? A I am a caseworker.

Q And how long have you held that job? A Just one year.

Q Before that, what did you do? A I worked at the Trenton Trust Company as a bank teller.

Q This is your first experience in welfare? A Yes, it is.

Q How many cases do you generally have at one time?
A My caseload consists of about 106 cases.

Q And what is the nature of the cases? A I handle ADC cases, disability, and old age.

Q What is your caseload, did you say? A Normally about 106.

Q About 106? A Yes.

Q How often are you able to visit an individual client?
A It depends a great deal on the problems concerned in the case. Some cases I have to visit approximately, sometimes once a week. Sometimes some cases do not require a visit more than two or three or four times a year.

Q Was Hattie Lynch one of your - A No, sir.

Q Is there another Miss Brown that was a welfare worker? A Not while I have been here.

Q You don't know anything about Hattie Lynch?
A No, sir.

Q Do you have any clients in the vicinity of 124 Brunswick Avenue? A I did for a short time, but I -

Q When was that? A It would be last spring that I was up in that neighborhood.

Q Last spring? A Yes, sir.

Q That would be the spring of 1961? A 1961, yes.

Q But you have no recollection of having a client known as Hattie Lynch? A No, I do not know anyone by that name.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Do you know Mrs. Hattie Lynch? A No, sir.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Did you ever discuss with any of your clients the investigation being conducted by this Committee? A No, sir, I have not.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Do you know who in the office would be handling the case of Mrs. Hattie Lynch? A No. I meant to look that up. I don't know.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Would you, through the Director, supply us with the information as to who have been the caseworkers assigned to the case of Hattie Lynch? A Perhaps Mr. Dougherty can give us the information; I don't know.

Q Mrs. Brown, there may be a case of mistaken identity. We will be very happy to excuse you.

SENATOR GROSSI: Mr. Dougherty, did you have anybody on your staff by the name of Brown who was a caseworker?

MR. RAYMOND DOUGHERTY: Yes, Senator, we looked into that, and about a year ago - talking it over with the workers there - there was a Miss Brown, who is now Mrs. Underwood, and she has been out of the

employ of our office for a year or more.

SENATOR GROSSI: This would be on July 14, 1960, in particular. In 1960, was there a Miss Brown or a Mrs. Brown as a caseworker?

MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes, she worked there at that time.

SENATOR GROSSI: And that was Miss Brown.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Miss Brown, yes,

MR. RICHMAN: And she is now Mrs. Underwood?

MR. DOUGHERTY: That's right. No, I'm sorry, Underhill.

MR. RICHMAN: Do you know where she lives?

MR. DOUGHERTY: We could find out.

SENATOR GROSSI: When did she leave your employ?

MR. DOUGHERTY: I'd say about a year ago, sir.

SENATOR GROSSI: She left about a year ago?

MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes. She married.

HERBERT YOUNG called as a witness.

SENATOR GROSSI: What is your full name?

MR. YOUNG: Herbert Young.

SENATOR GROSSI: And your address?

MR. YOUNG: 127 Jackson Street, Trenton 10, New Jersey.

SENATOR GROSSI: You have heard my remarks to the other witnesses as they took their seat. Do you understand the purpose of this hearing and your rights thereunder?

MR. YOUNG: Yes, I do.

SENATOR GROSSI: All right. Mr. Richman will take over as counsel and swear you in and apprise you of those rights again.

MR. RICHMAN: Raise your right hand, please.

HERBERT YOUNG, being duly sworn, testified as follows:

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q I believe you are familiar with your constitutional rights, aren't you? -- A Yes, I am.

Q -- about refusing to answer a question, and I don't need to explain it any further? A No, sir.

Q What is your position with the Welfare Department?
A I am a Case Worker with the Mercer County Welfare Board.

Q How long have you held that position?
A Approximately one year and nine months.

Q What did you do before that, sir? A I was doing graduate work.

Q Do you hold a degree? Do you have a degree?

A A Master's degree?

Q In what? A I don't have a Master's degree. I was working on it, but I had to discontinue my studies due to poor health at one time, but I do hold my Bachelor's.

Q How many cases do you generally have? A I would say roughly it varies, depending on people moving out of my territory, etc. I would say anywhere between 105 and 110, somewhere in that area.

Q What is the general breakdown of those cases? A I handle cases of four different categories. I handle Aid for Dependent Children Program, the Disability Assistance Program, the Old Age Assistance Program, and the Blind Assistance Program.

Q In the course of your work, did you handle the case of Hattie Lynch? A Yes, I did.

Q Did you handle most of those cases out at 138 Mercer and 140 Mercer Street in Hightstown? A At one time I did have the Hightstown area, but the names which you have mentioned previously, I did not handle those cases at that time.

Q Are you familiar with those two properties, 138 Mercer and 140 Mercer? A I don't recall.

Q You have been in them, haven't you? A I don't recall having any clients at that address. I don't have any records to substantiate that as I wasn't requested to bring any records. As it stands now, I don't recall.

Q But you were at one time assigned to that area? A Yes, I was.

Q Mrs. Lynch, I believe, was at 124 Brunswick Avenue, Trenton. A That's correct, sir.

