

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE INVOLVEMENT  
OF MANITOBA'S SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM  
IN SOCIAL ACTION

Being a Report of a Group Research Project  
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by

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## INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study was the manifestation of social action within Manitoba's social welfare system. An attempt has been made to examine the forms of activity employed, the issues prompting action, and recipients of the system's efforts to inform or advise. Some analysis has also been centered on the origin of concerns, and the level of agency personnel responsible for actually carrying out the action. Ultimately the purpose of this research project has been to describe

how has the Manitoba Social Welfare System been implementing the recognition of social action as an inherent part of its function.

The question posed derives from a particular view of society, and awareness of the implications of rapid social change. Within this broad theoretical context, the study's extreme relevance to the social work profession is based upon a firm conviction that the social welfare system has a crucial role to play in the evolution of a social order which facilitates the growth and sustenance of man.

## CHAPTER I

### SOCIAL CHANGE, SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL ACTION

The world of today functions at a pace and complexity, and in a state of such rapid flux, that one is prohibited from viewing society as a static entity. There was a time just recently past, when men lived out their lives according to patterns and beliefs established by their fathers, or even grandfathers. Today's situation is so altered that parents must relearn the ways of the world with their children if they are to maintain any sense of contact with a social order which changes at an ever increasing rate.

A crucial point which is frequently forgotten in studies of man's environment, is that man himself created the social order around him.<sup>1</sup> As populations have increased, as knowledge and skills, needs and wants have become increasingly diverse, it has been necessary to divide the labor, to specialize tasks, and to segment services so that maximal good would be distributed to maximal numbers. Basic to every social institution, every societal structure, are the needs of man, and his accumulated efforts to provide

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<sup>1</sup>In The Sane Society (New York; Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1955), Erich Fromm discusses the social evolution of man with patience and optimism.

for himself and others. Societies are not, therefore, environmental "givens" which men should seek to preserve at the expense of their own humanity. The social order is only as perfect and effective as they who together created it. It is unlikely that the possibilities for fruitful living have been exhausted, or the best solutions found. In fact, with each new discovery about man and his potentials, or the possibilities inherent in the physical world around him, new vistas for existence are exposed.

Social organization, or the ordering of people-serving structures and institutions within society, must, in such a fluid context, be considered as in process.<sup>1</sup> And the challenge of our period lies in comprehension of that process, with the associated responsibility for influencing its course. In order to approach such an end, the workings of the social order must be examined more closely.

One useful way of conceptualizing the divisions or functional parts of society is by systems. Each system represents the coordinated activities and responsibilities involved in the provision of some specialized service. The major systems considered by Sanders are government, economics, law, education, health, religion, recreation, family,

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<sup>1</sup>Scott Greer, Social Organization, (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 7.

and social welfare.<sup>1</sup> The responsibilities of each system may be conceived of in a variety of ways. Two views of system responsibility will be discussed relative to social welfare.

Some theorists and practitioners within social welfare interpret the system's role in society as one of task performance. They consider that system function is defined by societal needs, and that social welfare should therefore serve to maintain the established social order.<sup>2</sup>

This approach derives from an attitude that the existing social constructs are part of some "master plan", not to be disputed. If individuals, or whole groups of people are excluded from that plan and its ongoing operation, then their exclusion is considered their personal failure, which in no way implicates "the plan" as being faulty. Social Welfare Services are thereby devised to bandage and temporarily support these inept individuals in some manner which, though inadequate in terms of their needs, at least softens their temporary deprivation. Two results are desired of such an approach. Deviant individuals in receipt of social welfare services will be made comfortable enough to prevent total deprivation which could accumulate

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<sup>1</sup>Irwin Sanders, The Community, An Introduction to a Social System, (New York: The Ronald Press Co, 1959), p.192.

<sup>2</sup>Harold Wilensky and Charles Lebeaux, Industrial Society and Social Welfare, (New York: The Russell Sage Foundation, 1965 ed.) pp. 138-139, originated the concept of "residual" as opposed to "institutional" social welfare.



and eventually constitute major threat to the society at large (i.e. 7,000 welfare recipients in the city of Winnipeg are sufficiently pacified, and fed to prevent chaos and looting in the streets). Secondly, the degree of stigma and relative discomfort of the services provided, is meant to propel those erring back into the mainstream of society, while at the same time discouraging the downfall of other potential deviants.<sup>1</sup> In such a view, the social welfare system has a clear social control function. Obviously this orientation is antithetical to the one that gave rise to this study.

Armed with a reminder of the origin of society, and the need-meeting function of social structures, and at the same time being aware of the forces of social change, a broader function must be assigned to social welfare. The residual concept of social welfare described above could be compared to any one-way communication model, bringing directives and provisions from the social order to individuals in need. A more viable model links individuals to society through a social welfare system which functions not only as a need-meeting institution, but also as an open channel for communication. Social Welfare services were defined in 1959 by a United Nations expert group as

organized activity that aims at helping towards a

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Wolins, "The Societal Function of Social Welfare", New Perspectives, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring, 1967).

mutual adjustment of individuals and their social environment.

This definition of social welfare requires a degree of acuity, and built-in mechanisms for the system to respond to its clientele. There are two responsibilities inherent in awareness of the needs of people. The social welfare system of the model must be prepared to adjust its own structures and services where it is accountable for need-meeting. Furthermore, if the system really intends to influence "mutuality" of adjustment between the individual and the social environment, its responsibility carries over to informing other systems of their shortcomings.

People being served by the social welfare system are very often excluded, in some manner, from the normal workings of society. Many writers who despair the inequities of industrial society (Wilensky and Lebeaux, Fromm, Michael Harrington, etc.) help to emphasize the magnitude of social welfare's unchallenged responsibility in this regard. It has been and possibly could continue to be, easy to ignore the needs and rights of expanding categories of "worthless" men. But it is argued here that such social irresponsibility is contrary to the inherent function of all systems, and particularly that of social welfare which "provides the most sensitive possible instrument for spotting emerging needs and problems, weak spots in the social

fabric."<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of this view of social welfare's function, it is apparent that there is need of some natural process of communication rising from service experience, through the system itself, and were necessary, to the broader community. It is to this process, in the context just provided that Elizabeth Wickenden has attached the term "social action".<sup>2</sup>

Social action has become a popular phrase, which is by no means limited to social welfare practice. Its meaning is frequently tinged with radical overtones, and linked with civil rights or power movements in the United States. Saul Alinsky and French Canadian "animateurs" have adopted this term for their particular community action programs. It is the subject of hot dispute rising out of American poverty program experiences such as the Mobilization for Youth project in New York, where communication of the needs of people (in a fairly forceful manner) has disturbed the City fathers.

The topicality of social action is not accidental. Masses of people, particularly in the United States, are increasingly alienated from the institutions which order their lives. This is a symptom of technological societies

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Wickenden, "Social Action", (Encyclopedia of Social Work, 15th ed., pp. 697 - 703.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.,

as they become increasingly bureaucratic in structure. Social action constitutes one attempt to reverse the flow of communication within bureaucratic pyramids, sending information from its base about people's needs, to the remote, apparently disengaged organizational apex.<sup>1</sup>

There is some discussion as well, about the effectiveness of attempts to move such awareness up through existing structures. Even within social welfare there are proponents of radical activism who would ignore the validity and potential for change of even the system itself, advising blatant attacks on any dysfunctional part of the social structure.<sup>2</sup>

This study is based on the premise that social welfare is a viable system which can be most effective in its service and community functions when it is alert and responsive to the needs observed in daily practice, and is further prepared to promote change and policy decisions which will ultimately prevent creation of recognized social problems. Spokesmen for the field exercising this social action function play two roles in the process. They are, in some cases, authorities in a particular area of social organization and activity, and in others, they act as reporters

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<sup>1</sup>Erich Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, Toward a Humanized Technology, (New York: Harper & Row, Pub. Inc. 1968), p. 104.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Cloward of New York's Mobilization for Youth implied this approach at a recent MASW Conference in Winnipeg.

and pleaders for a particular area of observed need.<sup>1</sup> As a result, they direct their information and concern to eventual change within their own social system, and to other systems within the structure of the community. Thus social welfare assumes a participating, responsible role in the evolution of a social organization which, through responsiveness to the needs of people, should become increasingly effective.

#### Summary

Recognizing that rapid social change has implications for structures and services in present day society, it has been suggested that the social welfare system is particularly responsible for communicating its experience and impressions in an effort to influence the course and direction of that change. A research project was consequently designed with the objective of describing the extent and nature of the Manitoba Social Welfare system's efforts to share its experience, knowledge and concerns with those responsible for effecting social policy. The following chapter will discuss the method used to pursue these questions.

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Wickenden, "Social Action"

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

The purpose of this study was to describe the kind of social action that the social welfare system in Manitoba has been doing. No attempt was made to evaluate the content or effectiveness of the social action, since the objective was limited to obtaining a factual, quantitative picture in terms of a number of questions posed. This chapter will discuss the method by which this aim was achieved.

#### Definitions

##### Social Action

For the purposes of the study, social action was defined as

activity undertaken in the name of any agency or organization within the Manitoba social welfare system, for the definite purpose of communicating an awareness of social needs to an institution with the power to shape or influence social policy.

In order for the social action to be measurable, a unit of study had to be defined. Since social action actually represents a kind of communication, specific forms of expression were selected to be called "indicators of social action". A comprehensive range of indicators was selected, including briefs, presentations, committee re-

ports, radio, television or press releases, speeches or public addresses, conference or institution initiation or participation, citizen's meetings, research or study reports, petitions, public demonstrations, and letters. Provision was also made to include any additional indicators which served the defined social action purpose. There was no weighting or assignment of value to particular indicators because the study was not attempting to qualify the social action. The intention was to learn which forms of social action were most frequently used, and, if possible, to hypothesize about the basis for their selection.

#### Manitoba Social Welfare System

The Manitoba social welfare system was defined to include twenty direct service agencies in Winnipeg which were used as School of Social Work field placements, eight rural social welfare agencies, the Community Welfare Planning Council, and the Manitoba Association of Social Workers.