Q That is where she was located when you handled that case? A That's correct. Sir, may I add something to what you have asked me?

Q Sure. A At the time when I did have the Hightstown area, our particular county or Mercer County had not integrated their caseloads and at that time I only handled the Old Age Assistance and Disability cases in the Hightstown area, not the ADC Program or Aid for Dependent Children. And I believe the cases that were previously mentioned with the last two witnesses - they were Aid for Dependent Children clients.

Q Without mentioning any names or without any reference to the names that have been mentioned here - they were only mentioned largely in connection with the Hightstown area, except for Mrs. Lynch - without thinking of names at all, what has been your observation with respect to the incidence of illegitimacy so far as the children concerned with this program? A Could you repeat that?

Q What is the incidence of illegitimacy of children in this program? A Do you mean what are the numbers involved?

Q What has been your experience? What have you found as you have been handling these cases? A I would say that the greatest number of cases in my caseload would be children born from these mothers of my clients. They are illegitimate, the biggest percentage.

Q You would say it would be more than half?

A It would be a pretty hard figure to narrate. I would say it would take up a good majority of the cases. If you would say half, I would say you would be coming pretty close.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q How often do you make calls at these homes that are under your jurisdiction? A Senator, I make my two visits per year as required under law and I make additional visits whenever the need arises. By this, if an extreme emergency arises, I make the visit or if I am contacted by some other agency to look into a specific problem. If I get a so-called crank complaint from a neighbor, I try my very best to look into this, or if the clients themselves call me and want to just discuss their case in general, I also try to do this where possible.

Q Do you make it a point to visit each family under your care at least twice a year? A I do, your Honor.

Q You haven't missed any of them, have you?

A Not to my knowledge, I haven't.

Q Has as much as a year or two years gone by without your visiting some family that is under your care? A Well, no, not to my knowledge. May I say this: The particular caseload that I have now I have only had since January -- I'm sorry; I'd like to retract that -- since July of last year - July of '61, that is - when our caseloads were integrated with the four programs for each individual worker. I have made my visits for those particular cases since I have had them. I can't speak for those cases in the past as I have not had them.

Q Do you have more cases now under the new program than you had under the old program? A I would say it averages out rather closely. I wouldn't say more; it would be very close. The caseload stands quite high. I would say this, however, to clarify it, the biggest percentage of my caseload now is Aid for Dependent Children rather than the other three categories which I handle. I would say roughly three-quarters of the visits I make per month are Aid for Dependent Children as put alongside the Blind, Disability and Old Age.

Q Well, that's because they have been transferred, haven't they, from the relief programs of the municipalities to ADC? A I couldn't answer that.

Q Were you working for the Relief Department prior to the ADC Program? A Prior to the county handling it?

Q Yes. A Yes, I was.

Q For whom did you work? A For the Mercer County Welfare Board.

Q You worked for the Mercer County Welfare Board then? A Yes, I did.

Q And the caseload has increased, hasn't it, since the ADC Program has gone into effect? A I would say -- I really couldn't answer that if it has increased. I don't know exactly how many cases the Mercer County Welfare Board has. Those records are not open to the case worker. I only can speak for my own caseload as it stands now.

Q Well, prior to 1960, what was your caseload? A I'd say roughly about a hundred.

Q And since then, it's still around a hundred?

A Roughly - a little bit more, yes. The only thing I was trying to bring out, Senator, was that the cases per month, the greater percentage are ADC in that particular month I must make my visits. I would say three-quarters.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Is it part of your duty in connection with your investigations - I don't know whether you call them that or not - to determine what rental your clients are paying?

A No, it is not my duty to determine this. However, when I am assigned to a new case, I make an inspection of the apartment or house, whichever it may be, prior to the client moving into the apartment or house and I look the premises over - I am not a real estate agent - and I ask usually the landlord - I do make a contact with him - to verify the amount of rent and utilities to be paid and I discuss what I feel should be repaired in the apartment if there are any repairs, and most times the landlord sets a price and, if possible, we try to get a more lenient price. After all, this is taxpayers' money which we are using and we try to be very cautious. Most times the landlords won't budge though; they will keep the prices they have set.

Q Do you make written reports on your visits?

A Yes, I do.

Q What is the nature of those written reports - what kind of observations do you make - what do you look for?

A Well, on an initial visit or, as we call them in our office,

a continuance visit -- May I ask you, sir, are you speaking specifically of ADC or ---

Q Right now, ADC, but anything that you would put in your report.

A Well, on the initial investigation or the continuance investigation, as we call it, the first thing we do is question the client, whether they have been in any recent contact with the father or the putative father within the last week or month - if they have heard of them since they have filed with our office for assistance. That's the first thing I always question them on. And the second thing I go into is the children themselves. I ask the client, if the child is in the home, if this child is now attending school and what grade and how the child is faring in school - by that I mean how they are doing as far as their school work is - and then I go into the social history with the parent, which are general things, their age and their birthday, when they came to live in Trenton. I discuss the different fathers whom they have lived with and usually I try to put in a report if this woman is able to provide adequate supervision and if she appears interested in her children. That would be the social part. Then I would discuss - the next thing would be the economics in the case - by that, if our client is employed and; if the client is not employed, I usually try to encourage the employment of the client where she is not, if it is possible at all. And then I discuss the shelter arrangement with the client. This is a breakdown of the shelter arrangement which they have, the number of rooms, the rent that they are

paying, how her household condition is - by this I mean if she keeps the house in a neat condition or if it is kept sloppily, if she was asked to straighten it out. If need be, the City of Trenton Health Department is asked to make a visit if the place is in my opinion not kept in proper order.