The field placement agencies were selected because they represented a wide range of agency characteristics along with the common element of some professional social workers on staff.<sup>1</sup> It was felt that involvement of pro-

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<sup>1</sup>This has been one of the selection criteria for the School of Social Work field placements. The only agency in the grouping which did not have professional social workers on staff was Mount Carmel Clinic.

professionals should, if anything, enhance the agency's social action commitment, and hence the validity of the assumption that this activity was an inherent part of social welfare function. In addition to this factor, the grouping included the larger agencies in the city which were most likely to be in contact with a wide range of social problems -- many beyond the particular agency's service responsibility. This too should have emphasized the need for communication of awareness of unmet needs to the broader community. These agencies also represented both public and private auspices, primary and secondary settings, and included a variety of fields of practice. It seemed that the study was thus assured of a thorough cross-section of Winnipeg's social welfare system.

Urban direct service agencies selected for the study were the

Child Guidance Clinic of Winnipeg  
 Children's Aid Society of Eastern Manitoba  
 Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg  
 Children's Hospital Social Service Department  
 City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department  
 Department of Provincial Welfare - North Office  
 Department of Provincial Welfare - South Office  
 Family Bureau of Greater Winnipeg  
 Jewish Child and Family  
 Juvenile Court of Winnipeg  
 Manitoba Home for Girls  
 Marymound Home for Girls  
 Mount Carmel Clinic  
 Municipal Hospital Social Service Department  
 Neighborhood Service Centre  
 Selkirk Mental Hospital Social Service Department<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This agency will be considered with the urban agencies because it is used as a field placement for the School of Social Work.



Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba  
 Winnipeg General Hospital Social Service Department  
 Young Men's Hebrew Association  
 Young Women's Christian Association

Of the twenty urban agencies listed, the City of Winnipeg Welfare Department, and Children's Hospital Social Service Department were not used in the study due to restrictions of agency or researcher's time.

An attempt was made to include all rural social welfare agencies through a letter inviting the total eight agencies to participate in the project.

Two agencies decided against participating<sup>1</sup>, and of the remaining six, four were fully engaged in the research process, and two participated only through the mail. The six agencies from rural Manitoba's social welfare system were

Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba  
 (office in Portage la Prairie)  
 Children's Aid Society of Western Manitoba  
 (office in Brandon)  
 Department of Provincial Welfare, Dauphin  
 Department of Provincial Welfare, Portage la Prairie  
 Department of Provincial Welfare, The Pas  
 Public Welfare Department, Brandon

These agencies function in the major areas of population in the province of Manitoba, and were considered valuable to the study for their involvement with rural problems, and potentially different concerns.

The Community Welfare Planning Council (CWPC) and

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<sup>1</sup>Child Guidance Clinic, Brandon; The Probation Service, Dauphin.

the Manitoba Association of Social Workers (MASW) were included in the definition of the Manitoba social welfare system because they were seen as important structures within it. Even though their functions are not tied to direct service, both organizations have knowledge of, and obligations to the social welfare field. The rationale for social action responsibility therefore included the CWPC and MASW.

The total sample of social welfare agencies was so inclusive, that it was considered to be broadly representative of the Manitoba social welfare system.

#### The Approach and its Limitations

A letter was sent to the director of each agency in the sample, explaining the objectives of the study, defining social action for its purpose, and making clear the nature of the participation requested from the agency.<sup>1</sup> Arrangements were then made for a pair of researchers to examine the agency's records of social action, and interview the agency director.

A pre-test was run with five agencies which were selected on the simple basis of familiarity to individual researchers.<sup>2</sup> Social action records were examined in

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix I

<sup>2</sup>Canadian Paraplegic Association; Children's Home, Care Services; Dept. of Provincial Welfare -- Central-Interlake Regional Office; St. Boniface Hospital Social Service Dept.

terms of the questions being asked, and interviews were held with agency directors.

On the basis of this experience, a two year time period was selected for the study, because it seemed manageable and likely to produce a significant quantity of data. Social action undertaken between January 1, 1967 and December 31, 1968 was therefore subjected to analysis.

The researchers were reminded by the pre-test that descriptive study methods do not aim at statistical precision alone, because the objective is to obtain a flexible picture of tendencies, which at best will imply relationships between phenomena, and suggest hypotheses for further investigations. The questions posed by this study were intended to guide collection of data, while leaving room for recording pertinent, unanticipated information about the social action. This built-in latitude for responsiveness, inevitably created a certain imprecision.

It also became apparent in the pre-test that social action records were sometimes incomplete, or obscurely filed, emphasizing the fact that not all social action (even within the limited definition and indicators of the study) could possibly be recorded and described.

Experiences in the pre-test resulted in the definition of social action being further refined to exclude public relations, or efforts in which the central purpose

was to acquaint the community with the nature of the individual agency's services. Also excluded were efforts which were internal to the agency's function (i.e. up-dating programs to meet more adequately newly defined needs which fell within agency service responsibility.)

Another result of the pre-test was an awareness of the extreme importance of the attitude of the researcher, and his effect on the agency response to the study. Considerable defensiveness on the part of agency staff was noted, and clearly had to be dispelled for best study results.

Through the pre-test and actual study, the limitations of the study design and method were quite apparent. Some of these have already been implied. Records of social action as defined and to be measured by the study were often incomplete, or inaccessible. There were problems in tabulating the results which related partly to the degree of indefiniteness of the questions posed, and partly to the fact that ten individual researchers were inevitably going to vary in their methods of interpreting study objectives and social action records, and hence would record somewhat differently. The actual interpretation of the study's scope and intention was open to misinterpretation by agency personnel who were ultimately responsible for making the required records and information available for recording.

### Questions Posed by the Study

Within the stated purpose of the study which was to describe how the various agencies were engaging in social action, it was necessary to delineate the significant areas of inquiry. It seemed that the indicators represented part of the social action method, but alone told very little about the nature of the activity. Consequently several areas of inquiry were established, including the source of the concern, what part of the agency enacted the communication, what topics were being addressed, what part of the policy-making community was being approached, and to what end. This section serves to discuss each of these question areas in some depth.

### Form of the Social Action

The indicators constituted the forms of social action to be studied. The intention was to note preferential usage, and to hypothesize on the significance and implications of the findings.

### Issues of the Social Action

It was an important objective of the study to learn which unmet social needs were being perceived by the various agencies as important enough to prompt taking some action. The list of eleven social issues proposed for study follows:-

Inadequate income  
 Inadequate housing  
 Child neglect  
 Illegitimate pregnancy  
 Divorce, desertion, separation, marital discord  
 Alcoholism  
 Drugs  
 Unlawful behavior  
 Mental handicap  
 Physical handicap  
 Urban renewal

On the basis of findings, it was intended that some conclusion might be drawn about the breadth of agency interest and awareness. There was some interest too in noting whether or not any particular minority or age groupings were being singled out for special concern. Since issue was expected to be the most important aspect of the social action from the agency viewpoint, it was anticipated that the relationships between issue and the other factors being studied could prove very significant.

#### Source of the Social Action

In view of the rationale for the study, there was some question of whom, within agency structure and contacts, actually initiated and sponsored the social action function. Were the concerns growing directly out of service experience, and if so, at the client, professional staff, administrative, or Board of Director level? Or were there forces from outside agencies insighting awareness, and urging that some action be taken?

The findings under this heading were expected to

reflect the interpretation of agency function, and to suggest something about the use of agency structure.

Adjacent to the question of source of idea, was the question of who carried out the social action. This too would imply something about interpretation of social action responsibility, and could have implications for the form, issue, and direction of the social action.

#### Direction of the Social Action

It was considered within the scope of this study to ask which social policy-makers, or bodies capable of influencing such decisions were being addressed by the welfare system's social action efforts. The study's rationale was closely tied with the system's model for studying community, and hence provided a basis for considering which sectors of the social environment might be involved. Within the nine systems from Sanders (law and government, education, economic, family, religious, social welfare, recreation, health), government and the social welfare system were given extra consideration, because it was apparent that many social policy decisions ultimately rest with the legislature, or with the service giving organizations inside the social welfare system. Federal, provincial and municipal governments were therefore divided into cabinet, administrative, committee, and individual legislation levels. The social welfare system was divided

into fields of practice. It was intended that this would prevent blurring of possible trends and preponderances of particular channels of communication. It was recognized that the findings in this area of questioning might hold potential for further studies centered on effectiveness of social action strategies.

#### Intent and Response of the Social Action

Recognizing that evaluation of effectiveness was beyond the scope of this study, the decision was nevertheless made to attempt to obtain some indication of the actual intention of pieces of social action, and the response to them. Intent was to be classified under three possible objectives: (1) to alter the existing social structure; (2) to support the existing social structure; (3) to indicate future inadequacies of the social structure. Responses were to be classified according to their source (i.e., whether or not the response came directly from the recipient of the social action), and also according to whether or not the social action resulted in tangible change of some policy or program. Where possible, it was also planned that for each social action indicator, the particular response would be attributed to either form, volume, timing, source, direction, or any other distinguishable factor.

Both areas of inquiry were poorly conceptualized,



and the failure to clearly define potentially valid criteria for observation limited the accuracy and relevance of the data obtained. For this reason, intent and response will not be discussed further in presentation of this study, except to indicate both as areas in which further study would be interesting and purposeful.

### Data Collection

Specific questions were designed to guide collection of data on each piece of social action according to the four aspects discussed above.<sup>1</sup> The questions were then distilled to a more concise form for the "indicator sheet" which was ultimately used for the recording of data.<sup>2</sup>

Each agency which participated in the study was itself subject to some analysis. Identifying information was obtained, the most relevant of which was a statement of agency purpose. The inclusion of social action in this official statement of purpose was to be noted. Information on professional training of service staff was also obtained, with the hope that this factor could be cross-correlated with amount and other characteristics of agency social action. Time did not permit this line of analysis,

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix II

<sup>2</sup>Appendix III

however. Each agency was classified according to field of practice and auspices, as potential categories for comparisons.<sup>1</sup>

In order to obtain some overview of agency attitudes toward social action, a list of questions was created to guide the interview with each agency director.<sup>2</sup> The questions were intended to elicit opinions on commitment to social action objectives for such activity, effectiveness of particular methods, appropriate sources and directions, as well as the interviewee's impression of social action trends.

#### Summary

This study was designed in such a way that social action, as an inherent part of every social welfare agency's function, could be described in several of its basic dimensions. The form, source, reason and object of the action were the essential foci of study. A set of questions was used to direct data collection in a two part process consisting of examination of records, and an interview.

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix IV

<sup>2</sup>Appendix V

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The basic unit on which the analysis was founded was that of the social action indicator, and it was in terms of this quantitative measure that all correlations and cross-correlations were calculated. A great deal of specific data was collected in the recording phase of the study, providing adequately for the objectives of describing how the Manitoba social welfare system had been implementing its social action responsibilities. Some of the specificity of the data was necessarily sacrificed to the end of abstracting trends, and dominant patterns.

This chapter will discuss the findings of the study under the five headings of indicator, source of idea, issue, direction, and agency. The significant findings regarding each factor will be stated, and the major points will subsequently be drawn together in a summary of the chapter, setting the stage for final observations and comments.

#### Indicators

##### Incidence

There were a number of possible ways in which

the indicators were tallied. The first of these was on the basis of occurrences. This approach meant that the social action was measured in terms of volume. For example, a report on a study of youth problems which was sent to more than two hundred individuals and organizations was, by this method, seen as a major contribution to the total amount of social action recorded for the two-year period.

Within the limitations of accurate data collection, the occurrences of social action tallied in this manner seemed quite impressive. The direct service agencies <sup>1</sup> accounted for approximately 951 occurrences of social action indicators, averaging 48 "expressions" each. The CWPC had 523 occurrences, while MASW recorded 10,001 manifestations of social action.

Clearly the social welfare system of Manitoba has been implementing its social action function by extending information and ideas to policy-makers. The MASW demonstrates the breadth of impact possible with its very high total which grew out of the imaginative use of mailed indicators (i.e. post cards and Christmas cards) in addition to broad distribution of briefs and policy statements.

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<sup>1</sup>"Direct service agencies" shall henceforth be the phrase used to include all rural (6) and urban (18) social welfare agencies included in the sample, excepting the CWPC and MASW which will usually be discussed separately.

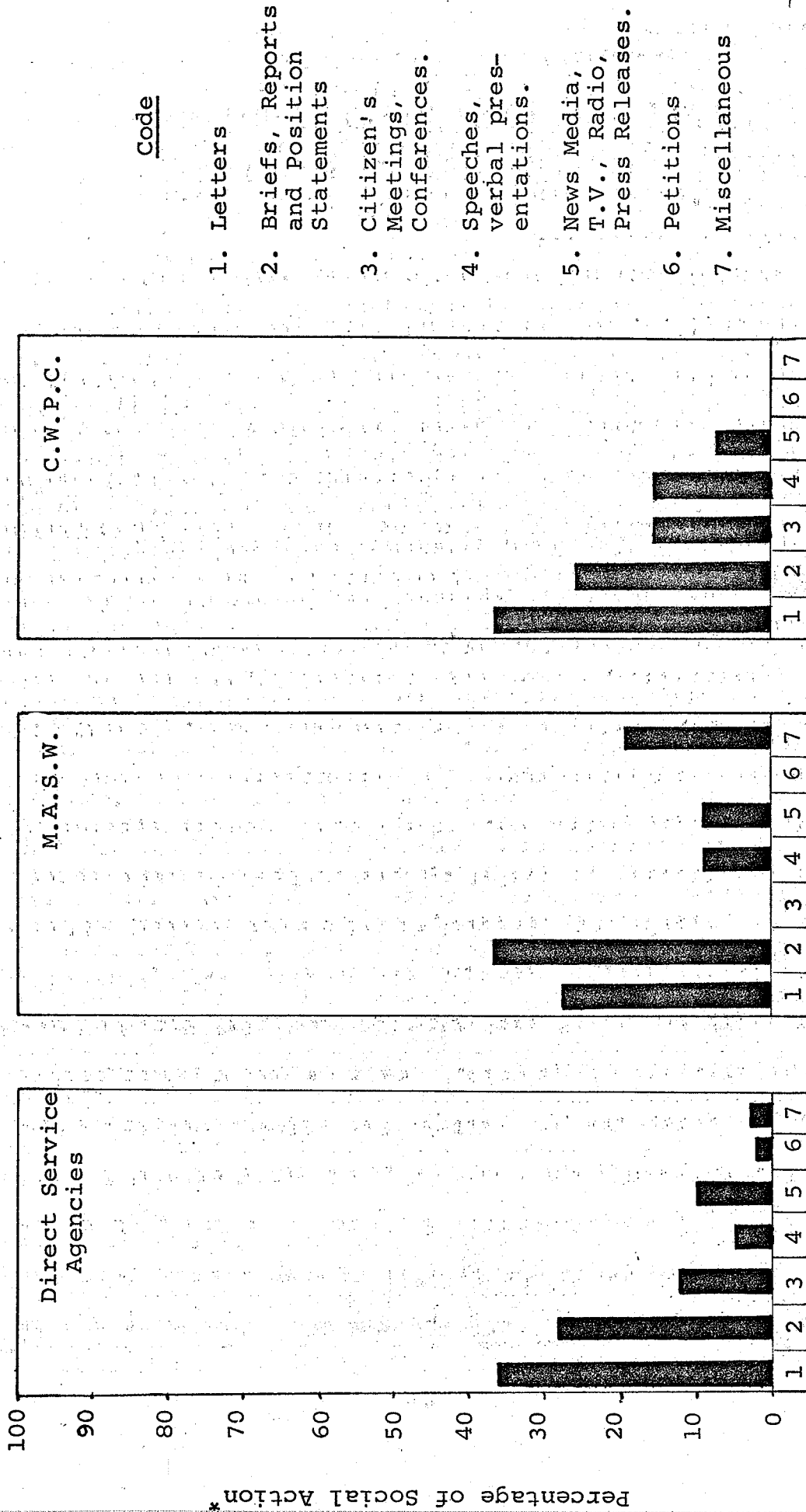
In an effort to refine interpretation of the data, the volume tally discussed above was not used for further analysis. The concept of a "unit of social action" was defined to mean any volume of activity which had in common the indicator, source of idea and issue. The study examined an approximate total of 184 units of social action. (Totals will vary within a 5 per cent margin throughout the analysis due to human error and variations in interpretation of the data.) This measure of social action helped to focus the analysis on the central questions posed.

#### Indicator Frequency

The graph in Illustration I presents the indicator preferences of the Direct Service Agencies, CWPC and MASW. (Note by the Code, that the original twelve indicators were combined for analysis into seven categories.)

The striking point made by the graphs is preference for the most formal indicators in all three sections of the Manitoba Social Welfare system. More than half of the time, agencies chose to use either letters or briefs to express their social action function. On the overall, preferences ranged from letters, briefs, speeches, meetings, new and miscellaneous, to petitions which were chosen only rarely by Direct Service Agencies.

When the three divisions of the social welfare system are studied for idiosyncratic forms of social action, it appears that the Direct Service agencies employed the



Distribution by Percentage of Types of Social Action Indicators used by the Agencies studied.

\*Based on a total of 184 Units of Social Action.

FIGURE 1: Social Action Indicators

broadest range of indicators. The fact that twenty-four agencies are represented in the grouping no doubt accounts for the wide variety. Letters and briefs were still, however, distinctly preferred forms of Direct Service agency social action.

The CWPC and MASW appear to have used indicators selectively, ignoring some, and using others in fairly balanced proportion. The CWPC's preferences ranged from letters, briefs, meetings and speeches, to news media, with no use of petitions, or other indicators. The MASW pattern of indicator choice was somewhat different, preferring briefs to letters, having a fairly high incidence of "miscellaneous" indicators, and then equal use of speeches and news media. Innovative use of marches and post cards on Medicare, and Christmas cards protesting inadequate housing suggests that MASW's Social Action Committee was quite aware of indicators as a variable in social action.

#### Indicators and Source of Idea

Such a large proportion of the ideas for social action originated within the staff category of MASW and CWPC, and were subsequently carried out by this group,<sup>1</sup> that correlations between these factors and indicators have little significance.

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<sup>1</sup>See Figure III, p. 35.

Direct service agency administrators chose to use letters for more than 50 per cent of their social action. They chose briefs for 16 per cent, and then speeches, citizen's meetings, news media, and miscellaneous for the remaining indicators. Preference for letters, and then briefs characterized all social action carried out by levels completely within the agencies.

When the agency social action was carried out in cooperation with another organization, preference was given to meetings, followed by briefs, news media, letters, and petitions.

#### Indicator and Social Issue

It is assumed that correlations between indicators and issues are of limited value. The basis for concern, or subject of the communication seems less likely to influence indicator choice than its source or direction. For that reason, the direct relationship between issues and indicators will be given very brief attention.

Inadequate housing, child welfare, and inadequate income were the three social issues most frequently involved in social action.<sup>1</sup> Together, briefs (38%) and news releases (20%) represented most of the social action concerning inadequate housing. Child welfare was addressed primarily through letters (40%), and meetings (30%). The

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<sup>1</sup> See Figure Iv, p.44.



third major issue, inadequate income, was addressed most frequently by briefs (40%) and second most frequently, by letters (35%). From this limited consideration of the data, the interesting figures are those relating news releases and meetings to the issues of inadequate housing and child welfare. News releases were as low as the fifth indicator on the Direct service agency range of preferences. The peculiarity of its extensive usage in relation to inadequate housing may be explained under discussion of issue.

#### Indicators and Direction

Most social action done by the total sample of agencies over the two-year period studied was directed to Government (42%), with the Provincial Government receiving the greatest proportion within the three levels. Following Government, the Other Systems received a large proportion (21%), then the Social Welfare System (19%), and finally, the General Public (18%).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Figure V, p. 50.