Q You put this all in your report? A Yes, I do.

Q Now, with respect to some of those homes that you visit where you know that there are illegitimate children and, in fact, where perhaps the mother has never been married, and without mentioning names, have you ever checked into the fact as to whether the woman might be cohabiting with a man?

A I have discussed with clients - most of them are free - by that I mean that they will freely discuss if they are friendly with someone of the opposite sex.

Q I am talking particularly about somebody who may be living there. A Pardon. Could you clarify that?

Q -- about a putative father or a man who is cohabiting with the mother of these illegitimate children. Have you ever found instances, without mentioning names - have you ever found instances where men are living in the home with these children and the mother? A Yes, I have. I have several cases.

Q And what do you do in those instances? Do you include that in your report? A Yes. In instances such as this we tell the client that this is not condoned by our agency, of course - by this I mean common law relationship - and that the male with whom she is living must vacate the premises, that

is, if there are no children of his. If there are children of his, we usually bring him into the office or call him in and discuss the case with him and try to make some type of arrangements whereby he will feel a want to support his children.

Q Have you ever in any instance signed a complaint against any of these families who were getting welfare where there was a cohabitation? A What type of complaint do you mean, sir?

Q Have any complaints been made, any criminal complaints made? A I have never, Senator. I don't believe I have authority to sign a complaint in my capacity.

Q But you did include these situations in your report? A Yes, I did.

Q Have you ever had the opportunity -- did you ever work in that area of Mercer Street, 138 or 140 Mercer Street? A You are speaking of Hightstown, New Jersey?

Q Yes. A I did have that area, yes.

Q Did you ever go into 138 and 140 Mercer Street? A To be very truthful, in my mind it is not clear which property is 138 and which 140. I can't exactly recall. I do remember a past client mentioning Steve's Bar. I am familiar with that area.

Q Well, this would be the two houses right next to Steve's Bar. A There are three bars in that area, sir. I don't recall exactly which bar is Steve's. There are about three of them, almost one right next to each other.

Q Well, didn't you have to visit those homes where the

relief clients lived? A I did have one client at one time who was a disability case in a home - I don't think it was 138 though or 140. As I recall it, it was right in that row. It was back off the street. I did make a visit. This was a licensed boarding home or licensed rooming house. I'm sorry.

Q How many reports do you turn in each week?

A Each week?

Q Yes. -- to your superiors? A Well, if I average it by the week - my caseload averages roughly about 15 reports per month of my active cases - I would say if you narrow it down to an average, it would be four or five. But usually with our caseloads the way they are, you don't get a chance to do it that way. And may I add this: It is permitted for each individual case worker to do these reports and not turn them in at any specified time other than the deadline and usually I'll try to do them within my second or third week and I'll try to complete as much work as I can for the month of my monthly visits.

Q You have about fifteen per month? You have a caseload of about fifteen per month? A In my active cases, yes, sir. This does not include though the other incidents that come up; by that I mean, changing of addresses, cases that are discontinued for some reason or other or people moving into your territory.

Q So that you make fifteen reports a month roughly?

A That is for my active caseload. Now this does not include my pending cases; by that I mean, each case worker is assigned

new cases which he may get anywhere in the county other than his territory and the worker has to divide his time between his active caseload and his pending cases which he is assigned and try to make his investigations.

Q When you say you have 106 cases, a caseload of 106, are they active cases? A Yes, they are, sir.

Q Then in addition to those 106 cases, you also do the corollary work that is necessary in the job with respect to emergencies and new assignments, etc. Is that true?

A That's correct, sir.

Q How many hours a day do you put in your job? A I put in the full amount of time which I report in for work in the morning. Actually the office opens at nine o'clock, but I am usually there at least no later than 8:30. At times I have been, but most of the time I am there at 8:30 or better and I don't leave until the official closing hour of 4:30 and many times I take extra work to do with me on my own time.

Q Do you find that this 106 caseload is heavy, very heavy, or do you find that you are overworked or do you find that you can handle them easily enough or do you feel that your caseload is too much for the work that you have to do? A I feel the caseload is very heavy, sir. However, I don't mind doing it because I like the work that I am doing. I am interested in working with people.

Q Do you feel that you can give sufficient time to each of your cases or do you have to rush through them in order to meet your quota? A I feel I could use more time.

Q You could either have more time or less cases?

A That's correct, sir.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q When, for example, you find an individual living with one of your clients, an illicit relationship, and you testified, I believe, that she is instructed that he must leave the house and get out. -- A Not that she must - the man whom I found in the home.

Q That's right. A That's correct.