TABLE II

Number of Indicators According to Direction<sup>1</sup>

| Indicator                              | SWS | Other Systems | Government |      |      | Public |    |
|--|-----|---------------|------------|------|------|--------|----|
|  |     |               | Totals     | FG   | PG   |        | MG |
| Letters                                | 13  | 11            | 46         | (12) | (23) | (12)   | 8  |
| Briefs, Reports &<br>Policy Statements | 20  | 35            | 42         | (17) | (13) | (12)   | 3  |
| Meetings & Confer-<br>ences            | 13  | 10            | 13         | (4)  | (6)  | (3)    | 7  |
| Speeches & Verbal<br>Presentations     | 2   | 2             | 3          | (2)  | (1)  | (1)    | 6  |
| News Media                             | 1   |               |            |      |      |        | 24 |
| Petitions                              |     |               | 1          |      | (1)  |        |    |
| Miscellaneous                          | 1   |               | 6          | (2)  | (3)  | (2)    |    |
| TOTALS                                 | 50  | 58            | 112        | 37   | 46   | 29     | 48 |

"FG" - Fed. Gov't.  
 "PG" - Prov. Gov't.  
 "MG" - Municipal Gov't.

As Table II shows, letters and briefs constituted almost 80 per cent of the social action indicators addressed to government. This large percentage, combined with the large proportion of letters and briefs going to Other Systems, and the Social Welfare System, clearly account the majority of these two indicator forms.

<sup>1</sup>Note that a unit of social action can be employed in more than one direction. Therefore, a total of 266 indicators are considered in Table II.

The General Public was usually addressed through the news media.

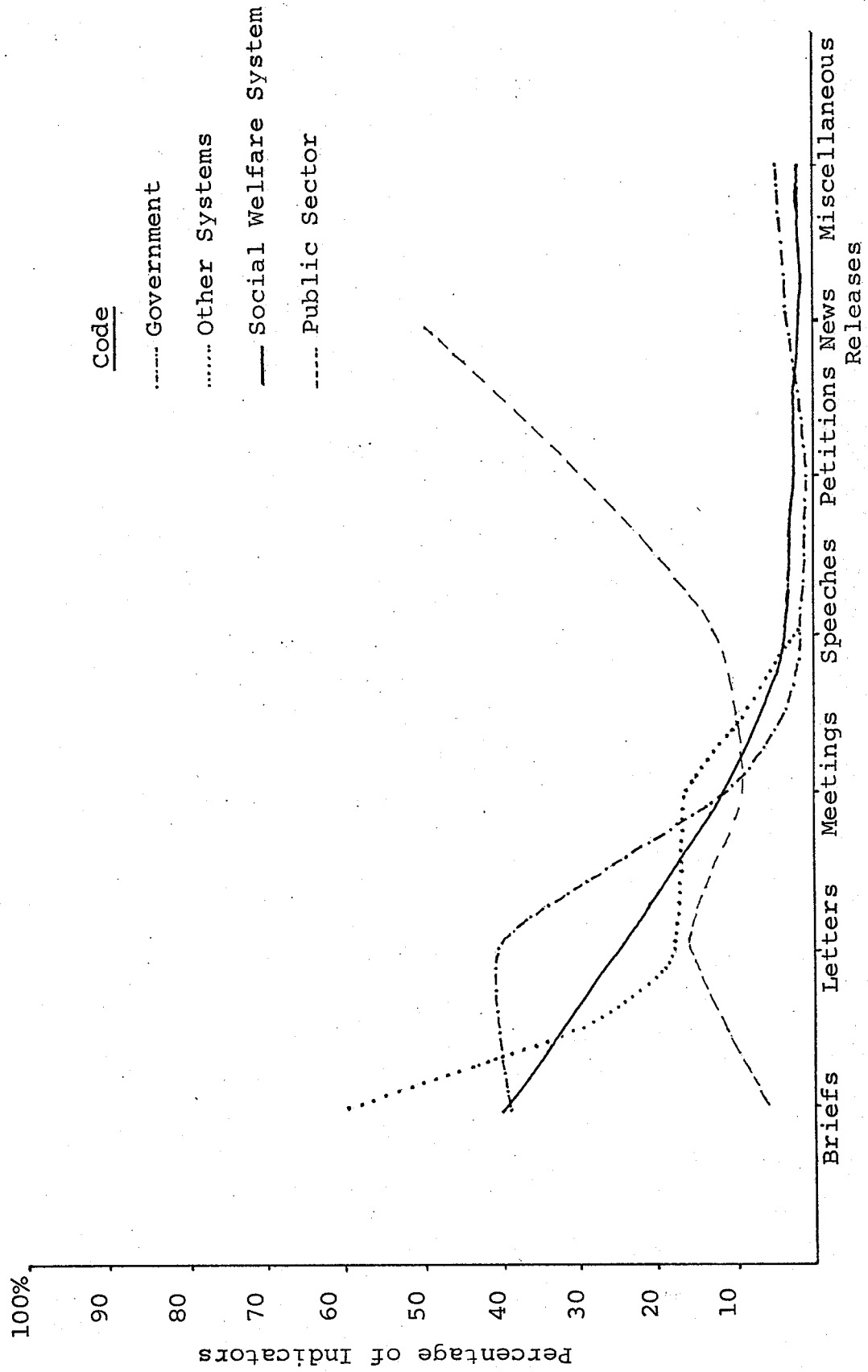
Since indicators of social action represent actual attempts to communicate to some designated body, it is not surprising that formality of indicator seems to relate to the level of formal organization characteristic of the receiver of the social action. This point is supported by the fact that the Federal Government was more often addressed by way of briefs, with fewer letters, and the reverse was true of the Provincial Government. However, noting the large proportions of briefs extended to Social Welfare and Other Systems, the questions of content and intention of the social action inevitably comes to mind, for in these instances, lessened formality could be expected. (Content and intention were not within the scope of this study.)

The graph on page 33 attempts to illustrate the distribution of the indicators by percentage according to the four directions considered.<sup>1</sup> The indicators are arranged along the horizontal axis ranging from the most to the least formal. With the exception of news releases aimed at the General Public, use of the less formal indicators was almost negligible for all directions.

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<sup>1</sup>The percentage of each indicator according to direction were approximated from the data on Table II.

FIGURE II: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF INDICATORS ACCORDING TO DIRECTION



### Indicators and Agencies

The CWPC and MASW use of indicators was discussed partially on page 27, under the heading "Indicator Frequency". There was further analysis of Direct Service Agency indicator preferences under the heading "Indicator and Source of Idea". A more general discussion of variety of indicators used will be included in the section on "Agency and Indicators", page 53.

### Source of Idea, and Responsibility for Carrying Social Action Through

Part of the analysis of the social action of agencies concentrated on exactly who was involved in this agency function. The objective was to learn who identified concerns, and therefore who held this joint right and responsibility. And second to this was the question of who actually designed the strategy and implemented the social action role. Did agency sanction extend to the same level for both aspects of the role?

The organizational structures of CWPC, MASW, and most Direct Service Agencies are quite different. For this reason, the three will be considered separately in relation to the factors of source and responsibility. The social action of the three divisions is represented in percentages on Figure III, according to seven categories.

The MASW Executive supports a Committee within the

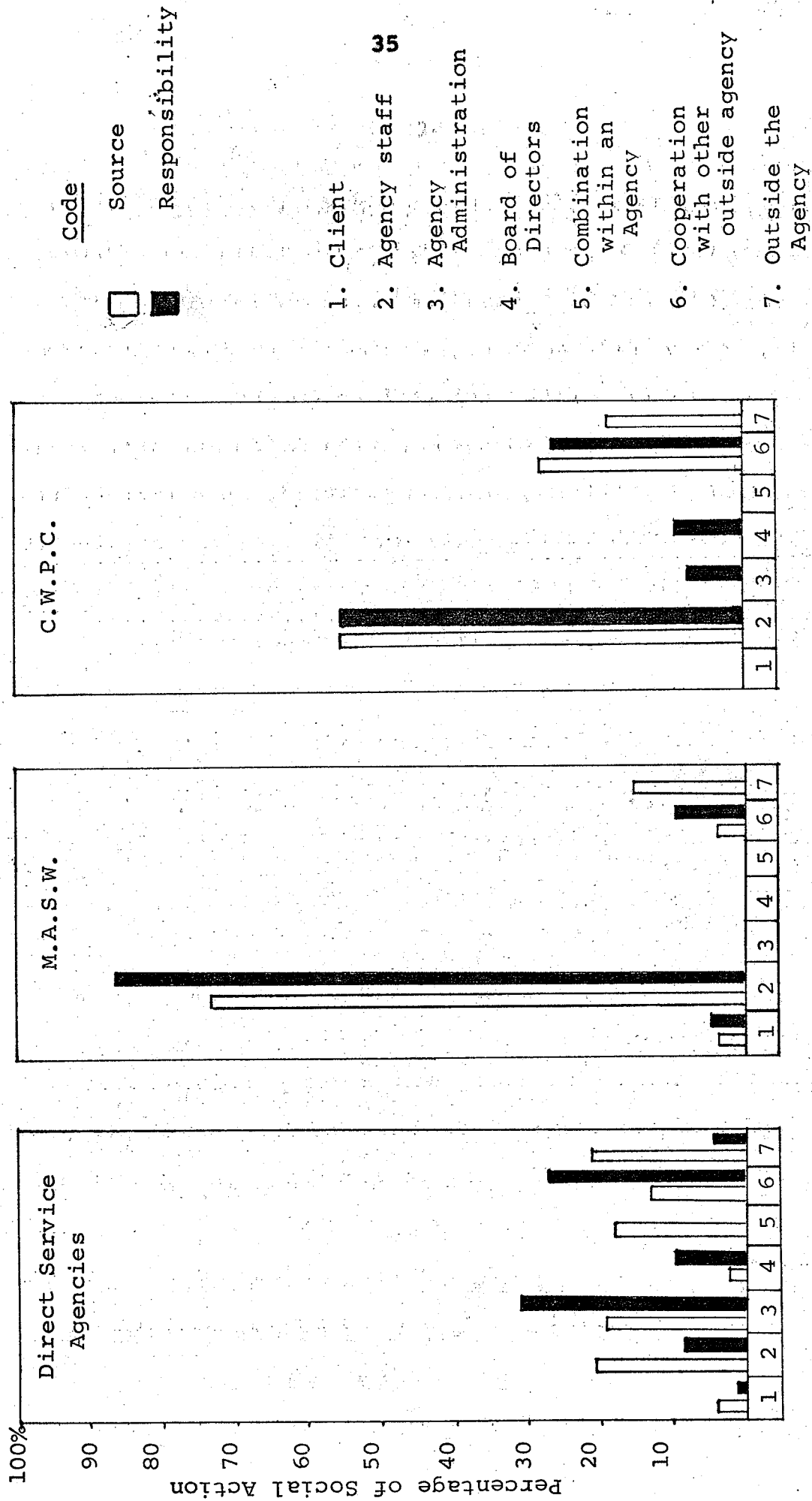


FIGURE 1111 A COMPARISON OF THE SOURCE OF IDEA FOR SOCIAL ACTION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARRYING IT THROUGH.

professional organization which has the singular purpose of social action. The Committee has a fairly large measure of autonomy within the Association, however, is still accountable to the Executive. (This point was emphasized when, in 1968, the use of Christmas cards to deplore inadequate housing conditions incensed parts of the community, and resulted in unhappy repercussions within the Association.)

Noting the section of the graph devoted to MASW's social action, it is apparent that the Committee members, classified as "agency staff", conceptualized and enacted almost all of the Association's social action. Small percentages of the ideas were initiated outside the organization, or in cooperation with some other agency. MASW also lent its support to a group of welfare clients who requested help with their social action efforts. The only other social action not carried out solely by the Committee was done in cooperation with other agencies or organizations.

The CWPC, a planning agency with a very small staff and specialized function, engaged in social action in a manner which slightly resembled MASW's pattern. Agency staff were responsible more than half of the time for originating ideas, and carrying out the social action. The only other sources of ideas were in cooperation with other agencies or organizations, or from completely outside the CWPC. Almost one-quarter of the social action was carried out in cooperation, while the agency Board of Directors, and the Administration

(Executive Director) enacted small proportions each.

Both the CWPC and MASW demonstrated clarity in the assignment of major social action responsibility to a particular staff or committee level. The CWPC added to this tendency a certain sharing of responsibility through use of its horizontal community, and intra-social welfare system ties.

The Direct Service Agencies present a pattern with fewer marked contrasts in the division of social action responsibility. The large number of agencies represented by this inclusive grouping undoubtedly contributes to both the breadth and relative matting of results.

The trends apparent in the graph, however, suggest, beyond diversity of responsibility for social action, that ideas or identification of social action issues originated outside the agency slightly more often than anywhere else. However, agency staff, combinations of agency levels, agency administration and cooperative efforts were closely similar in their percentages of idea source. Clients and Board of Directors had significantly lower percentages. The implication of this data is that responsibility for conceptualizing social action issues is fairly evenly distributed in Direct Service Agencies, between the staff and administrative levels, and their horizontal community ties. The high percentage of the "outside of agency" initiations of social action may be explained in further analysis related to direc-



tion and issue.

Within Direct Service Agencies, social action was most often carried through by the administration, followed in frequency by cooperative efforts with other agencies, then combinations within the agency staff (e.g. Public Affairs Committee at Family Bureau is representative of staff, administration and Board). The Boards of Directors carried out relatively little social action, as did the agency staff. A small percentage was carried out outside of the agency, and almost no action was enacted by clients.

The general conclusions are that Direct Service Agency staff and the forces outside the agencies pin-pointed the unmet needs thereby producing most of the social action ideas. Then agency administrators, and cooperative efforts with other agencies, undertook to express the "awareness of unmet social need" to some part of the community.

#### Source and Indicator

On the basis of the above discussion and that which related indicators to responsibility for carrying through the social action ( pages 27 - 29), these points emerge:

- (1) letters and briefs (formal indicators) were most preferred (in fairly equal proportion) by Direct Service Agencies, MASW and CWPC.
- (2) the agency personnel or group carrying through the social action are assumed to have been responsible for choosing the indicator.
- (3) Direct Service Agency administrators, those who participated in inter-agency relations (probably

administrators), the staff of CWPC, and the MASW Social Action Committee carried out most of the social action.

- (4) the apparent differences in agency level of social action responsibility had no obvious effect on choice of social action indicator.

These points serve as the basis for the conclusion that the representatives of Manitoba's social welfare system who are most often responsible for carrying out its social action function, prefer to use formal, written expression of their concerns, regardless of planning, professional, or direct service auspices.

#### Source of Idea and Issue

The relationships between agency levels and identification of, or carrying through on specific issues was given only brief attention. The material relating these factors was not significant for MASW and CWPC social action because of the extent of responsibility vested in agency staff for such activity.

The social action carried through by the Direct Service Agency staff was mostly on the issue of inadequate housing (64%). Cooperative efforts with other agencies were primarily on inadequate housing (36%) and child welfare (21%). Administration carried out 26% of its social action on child welfare, and 21% on inadequate income.

The characteristic patterns of agency social action, choice of issues, and directions, probably all interrelate to

determine why there are recognizable variations in the relationship between responsibility for carrying through the social action, and the issue addressed. The actual selection of the issue as a matter warranting social action will be discussed under the major heading of "Issues".

#### Source of Idea and Direction

The proportions of social action originated and enacted by each of the seven agency levels, was not analyzed according to direction. However, this relationship will be discussed under the topic "Direction" from the opposite perspective.

#### Source of Idea and Agency

Specific agency characteristics in designation of social action responsibility will be considered in the broad discussion of agency implementation of social action which will conclude this chapter on analysis.

#### Social Action Issues

Some of the most interesting data collected in this social action study was related to issues -- the subjects of the action. The question of how a social welfare system implements recognition of its social action function is very much a question of how it perceives human needs and rights, as well as its interpretation of the system's role in, and

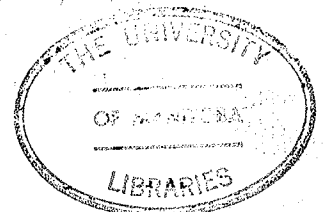
responsibility to the broader community. It is on this level of analysis that the study comes to grips with the actual dimensions of responsiveness operative in the system, and its readiness to interpret or report its opinion to social policy-makers.

The initial listing of issues used to guide recording, was fairly predictive of the actual data collected.<sup>1</sup> Population (age and minority) groupings were also recorded where issues related to some special category of people. This information, along with unanticipated issues was combined to form fourteen fairly homogenous problem areas. Each of these will be discussed to insure appreciation for the range or specificity of the area.

- i. "Inadequate housing" -- included social action which attacked a wide variety of problems. Sub-standard housing, high mortgage rates, rent conditions, availability of boarding or rooming house facilities, special residence needs of the mentally or physically ill, low and medium income, or ethnic groups were all included under this one heading.
- ii. "Inadequate income" -- issues were primarily related to welfare and categorical allowance rates, but also included a few special needs like clothing or other budgeting problems of special groups.
- iii. "Medical services" -- were issues concerned with two areas: health services for Indians and Eskimos, and the Federal Medicare scheme.
- iv. "Urban renewal" and urban planning -- issues were

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<sup>1</sup>See List of Issues, p. 18.



all related to experiences and problems studied or recognized in the City of Winnipeg.

- v. Desertion, divorce, separation, and "family breakdown" -- represent a fairly specific listing of problem areas included. Many of these issues focused on problems of women, or sole-support parents in general.
- vi. Illegitimate pregnancy, child neglect, child welfare, adoption, emotionally disturbed girls, day nurseries -- represents a thorough listing of special issues which as a category will be referred to henceforth as "child welfare".
- vii. "Education" problems, inadequate education and pre-school education -- were issues ranging from needs of children in schools, to specifics of training programs for educators.
- viii. Alienated youth, Winnipeg Youth Study, police treatment in detention, transient youth, juvenile delinquency, glue-sniffing, truancy, inter-provincial repatriation procedures -- were all issues which will be called "Youth Problems". This segment of the social action was focussed on the needs and problems of young people, many of whom break the law, or are failing to accept the existing social order in some dimension.
- ix. "Status of Women" -- issue was almost solely related to presentations to the Royal Commission established by the Federal Government to study this problem.
- x. "Unlawful behaviour" -- included juvenile and adult offenses, in prevention and treatment dimensions. Many of these presentations were closely related to Youth Problems.
- xi. "Recreation" -- needs related primarily to inadequate facilities.
- xii. Problems related to being "Indian, Eskimo, or migrant" -- were issues of some breadth usually including several aspects of disadvantaged living. Since other major issues like inadequate housing and inadequate income often included concern for these special ethnic groups, this issue is not very accurately represented in the data.

- xiii. Expansion, preservation, or other problems related to "social services" - included issues like the need for free legal aid, and maintenance of existing services (St. Francis House).
- xiv. "Other" -- issues included the miscellaneous bits of social action addressed to alcoholism, taxation inequities and broad social disorganization.