Q Now, after you do that, what do you do about it to see that it's accomplished? A Well, I can make a visit at my discretion. I can make several visits into the home to see if this man is there. But a fallacy erupts here because most of our clients know the hours which we work and after hours, I don't feel I know what is actually going on in this home. In many cases, I think, there are many things going on which the case workers do not know.

Q In other words, you think you are a social worker rather than a detective? A I would like to think of myself as a social worker rather than a detective.

Q So actually, it's your feeling I gather, even though you may instruct the client that the man must leave the home, you don't feel that that is much more than a warning and it is probably not obeyed in most instances, is that right?

A Well, I would say the client doesn't take my advice 100 per cent. I would put it that way. They listen to what we say.

Q Well, is this advice or an order? A Well, I

usually give them advice as to what to do. In most cases they do follow through.

Q Suppose they don't? A Then we will send them a letter. Before that, I usually discuss this case with my superior and then we will send them a letter and they will be asked to come in to discuss the case before Mr. Dougherty and my supervisor and they will be told again, and in most instances they do follow through after they have been called in.

Q Suppose they don't; then what do you do? A Then the Welfare Board would have to make a decision which would not be mine.

Q Well, what would the Board do; what alternatives would the Board have? A Well, I guess -- I really don't know. You are putting me on the spot there. I don't sit in at the Welfare Board meetings.

MR. RICHMAN: Well, I think we can ask Mr. Dougherty that. I don't think it is quite fair to press you.

SENATOR GROSSI: That's all.

MR. RICHMAN: Thank you very much.

Trooper Kobiela.

T H A D D E U S G. K O B I E L A, called as a witness, being duly sworn, testified as follows:

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q I don't have to explain your constitutional rights to you because you don't have any. You are a member of the State Police covered by a different statute.

What's your full name, sir? A Thaddeus Kobiela.

Q You are a member of the New Jersey State Police?

A Yes, sir.

Q And for how long have you been a member? A Nine years.

Q Are you an investigator? A Yes, sir.

Q Did you have occasion during your investigations of various welfare matters to visit 138 and 140 Mercer Street in Hightstown? A Yes, sir.

Q Can you describe to me the nature and condition of those properties and tell me when you were there? A I was there last year during the summer and the condition of the properties was very dirty. They were stinking. In one of the downstairs apartments especially it was so bad that every time you tried to talk the flies would fly all around your mouth, very bad.

Q What was the condition of the paint and the upkeep of the properties? A Dirty.

Q Did it look to you like these properties have been painted once a year? A No, sir.

Q What was the condition of the screens, if any? A There were none.

Q There were none? A No, sir.

Q What was the condition of the bathrooms? A Very dirty.

Q What kind of fixtures, modern, old? A No, they were old fixtures.

Q How about the kitchens? A The kitchens were

running true to form with the rest of the apartments.

Q How about the equipment in the kitchens, was it old or new? A Well, the people more or less had to share

what was in the apartments with each other and what they had wasn't much for what they were paying.

Q Did you have any occasion to observe any flooding or any water in any of these apartments? A There was

no flooding when we were there. I talked to the clients who were living at the places and they complained of it and in one downstairs apartment I was advised that about a week before I got there, somebody from the Board of Health had come there and advised them to take the wiring from along the floorboard and put it up along the ceiling on account of shocks going across the floor.

MR. RICHMAN: Thank you, sir.

RAYMOND DOUGHERTY, called as a witness, testified as follows:

MR. RICHMAN: I don't think it is necessary to swear Mr. Dougherty.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Will you tell us your position, sir, and how long you have held it and your background in this area? A I have been Director of the Mercer County Welfare Board since August 1961. However, I have had quite a background in welfare work. I started back in 1934 as a case worker with the Trenton Department of Public Welfare and I carried a caseload there for about eight years and then I transferred with the Parole

Division as a parole officer several years and also served as a parole supervisor, district parole supervisor. I had very valuable experience in the Army, working with people. I worked in the Psychiatric Section for several years. I worked with the Veterans' Administration after the war as a psychologist, vocational guidance, vocational education and guidance. And then I returned with the Department of Institutions and Agencies with the Bureau of Community Services and we made studies on delinquency prevention and community organization, and that is the background I have had in this welfare picture.

Q Can you tell us, sir, what the problem is so far as Mercer County is concerned; that is, the number of cases, the type of cases, how much it costs the county per year, etc.?

A We don't have those figures at our fingertips; however, we do have a caseload of about 2300 and the breakdown on that is roughly: Aid to the Blind, about 30 cases; Disability runs around 400; Old Age Assistance runs about 800; and the largest category is Aid to Dependent Children - I would say around 1300 or 1400.

Q Has that increased since the change in the law?

A Yes, sir.

Q What percentage of increase, would you say?

A Since 1960 now we are talking about?

Q Yes. A January, 1960. I can't say actually that the numbers -- Let's see, the number of cases that were transferred from the State to the county level has increased,

I would say, about 30 per cent.

Q What are the average caseloads of your case workers?

A As brought out here today, they average between 100 and 110.

Q How many case workers do you have? A We now have 24 case workers. Up until January 1st we had 20 and now we appointed 4 new case workers.