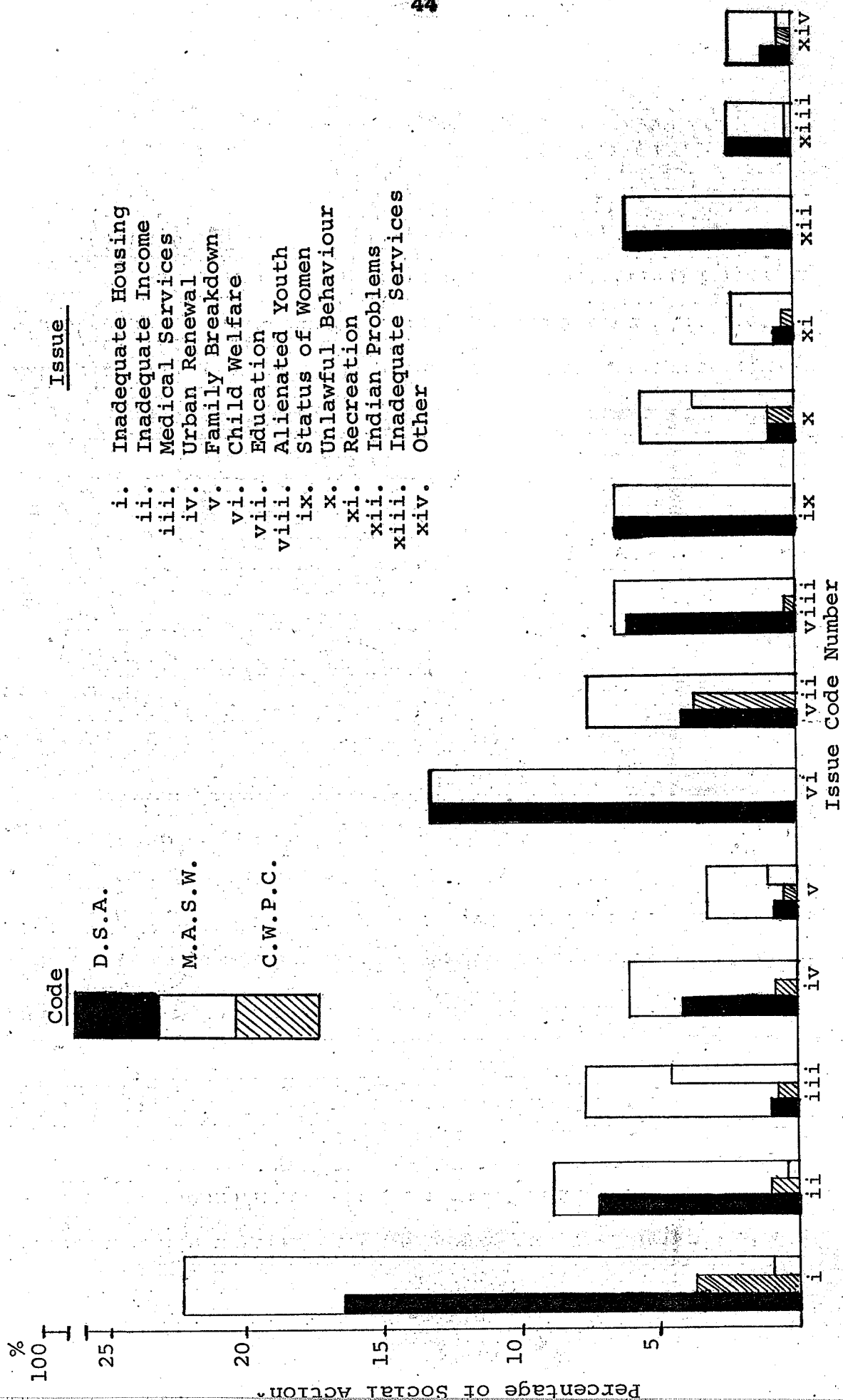
The percentages of the social action recorded that related to each of these categories of issues are presented in the graph of Figure IV. The total percentages are divided into the three divisions of the social welfare system, so that the degree of participation of Direct Service Agencies, MASW and CWPC can readily be compared.<sup>1</sup>

More than one fifth of all the units of social action recorded for the twenty-six agencies over the two year time period, related to the issue of inadequate housing. Child welfare received the second largest number of social action units and inadequate income was third. Education problems and medical services each received a little over 7% of the social action. The remaining 40% of social action units were related in small, almost equal percentages to youth problems, status of women, Indian problems, unlawful behaviour, urban renewal, family breakdown, social services, recreation and the miscellaneous grouping.

Within each issue-bar of the graph, the degree of

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix VI



Cumulative Percentage of Social Action Addressed to Issues By C.W.P.C., M.A.S.W. and D.S.A.  
\*Based on 184 Social Action Units.

Figure iv

involvement of Direct Service Agencies, MASW and CWPC is presented. It is obvious that Direct Service Agencies, responsible for 136 of the 184 units of social action, or approximately 73%, frequently produced the only, or at least majority of action on the issues. Only Direct Service Agencies were concerned about child welfare issues, Status of Women, Indian problems,<sup>1</sup> and recreation. Compared to MASW and CWPC, Direct Service Agencies were little concerned about education problems, medical services, unlawful behaviour, and family breakdown.

The Social Action Committee of MASW was obviously very selective about its issues, involving itself in only six. It is important to note that the MASW social action constituted major proportions for the issues of medical services and unlawful behaviour. Their medical services work related almost entirely to the Medicare scheme. Juveniles were very central to the issues on unlawful behaviour which related to detention and treatment facilities as well as recommendations for the Corrections Act. The MASW was also involved in issues on inadequate housing, family breakdown, inadequate income, and others.

The social action of CWPC never constituted the

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<sup>1</sup>This is a misrepresentation. The CWPC was often especially concerned about Indian problems in addressing issues on inadequate housing, medical services, urban renewal, and inadequate income. MASW's medical services, inadequate housing and inadequate income issues also had at least some reference to Indian problems.



majority of work on any issue. The organization expressed concern on ten of the possible fourteen issues, with greatest proportions going to inadequate housing, education problems, medical services, urban renewal and inadequate income. Involvement related to unlawful behaviour and youth problems together represent an extensive interest in the problems and services for young people in Winnipeg. A division within CWPC, the Volunteer Bureau, has been responsible for much analysis and promotion of transient youth services (i.e. CRYPT, the Free University, Youth Squad for the City Police Dept., etc.). Family breakdown, recreation, and other issues also received some units of CWPC's social action.

Generalizations about the agency choice of issues grow largely out of unrecorded familiarity with the nature and content of the social action efforts. The high proportion of inadequate housing issues suggests a certain breath of perspective and concern for preventative policy in this area. But it is stated out of general observation, that many of the Direct Service Agencies were very specific in their involvement with this issue, expressing concerns which developed out of immediate service experiences (e.g. after-care facilities for discharged mental patients, architectural barriers inhibiting to the physically handicapped, etc.). This service-focussed involvement could also be said to characterize social action on child welfare, inadequate income, and the majority of the other issues addressed by

### Direct Service Agencies.

Some of the issues singled out specifically by CWPC and MASW, as well as their handling of them suggest a different kind of social action role for these two organizations. The emphasis of MASW on Medical Services, their poverty brief on inadequate income, the CWPC's studies of housing, urban renewal and youth problems exemplify a broad, prevention-oriented approach which seems at least, to aim more at the base of social policy than at manipulation of particular provisions.

### Issues and Indicators

As has been stated, the relationship between social action indicators and issues suggested by the data, was insignificant. The large issues were addressed by a range of indicators with large proportions of the preferred letters and briefs.

### Issues and Source of Idea

Source of issue idea was analyzed only in terms of the three major issues. Of all the social action units related to inadequate housing, 34% were initiated by staff, and 30% originated in cooperation with others. Child Welfare, an issue addressed only by Direct Service Agencies, had small non-significant percentages of ideas originating at most of the intra-agency levels. Inadequate income was most often a concern of staff (35%) and administration (35%).

This material is certainly inconclusive, but does suggest that within Direct Service Agencies there may be real differences in the kinds of issues which different staff levels observe and to which they decide to speak.

#### Issue and Direction

A central factor in the playing of a social action role is choice of the decision-makers to approach regarding particular issues.

In relation to the major issues, considerable variation was noted. Inadequate housing was the only issue with action aimed at all levels of government, at all other systems, the general public, as well as within the social welfare system. Surprisingly the Federal Task Force on Housing received only 17% of the social action on this issue, with the largest single percentage going to the general public (30%).

Child welfare concerns were directed to the general public (47%), and the remainder in equal proportions went to the Provincial Government, and the social welfare system.

On the issue of inadequate income, it seemed logical that fully half of the social action was directed to the Provincial government.

This information demonstrates the variety of directions in which social action units were aimed. The reasons and results of these choices are beyond the scope of this study.

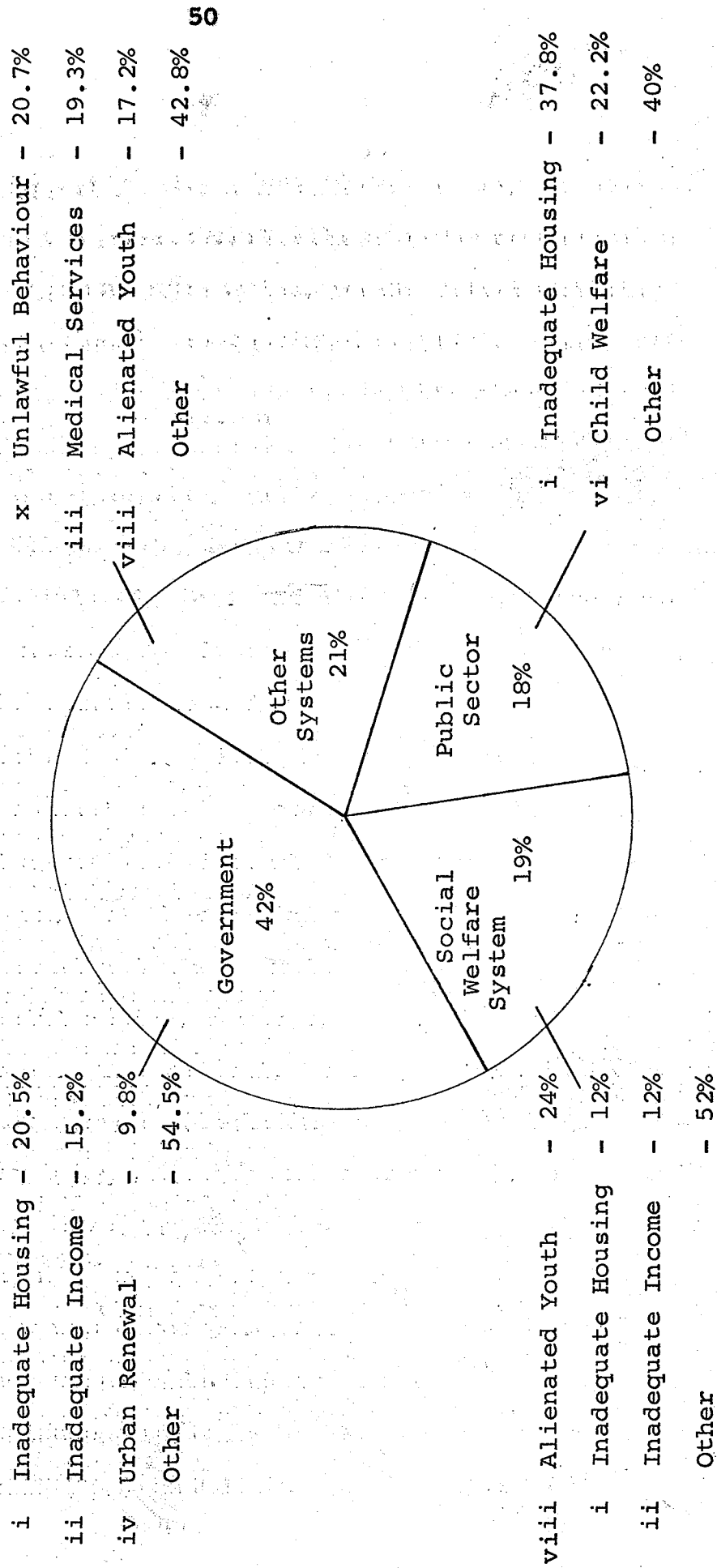
### Issues and Agencies

This section of material will also be touched upon under fuller discussion of agencies, where individualizing Direct Service Agencies is appropriate.

### Direction

Within the community, individuals, organizations, and government offices hold the power to make decisions about provisions and social policies. If the social welfare system has serious intentions of carrying out its social action function, it must connect on various issues with the appropriate policy-making body. Often the unmet social needs which service personnel could observe in daily practice, and be concerned about out of knowledge and experience, would relate to their own, or other social agency function. Internal agency communication was excluded from this study's definition of social action, however, inter-agency connections were recorded. The Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments, other systems (including law, education, economics, health, religious, family and recreation), and the Public Sector also have social policy power. These four divisions of community represent the directions in which social action flow was observed. Combining the data on this factor with issues results in information central to describing how the Social Welfare System implements its social action role.

FIGURE V : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL ACTION ACCORDING TO DIRECTION, and ISSUES WITHIN EACH DIRECTION.



Almost half of the social action of the total sample of social welfare agencies was directed to Government, with Provincial levels receiving the largest proportion (41%), followed by the Federal (33%) and finally Municipal (27%). Other Systems, the Public Sector, and the Social Welfare System were subject of almost equal proportions of the social action not directed to government. The graph of Figure V presents these proportions visually while also presenting the major issues posed to each direction, in percentages.

Government was the target for much social action on problems of inadequate housing, followed by inadequate income and urban renewal. To Other Systems went material and concerns about unlawful behaviour, Medical Services and alienated youth. Social Welfare System issues began with alienated youth, inadequate housing and inadequate income. Finally, the Public Sector received social action about inadequate housing and child welfare.

The breadth and selectiveness of social action endeavors is thus presented. The social welfare system of Manitoba seems to present its concerns to policy makers out of some rationale which emphasizes the importance of government and the various system power structures in effecting social policy. It directs considerably more of its concerns outside the social welfare system than within it.

It has already been demonstrated that this power-

structure approach seems linked with formal indicators, or social action forms.<sup>1</sup>

Also in keeping with the strata conscious approach was the apparent dominance of Direct Service Agency administrators in carrying out the social action,<sup>2</sup> which suggests the next topic for comment.

Throughout this analysis, considerable attention has been given MASW and CWPC as special organizations within the Social Welfare system. The other twenty-four agencies which participated in the study have, however, been indiscriminately lumped under the heading "Direct Service Agencies". The tremendous variations within the grouping deserve some recognition.

#### Direct Service Agencies

Of the twenty-four direct service agencies studied, a considerable number were minimally involved in social action as defined and measured. Four agencies had not been involved at all in social action over the two-year period in question. Included in this group was the Manitoba Home for Girls which does not see social action as part of its treatment-oriented function. The other three agencies were offices of the (then called) Department of Provincial Welfare at The Pas, Dauphin, and Winnipeg North Office. It

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<sup>1</sup>See Figure II, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>See Figure III, p. 35.

should be noted that these three agencies did see social action as a part of their role in the community, but were often concerned about effecting changes first in their own department policies.

Six more agencies contributed one unit of social action each to the data collected, bringing to a total of ten, the agencies in the sample which barely involved themselves in a social action role.

The Neighbourhood Service Center was responsible for approximately 25% of all the social action done by Direct Service Agencies over the two year study period. The four Children's Aid Societies produced another 25%, so that together these sources were responsible for half of this data. The remaining nine agencies averaged seven units of social action each on a variety of issues which were usually quite reflective of the individual agency's service experiences.

The degree of agency involvement tended to fluctuate simultaneously through all five factors studied. Agencies producing low or average numbers of social action units tended to use the basic social action forms (letters and briefs), addressed popular issues from their particular perspective, involved specific policy-makers directly, and usually followed up staff ideas through administrative procedures. The majority of the variations beyond the most frequently recorded choices of each factor, were tied to the social action efforts of Neighbourhood Service Center, and the Children's



Aid Societies. For example, in the entire Direct Service Agency total, six units of social action originated with client groups. Of this small number, five were recorded through Neighbourhood Service Center. This agency alone addressed all directions included, and was concerned enough to take action on ten of the fourteen issues. This was the only Direct Service Agency which had social action written into its official statement of agency purpose.

The Children's Aid Societies expressed concern on the issues of inadequate housing, inadequate income, family breakdown, child welfare, education problems and Indian problems. It seems that the nature of these agencies service has prompted involvement in a number of areas basic to prevention of the major social problems.

To illustrate the typical kinds of social action recorded at the average Direct Service Agency, here are a few examples: Winnipeg General Hospital Social Service Department wrote a letter to the Department of Health on the issue of Medical services. The action was taken in cooperation with other agencies. Juvenile Court submitted a brief to the Winnipeg School Board Youth Study. It was prepared by the administrators at the Court. Jewish Child and Family used a brief, public meetings, and press releases to further community support of a treatment center for girls. The administrator of the agency undertook the action alone, and in cooperation with other agencies.

### Summary

The major findings of this study which set out to describe how Manitoba's social welfare system plays its social action role were discussed in detail in this chapter.

Indicators most preferred by the twenty-six agencies studied were letters and briefs. The formality of these communication forms seemed to be their basis for selection, and this, it was suggested, resulted from the agencies desire to appeal conservatively to established community leaders.

The source of idea for the social action, and responsibility for carrying it through were clearly designated to the staff of MASW and CWPC who are sanctioned by position to perform these functions. Within Direct Service Agencies, clear patterns were less apparent until the extensive and varied social action of Neighbourhood Service Centers was separated out. At that point, the pattern of staff definition of problem, and administration's enacting responsibility became clearly apparent. Clients were rarely acknowledge participants in either definition or communication of social need.

The predominant issues recorded in the study were inadequate housing, child welfare, and inadequate income. Small numbers of social action units were recorded for the

remaining eleven issue groupings. The most common problem groups pointed out by the social action were troubled youth, and disadvantaged Indians.

The largest proportion of units of social action were directed to some level of government, frequently Provincial. Other social systems, the social welfare system itself, and the General Public were approached on the remaining occasions. It seemed apparent that particular issues found their way to those most powerful in deciding what provision could be made to meet the need defined.

In a closer look at the Direct Service agencies, it appeared that many agencies were minimally involved, if at all, in playing a social action role. The majority of the agencies did not demonstrate awareness of strategy, or deliberation in presenting their views, usually putting forth effort on current issues of popular concern, in standard form, when their agency service was directly involved.

The exceptions to this limited interpretation of social action function were child welfare agencies, to some extent, and very certainly, Neighbourhood Service Center. This community-based agency was as involved, in many ways, as the specialized MASW and CWPC organizations which also have a social action role in the forefront of their operations. Together the professional association's Social Action Committee, the CWPC and Neighbourhood Service Center

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

On the basis of the analyses just presented, it appears that the social welfare agencies studied are still very much operating according to "function" rather than "cause" orientation - that their's is usually not the interpretation for being which prompted this study. The social action role played by most of the direct service agencies was limited, frequently served as a response to enquiries or some prompting from the larger community, rather than intra-agency initiative. With the notable exceptions of MASW, CWPC, and Neighbourhood Service Center, few agencies appeared vitally aware of their key position as the link between the powerless in need, and the social order which excludes, or of the responsibility inherent in their position. Few presented convincing evidence, in quantity, that social action is recognized as an inherent part of agency function. This, it must be qualified, is a conclusion drawn on the basis of a selective analysis, and more complete examination of social action material content as well as its intended purpose would be necessary for a more complete understanding of the social welfare position.

Discussions with agency personnel added to the

records of the past a perspective for the future. And indications were that many professionals attached to agency structures are concerned and aware, while seeking the most feasible channel for expressing their knowledge, for exposing their experience, and voicing their concerns. Many were not sure that agencies could, or should accommodate this role, and perhaps the evidence of this study supports the view that professional and other more autonomous organizations have the greatest scope for social action.

It is likely that disassociation of the powerless, of the socially excluded, will continue until some effective form of "social action" or upward communication of people's needs is operative. The magnitude of this problem, and its potential threat to society is rocking the very base of the United States at the moment. Whether or not Canada will escape, or at least minimize such social trauma, may well rest on just such local solutions as whether the Juvenile Court warns and guides the community in terms of its unique awareness.

The material collected and examined in this study suggests a number of relevant areas for further study on the topic of social action. First to mind is a need for some analyses of content, for this study made no effort to weight or credit the social action being done, and could conclude little about the depth or specificity of agency

awareness of unmet needs, or of proposed solutions. The data presented on issues suggests a breadth of concerns which would be interesting to examine more closely.

A second major area for further study of social action has been receiving at least literary attention, being that of effectiveness of various strategies. Some of the data from this beginning study suggests the questions of which directions, which forms, and which activists serve which objectives best.

If professional responsibility may be easier to mobilize than that within agencies, and if it may be as effective in some circumstances requiring social action, this prospect suggests a multitude of further questions. Professional education, inculcating of attitudes as well as skills, the most effective organizational base from which to do social action, and related issues are ripe for inquiry.

The role of clients and the value in activating them in the expression of their own needs is yet another area to be tried and evaluated. This is clearly an approach almost unknown among the agencies studied.

Manitoba has a well-developed network of social welfare agencies. The issue of social action as an inherent part of the system's function has been raised. The continued effectiveness of that network may well depend upon its awareness of and responsible role in social action.

APPENDIX I

Agency Director,  
Name of Agency,  
Address.

Dear Mr.

A group of Social Work students has chosen "the social welfare system's involvement in social action" as the topic for their thesis project. For our study we have restricted the definition of social action to "action undertaken in the name of a social work agency for the purpose of communicating an awareness of social needs to any body (e.g. legislature, general public) which has the power to directly or indirectly shape social policy". Your agency has been selected as part of the population sample, and since the issue is a topical one, we hope we can engage your interest and cooperation.