Q Without holding you to any specific figures, could you give us an idea of what this program costs the County of Mercer annually? A The County of Mercer or the over-

all program?

Q The over-all program. A Over three and one-half million dollars, approximately three and one-half million dollars.

Q Tell me how much of that can be attributed to ADC.

A Well, the largest share. We have about 2300 or 2400 cases. I'd say 50 per cent.

Q About 50 per cent of it is ADC approximately?

A Yes.

Q Now when we were talking to Mr. Young, we brought up the problem about what to do about a man living in an illicit relationship with one of your clients and we got as far as the Welfare Board. What happens if that problem gets to that point? A Well, as brought out by Mr. Young, we subpoena the client in order to intensely interview this person and find out what is going on. Of course, it is pretty hard to get the facts because these people say that they are

not living there and these are rumors in the neighborhood that we have to run down. It's pretty hard for us to get factual information. What we try to do is to say that if this home is not conducive to the strengthening of family life, which the program provides, we feel as though the children should be taken out of that home and placed in foster homes with the State Board of Child Welfare, and that has been done in several cases.

Q And that has been done? A Oh, yes. Of course, this area that we are talking about now is a problem in other words. We do refer these cases to the law enforcement agents at the beginning. In other words, where there are putative fathers and there are deserting fathers, we refer them to the local - or the prosecutor's office, but the staffs of these agencies are not sufficient to cope with these problems. There are too many. I'd like to say in connection with this - and you probably know this - that both the Federal and the State governments are planning some type of remedy in order to cope with this problem.

Q That is what I wanted to ask you next. For example, we had five witnesses here this morning, all women, and they had a total of 27 illegitimate children in addition to some legitimate children. A Yes.

Q Apparently they have cost the State and the county about \$70,000 in the last few years. Now what is the thinking, what is your thinking, what is the thinking in welfare circles about what, if anything, can be done about this problem, taking into account the fact that the children are, of course,

the innocent victims of the circumstances and yet the taxpayer is shouldering a tremendous load? What, if anything, can be done about it? A Well, of course, it is understood that welfare is not a cause of these problems, that welfare is the treatment. In other words, we only treat and these are symptoms and I think we have to go a little deeper into this situation. This is a cultural pattern problem that some people who have been reared in certain sections of the country, their folkways and mores are different and what is conventional in our area seems unconventional to them. In other words, their social values are different. I would like to say that these people, I believe, are in need of counselling and the only way we can do that is with lower caseloads, with better trained people, experienced workers, so that they will have time with the lower caseload to sit down with these people and maybe we can salvage some of these people and maybe we can give them some direction. I don't know what other way you can do it - I mean, by force - we do have laws on the books. We do have laws against adultery and fornication and so forth and so on. But we also know that our institutions are crowded. Now, is it going to help to place these people in institutions or is it a better plan to try to work with them? I think it is a better plan through rehabilitation, trying to work with these people, maybe to raise their standards.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Well, when we point out that in our hearings in the State - and this is the third county in which we have been -

that the pattern seems to be somewhat similar, which is probably an understatement - and that the incidence of illegitimacy in a family, in a particular family, where we see women with 14, 15, 8, 10 illegitimate children in the same family, does the suspicion arise in your mind as a Welfare Director and one who seems to have had a wide and varied experience that some of these people are taking advantage of the fact that they know that their children, their offspring, will be taken care of by the state? A I can't say that. I can't say that. You can't generalize from a small sample of cases whether or not that is true, but it would seem to be true in some cases. However, we would like to point out that illegitimacy is not peculiar to people who have to apply for assistance. In other words, there are a great number of illegitimate children that are being born every day that never come in contact with the public assistance agency. But it does seem that there is a high incidence of illegitimacy in the public assistance cases. And as I pointed out before, I think it's the sociological, the cultural, patterns of certain groups of people whose social values as far as living together as man and wife and assuming responsibility of a family are not as intense as it is in our section of New Jersey, we'll say.

Q Let's take two different patterns. Let's take two contrasting philosophies, one, that conditions that exist in a municipality or a community or in our country cause us to institute welfare programs to take care of these people. That's one side of the coin. Now, the other side of the coin is that those people who are already on welfare - do they take

advantage, in some cases, of the fact that they know that as these children are born the expense for the raising of these children is going to be taken by the taxpayers. In other words, two kinds of abuses: One, we will say, the abuse, of course, where a woman has illegitimate children and she is not on welfare and finally because she has been deserted she finds herself without funds and she is indigent so she has to apply somewhere for help for these innocent children. Now we find that there are so many cases where a person who went on welfare, who had one or two illegitimate children when she first went on - we find that that illegitimacy now has been built up to where there are 8 and 10 and 14 and 15 children who were born illegitimately of an illegitimate relationship while they were on welfare and that each case is treated separately and extra money is allotted to these families for each child and each mouth that they have to feed. Now how do we go about changing the mores of those people? What do we do? Do we allow that situation to continue unabated and continue to give them extra number of dollars or is there something that we can do to curb that? We know that we can't stamp it out entirely, but can we curb it and how can we curb it? How would you propose that we might do something about it? A Well, first of all, Senator, I think that there are people in our society who are not good citizens and they take advantage of every opportunity they can to circumvent the statutes. Now this could be one way, and in various cases we would say that they are circumventing the statute by not being

as honest in their giving information to the case worker as the case worker is as honest in trying to help them in their difficulty. Now, that's the weakness. We are dealing with people who maybe don't have the wherewithal to understand, although we take every opportunity to inform them what is expected of them. etc.

Q Now we take that particular picture. We talk now about trying to rehabilitate those people. What about the cases where your investigators or your social workers discover that Mr. X is the putative father of a child that was just born to this woman who is on welfare? Are complaints made with respect to those putative fathers to the proper authorities through your agency?

A Well, putative father complaints - the paternity is established at the municipal level - municipal court. The complaint is made and we have to verify that a complaint has been made as to the paternity of this child at the local level. Then these people are brought before the court and then it's within the jurisdiction of the court to decide.

Q What do you do in those cases where the putative father is known and lives in the neighborhood and no complaint has been made?

A Well, if people don't cooperate with us - if we feel as though they are not cooperating and we feel as though there is ground for suspicion, we have the right to withhold assistance.

Q Now a child is born. No complaint has been made. There is another mouth to feed. Somebody makes the decision now to allot X number of extra dollars to this family for the

care of this particular child, don't they? A I understand.

Q And isn't it a fact that they should be sure that a complaint has been filed against John Doe or John Brown before --

A We do that.

Q We have had evidence before us on so many occasions where no complaint has been made with respect to these fathers and yet the take has been increased. Now what I am leading to is that one of the things the Committee has under consideration as a possible recommendation - and we'd like to have your expert opinion as to whether you think that this would act as a deterrent - is that a separate organization be set up within the prosecutor's office whose staff would have nothing else to do except to follow through on deserting fathers and pressing complaints against putative fathers in order to force them to support the children or bring them back to justice, that if that were done, that might be a curb on the men, at least. A I would like to see that.

Q Of course, the other is that shelters be set up. And I think you made mention of the fact that in some instances you recommend that the children be taken away and put out in foster homes. A That's right.

Q So those two things together - would that in your opinion act as an effective curb on this condition? A I think that's a very good plan and I think that we would work wholeheartedly with the prosecutor's office, which we do now. But as I pointed out, there are so many of these desertions and absentee fathers, that they just can't handle them all and

it's quite a job. They don't have the staff. That's all.

Q Talking about not having the staff, what is the norm of caseload per worker in order to do an effective job? What would you say the normal caseload should be?

A Well, the Federal government recommends in cases that need intensive casework, having a caseload of about 60.

Q About 60? A Yes.

Q And all your workers have over 100? A Yes, that's true.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q To go back to this problem of rental, I assume that a good portion of the moneys expended by your agency are spent for rent for various properties, -- A Yes.

Q -- which you generally, I take it, pay directly or through your client. A Through the client. That's a Federal regulation.

Q Who makes the deal for the property? I mean, who negotiates the rent, the client or your agency? A No, the client would find the property and report to the case worker that she has this property, etc. Then the case worker would appraise the situation and, if he felt as though it was exorbitant, he would say, well, unless there is a real emergency and we have to take these people off the street, we'd better look for another house.

Q Is there anybody in your organization in which all of this real estate activity is coordinated? A Yes, we have a supervisor of property and resources who handles the liquidation of insurance and liquidation of properties and

so forth, but not in the specific rentals.

Q He has nothing to do with that? A No. We feel that is the responsibility of the case worker because he knows the case, he knows the situation, and also, when there is a transfer into a new property, we have an agreement with the City of Trenton, with the housing inspector, that we are to notify them and they will make an inspection of this property to find out whether or not it is livable.

Q That pertains only to the City of Trenton?

A Yes. We'd like to see it in other municipalities.

Q But you don't have it in any other municipality?

A No, not that I know of.

Q Well, have you taken into account the fact that your case worker, no matter how diligent he may be, is probably at a disadvantage in dealing with a real estate man because he has no real knowledge of what rental values are?

A That could be. We feel as though - I think it's the general concensus that maybe if we had the rent controls back on, it would be helpful.

Q Well, quite aside from rent controls, do you think it would be helpful and result in any savings to the taxpayers if you had some controls within your organization to review these rental situations from time to time?

A Well, you see, you have a problem of scarcity of habitable living homes. Now, if we did have a choice, if there were enough properties or rental properties that we could make a choice, then I feel as though we could hold for a lower rental. But we are

responsible for these people and for these children, to see that they are taken care of, and sometimes we feel as though the rents are exorbitant.

Q When you feel that the rents are exorbitant, I take it from your testimony in an emergency situation there is very little, if anything, you can do about it. A Well, we wouldn't even pay the full price in an emergency of what he would ask. It has been cut down. Sometimes it's really pretty high.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q You don't pay the rents directly, do you? A No, but we affirm or decide what we will pay to that client in that particular home.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Don't you think you would have better control if the rents were handled directly by your agency? A Here's what I would say - we're talking about vendor payments - that may be helpful, in other words where our agency would deal directly with the landlord in making the payments for the rent, vendor rent payments. I think there is an area there that could be helpful, not only in that particular situation, but we also have clients who receive the rent, but never pay the landlords.