Through examination of whatever records you may have, plus an interview of approximately one hour's duration with yourself or another appropriate agency official, we will be seeking the following information:

1. General comment on questions such as - Does your agency have any commitment or responsibility to involve itself in social action? What principles or goals should guide such activity? What are the most effective ways of effecting social change? What trends seem to be indicated as you witness social action in the social welfare field?
2. Record of every effort your agency has made over the past two years (January 1967 - December 1968) to influence public or policy-making opinion through the following forms of communication: briefs, presentations, committee reports, radio, T.V. or press releases, speeches or public addresses, active participation in conferences, institutes, or citizen meetings, research or study reports, petitions, public demonstrations, or the writing of letters.

3. For each "indicator" (as listed above) of social action issued, basic information will be requested regarding its origins, purpose, content, and the resulting response.

A representative of the group will be contacting you within one week to ask if you are willing to participate, and if so, will arrange a convenient time for beginning the survey. Any questions you may have will gladly be answered at that time.

Yours truly,

Mr. David Vincent  
Research Advisor

DV/jt



## APPENDIX II

### PROPOSED STRUCTURE AND QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

#### Section I

##### Social Issues

1. With which of the following social issues was the social action concerned?
  1. Inadequate income
  2. Inadequate housing
  3. Child neglect
  4. Illegitimate pregnancy
  5. Marital discord -- divorce, desertion, separation
  6. Alcoholism
  7. Drugs
  8. Unlawful behaviour
  9. Mentally handicapped
  10. Physical handicapped
  11. Urban renewal
  12. Other
2. With which age group(s) was the social action concerned?
  - children 0-12 years
  - adolescents 13-18 years
  - adults 19-64 years
  - the aged 65+
3. Was the social action concerned with a particular minority group(s)?
  1. Indian & Metis
  2. White immigrants
  3. Non-white immigrants
  4. Other (specify)

Section II

## Source of Social Action

1. With whom did the idea originate?

Indicate one of the following:

- a. The client
  - b. Social Work staff
  - c. Administration (Executive)
  - d. Board of Directors
  - e. Outside of the agency
  - f. In co-operation with other agencies
  - g. Others
2. Who was responsible for carrying through the social social?
- a. The client
  - b. Social Work staff
  - c. Administration (Executive)
  - d. Board of Directors
  - e. Outside of the agency
  - f. In co-operation with other agencies
  - g. Others

Section III

## Direction of Social Action

3 Avenues:

- A. to the government
- B. to agencies and organizations within the SWS and other non-government systems
- C. public opinion-communication with the public

A. Government

1. To which levels of government was the action directed?  
(federal, provincial, municipal)
2. Was the action directed towards decision-makers?  
that is:
  1. Cabinet or council officials
  2. Administrative officials
  3. Legislative or council committee (specify)
  4. Individual legislators
    - (i) to the party in power
    - (ii) other parties

B. To Agencies and Organizations

1. To which system was the action directed?
2. To which agency or organization was the action directed?
3. To which field of practice was the action directed?

C. Communicating with the Public

What part of the public sector did the action attempt to reach?

1. general public
2. community organizations
3. civic groups
4. others (specify)

Section IV

Intent and Response of the Social Action

Intent

Was the social action intended to -

1. alter existing social structure
2. support existing social structure
3. or, indicate future inadequacies of the social structure?

Response

1. Has there been a response to the social action:
2. Where did the response originate?
  - a. group to whom directed
  - b. other
3. What kind of response was received?
  - a. tangible -- legislative action, resource action.
  - b. influence or education, resulting in change in public opinion, public climate.
4. Was the response attributable to
  - a. the form (method) of the action? (e.g. is T.V. more effective than briefs)
  - b. volume of the action (e.g. # of briefs, etc.)

- c. timing of the action (e.g. along with what)
- d. source of the action? (i.e. is s.a. originating from M.A.S.W. more effective than that originated from Agency)
- e. the direction of the s.a.? (e.g. to cabinet rather than general public)
- f. other
- g. don't know

# APPENDIX III

## RESEARCH GROUP RE SOCIAL ACTION: DATA COLLECTION FORM

|  |            |                           |
|--|------------|---------------------------|
| INDICATOR _____  | DATE _____ | NAME OF INTERVIEWER _____ |
| 4. <u>ISSUE:</u>   |            |                           |
| a. directly related to agency purpose & concern _____  |            |                           |
| b. broad (extra-agency) concerns _____   |            |                           |
| 1. Inadequate income _____   |            |                           |
| 2. Inadequate housing _____  |            |                           |
| 3. Child neglect _____   |            |                           |
| 4. Illegitimate pregnancy _____  |            |                           |
| 5. Divorce, desertion, separation, marital discord _____ (Specify) _____   |            |                           |
| 6. Alcoholism _____  |            |                           |
| 7. Drugs _____   |            |                           |
| 8. Unlawful behaviour _____  |            |                           |
| 9. Mentally handicapped _____  |            |                           |
| 10. Physically handicapped _____   |            |                           |
| 11. Urban renewal _____  |            |                           |
| 12. Other (Specify) _____  |            |                           |
| <u>INTENT:</u><br>1. correct existing social structure _____<br>2. support existing social structure _____<br>3. indicate future breakdown in social structure _____   |            |                           |
| <u>POPULATION GROUP:</u><br>1. minority group<br>a. Indian & Metis _____<br>b. non-white immigrants _____<br>c. immigrants _____<br>d. other (specify) _____<br>2. age group<br>a. children 0-12 _____<br>b. adolescents (teens) 13 - 18 _____<br>c. adults 19-64 _____<br>d. all age groups _____ |            |                           |

5. SOURCE OF SOCIAL ACTION:

1. source of idea

- a. agency \_\_\_\_\_
- (i) client \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) staff \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) administration \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) Board of Directors \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. other groups or individuals
- (i) from outside the agency \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) in cooperation with other agency \_\_\_\_\_
- c. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
6. DIRECTION:

- a. level
- (i) Federal Gov't. \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Provincial \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Municipal \_\_\_\_\_
- b. decision-makers:
- (i) cabinet/council \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) administrative officials \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) legislative committee \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) individual legislator \_\_\_\_\_
- c. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. responsibility for carrying through the  
the Social Action

- a. agency \_\_\_\_\_
- (i) client \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) staff \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) administration \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) Board of Directors \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- c. party: (viii) community planning \_\_\_\_\_  
 (i) in office \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ix) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) in opposition \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) other \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. agency or organization (name) \_\_\_\_\_
3. public sector:  
 a. general public \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. civic groups (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. community organizations \_\_\_\_\_  
 d. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
7. RESPONSE:  
 1. no response \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. response:  
 a. direct \_\_\_\_\_ (from sources of direction) \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. indirect \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. type of response:  
 a. tangible \_\_\_\_\_ b. Intangible \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. both \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. reason for response:  
 a. method \_\_\_\_\_ b. volume \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. timing \_\_\_\_\_ d. source \_\_\_\_\_  
 e. direction \_\_\_\_\_ f. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 g. don't know \_\_\_\_\_
2. agency or organization  
 a. system:  
 (i) law \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) education \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) economics \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iv) family \_\_\_\_\_  
 (v) religion \_\_\_\_\_  
 (vi) social welfare \_\_\_\_\_  
 (vii) recreation \_\_\_\_\_  
 (viii) health \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. if social welfare field of practice:  
 (i) public assistance \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) school social work \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) family service \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iv) child welfare \_\_\_\_\_  
 (vi) medical social services \_\_\_\_\_  
 (vii) recreation services \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX V

### QUESTIONS RE ATTITUDES

1. Do you believe that this agency has any commitment or responsibility to involve itself in Social Action?

If not, why not?

Guides: considered inappropriate or ineffective; a political role? etc.

2. What principles or goals should guide such activity?

Guides: prevention; social work objectives, etc.

3. What form of activities do you think would produce the results this agency desires?

Guide: indicators

4. Within the agency, who should originate and express social action?

Guide: Board of Directors; Executive Staff; General staff; Client groups, etc.

5. Where do you think this agency's social action could have its greatest impact?

Guide: various directions

6. Has your view of social action changed in the past 5 years? In what ways?

7. What future would you predict for this type of agency activity?

Guides: increased occurrence; community receptiveness; agency role, etc.

8. Is the agency/organization currently planning, or does it expect to plan in the near future, further social action activities?

- a) probable areas of concern
- b) probable direction
- c) probable method



# APPENDIX VI

## NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF SOCIAL ACTION INDICATORS ACCORDING TO ISSUE FOR D.S.A., M.A.S.W. & C.W.P.C. BASIS FOR THE GRAPH OF FIGURE IV

| ISSUE               | Direct Service Agency |             | CWPC      |             | MASW      |             |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
|                     | No.                   | %           | No.       | %           | No.       | %           |
| Inadequate housing  | 31                    | 16.8        | 6         | 3.3         | 2         | 1.09        |
| Inadequate income   | 14                    | 7.5         | 2         | 1.09        | 1         | .5          |
| Medical Services    | 2                     | 1.09        | 3         | 1.6         | 9         | 4.9         |
| Urban renewal       | 8                     | 4.3         | 3         | 1.6         | -         | -           |
| Family breakdown    | 3                     | 1.6         | 1         | .5          | 2         | 1.09        |
| Child Welfare       | 25                    | 13.6        | -         | -           | -         | -           |
| Education           | 8                     | 4.3         | 6         | 3.3         | -         | -           |
| Alienated Youth     | 11                    | 6.0         | 1         | .5          | -         | -           |
| Status of Women     | 12                    | 6.5         | -         | -           | -         | -           |
| Unlawful Behaviour  | 2                     | 1.09        | 2         | 1.09        | 7         | 3.8         |
| Recreation          | 3                     | 1.6         | 1         | .5          | -         | -           |
| Indian Problems     | 11                    | 6           | -         | -           | -         | -           |
| Inadequate Services | 4                     | 2.17        | -         | -           | -         | -           |
| Other               | 2                     | 1.09        | 1         | .5          | 1         | .5          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>136</b>            | <b>73.3</b> | <b>26</b> | <b>14.4</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>11.9</b> |

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