Q Exactly. A Yes, I'd be in favor of vendor payments.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Doesn't the Federal government frown on that? They will not permit you, will they, to pay rent directly?

I think under the rules of the welfare agency, you must give a check to the relief recipient and they are to pay all of their expenses out of that. A That's true.

Q It used to be in the old days of direct relief, emergency relief, in the municipalities where the municipality paid the rent and where they also issued food orders.

A That's right. I have had that experience.

Q But here under the ADC program, they give the check to the relief recipient and they spend that money as they see fit and they are supposed to meet their obligations.

A I would say this, Senator, in many cases that the people could manage the cash, etc. I would like to see the vendor payment plan as an option in those cases where we feel as though these people don't know how to manage their affairs and they are abusing it, that we would be assured that the money is being spent for the purpose that it is allocated.

Q But you are prevented from doing so now by regulations of the Federal government. A It is not within our plan now.

Q We have found in our investigation that where there is an illicit cohabitation, by agreement between the woman and her paramour, that he gives her X number of dollars per week towards the support of his offspring or for the privilege of living with this woman. Is there any effort made by your investigators to find out if this is so and if they should come across this situation, is it reported? A Yes.

Q And is the proper deduction made? A It is, but

we work on the basis that we wouldn't like to have that arrangement whereby the children are subject to such an environment where a man is cohabiting with the mother of these children. Now there is no real family life there. We wouldn't condone that situation. We would tell the client that this has to stop and unless we have facts though to prove it -- Now we work on various rumors and information that we receive, anonymous letters, and so forth. But it's pretty hard for our case workers to prove these situations, you see. Now if a woman comes out and says she is living with him, we say "Well, why don't you get married and take care of these children." We would like to handle them that way.

Q In the formula that you use for determining the amount of relief to be granted to any family, does it influence the amount by knowing that they are paying a higher rent than would normally be expected? In other words, if a client came to you and said that she was forced to move from where she was, where she was paying \$60 a month rent, and now she has the same number of children and she has to move to another place where she has to pay \$100 a month rent, now would that make any difference in the amount of allotment that she would get under those circumstances? A Well, if we had to pay the \$100, we'd have to pay it.

Q You would have to pay the difference? A Yes.

Q You would have to give her \$40 a month more then?

A Yes.

Q And yet you have no control over the rooms that she would take for herself, is that true? A We have none.

That's why I say maybe rent control would be helpful.

Q So if the only place that she could get was \$150 a month, you would have to meet that too, wouldn't you?

A Well, that's pretty high. I don't know.

Q Well, there are any number of instances where if you add up what they pay per week, it comes to \$125, \$130 a month.

A Theoretically it would be so.

Q You have no control whatsoever over the amount of rent that they pay or have to pay. That's figured in your formula. You have no control. You can't say to the landlord, "You can't charge that much. The relief department will not pay that much"?

A Well, we can say it; we have said it. But whether or not he will accept this tenant or not is up to him, see.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q But you are actually at his mercy.

A Oh, absolutely, yes, if there is nothing else to do. I mean, we have to take care of the family. In other words, you know we have a big urban renewal project in the City of Trenton and people are forced to leave these areas, etc., and it causes a shortage of homes.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Do you feel that in many of these places where the relief recipients are living, the rent is unconscionable and perhaps if it weren't for the fact the State was paying the rent, that they could never get that kind of money for those rooms?

A I think it was brought out by the landlord - and I've heard this before - that certain types of

people are greater risks as tenants and they feel though that this is justified. I don't subscribe to that. But they feel this is justified because they don't take care of the property and after a year or so they have to spend a considerable sum in renovating the property.

Q It would seem to be that they are triple A risks as far as financial ability to pay the rent. They are triple A guarantee. A Yes, I would say that.

Q So when they say they are a risk, they mean they are a risk because they are more destructive than others. By the same token, don't they live in hovels too? Don't they live in places that landlords don't bother to repair?

A Yes.

Q And if these same people were living in an apartment house in a better neighborhood, they would be a financial risk perhaps, but not a destructive risk. A I would say there is a guarantee of a relief recipient paying because he gets it from the county, except where the client doesn't pay.

Q Destroying something that is beyond destruction doesn't constitute a risk. A Yes, but as I said, we try to have some control and in the City of Trenton where the largest population of the county is concentrated, we do have a very good working agreement with the housing inspection of the Bureau of Health and we are trying to eliminate those situations. In fact, I had hearing this morning on one.

BY MR. RICHMAN:

Q Is it your impression in this real estate rental situation that landlords are generally taking advantage of

this situation? A I don't know whether I can make a general statement on that.

Q But you have known of instances where that has happened? A I have known of instances where I thought the rent was exorbitant.

BY SENATOR GROSSI:

Q Is there anything you would like to say to the Committee, Mr. Dougherty? A Senator, I had a statement prepared. Of course, some of the things that we have been talking about are covered in my statement. But I'd be pleased to read it to you, if you want, to get my thinking.

Q If we have already covered it, that won't be necessary. But if there is something there that we haven't covered that you would like to say, why ---

MR. RICHMAN: If you have covered the substantial part of it, why don't you file it with the Committee?

THE WITNESS: I'd be glad to.

SENATOR GROSSI: We'll be glad to incorporate it. But if there is something that you think needs some verbal expression by you, don't hesitate to say so, even if it's in criticism of the Committee. We grant you that right.

MR. RICHMAN: We've been criticized before.

THE WITNESS: The object of your Committee, as I understand it, is to try to find out what is going on so that if there are any improvements to be made, you can make them. Is that right?

MR. RICHMAN: Yes.

THE WITNESS: I will be glad to leave this with you.

MR. RICHMAN: All right, sir. Thank you very much. You have been very helpful and we appreciate your coming.

SENATOR GROSSI: Is there anyone else here who wants to be heard before this Committee.

Mr. Engelman, is there anything that you wanted to say?

IRVING J. ENGELMAN: Nothing that I have prepared to say. If there are any particular questions you would like to address to me, I would be glad to answer them.

SENATOR GROSSI: Toward the end of our hearings we would expect to have you come before us to give us the benefit of your thinking and your experience.

MR. ENGELMAN: There are a number of subjects that were alluded to here today that I think I would be prepared to make amplifying statements about.

SENATOR GROSSI: Well, if you will start running over those things in your own mind and perhaps making some notes, the day won't be too far when you can come before us and give us the benefit of your thinking.

Now, if there is no one else - Mrs. Burkhardt you don't want to say anything?

MRS. BURKHARDT: No.

SENATOR GROSSI: All right. That will conclude the hearing today and the next hearing of the Welfare

Investigating Committee will be duly announced to
the press and the public.

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(See the next page for the statement prepared
by Raymond A. Dougherty, Director of Welfare,
Mercer County Welfare Board.)

THE WELFARE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE OF THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

PUBLIC HEARING, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1962 2:00 P.M.

The following statement was given by Raymond A. Dougherty, Director of Welfare, Mercer County Welfare Board at the above noted hearing.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I subscribe to Secretary Ribicoff's statement on the administration of assistance: that the assistance program should be administered with a hard head and with a warm heart. A hard head in that we must service these cases in the most efficient manner through adequate collateral investigation and factualized data. With a warm heart in that we must respect the individual's dignity and his basic rights as an American citizen. This can best be achieved by the application of casework techniques which is centered on helping the individual help himself.

We are not satisfied that we are doing the best job. By that I mean there is room for improvement in the stabilization of personnel, there has been an unusual turnover in our experience. The need for staff development whereby the caseworker will become more skillful in the use of the rules and regulations and the approved techniques in servicing applicants and active assistance cases. We need to reduce case loads to a manageable number so that the caseworker can service them more adequately. With a reduced case load the caseworker would be able to make more frequent home visits and other necessary collateral contacts; hence, get to know the recipient more intimately and establish a more cooperative relationship in determining continuing need. In other words we need to run the job rather than have the job run us. The policy of the Mercer County Welfare Board is focused on working toward this goal by provision for additional caseworkers in the 1962 budget, and by the establishment of an in-service training program to assist the caseworkers to become more familiar with community resources and other tools of the trade.

The area of greatest concern in the public assistance program is in the category of Aid to Dependent Children. As in the other assistance categories: Old Age Assistance, Disability Assistance, and Aid to the Blind, we are treating symptoms; by that I mean welfare is not the cause, it is offered as treatment. We must look for the causes in the cultural pattern of the community and the socio-economic reasons for the disorganization of the individual and the family evidenced in the separation of parents, alcoholism, immorality and other deteriorating factors. Literature on this subject is replete with studies of these causes. The objective of the Aid to Dependent/Children Program is to shield children from these social hazards and to maintain and to strengthen family life.

An area of concern within the Aid to Dependent Children Program is the absentee father. Here we find some fathers who would try to circumvent the statute and regulations by leaving their families and placing the sole responsibility for raising the children on the mother. Some of these fathers are married to the mother of the children made eligible for assistance and some have cohabited with the mother of these children without the benefit of matrimony. Although the criminal statutes of our state provide for the apprehension of these persons we find in actual practice the number of violations are so great that the law enforcement agencies do not have sufficient staff to cope with this situation. This problem is being given serious consideration by the Federal and State Governments.

As noted elsewhere, the welfare program is not the cause of this situation the cause or causes of family disorganization could be brought about for various reasons. Sociologists who have studied the family cite that young people enter into matrimony in a very casual manner. There is little real knowledge of character, disposition, general fitness for the trials and responsibilities of married life.

Beginning March 1, 1962 the medical vendor payment plan

will become effective throughout the State. This will give the County Welfare Boards greater control over funds expended for the services of physicians and pharmacists. We look forward to a rent vendor/^{payment} plan whereby the welfare directors would have control over funds earmarked for rent with the option to change the payment of rent on a vendor basis in cases where the client is unable to properly manage assistance funds.

We in public assistance must steer a difficult course in identifying need and determining eligibility for assistance by the applicant. There are applicants who rightfully or wrongfully, honestly or dishonestly think they are entitled to assistance just for the asking.

It is our job to determine who is needy and who is not.

