



NEWFOUNDLAND - LABRADOR HUMAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

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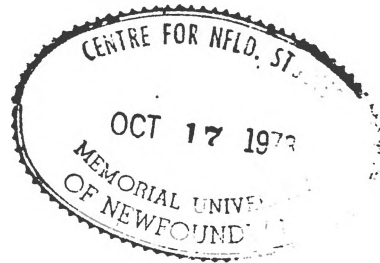
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BRIEF

In respect of Housing submitted to the Mayor and Councillors of St. John's through the Conference on Housing.

Prepared by Lillian Bouzan

The Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Association in this brief on housing is concerned about two issues. The first being that moneys be made available for housing to people with low incomes; the second, that housing be so built and allocated that it becomes a part of, and integrates with, the environment in which we live; and to that end the Association makes five recommendations and two suggestions to City Council.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The Association is concerned that none of the public funds allocated by the Federal Government for housing are being made available directly to the people in the lower income bracket and we, therefore, urge City Council to open discussions with the Federal Government on the following recommendations.

That all persons earning a salary of less than \$4,000 (which is apparently the lowest income at which CMHC will grant loans) be given an annual housing income tax relief of \$1,000 per wage earner.

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That persons whose earnings are below \$1,894.00, which is the established Federal Government poverty level be given an annual guaranteed housing subsidy of an amount equal to that amount by which his/her earnings are below that point.

That persons who receive the guaranteed housing subsidy also be eligible to receive the housing income tax relief of \$1,000.00.

That money be made available through CMHC for home repairs.

HOUSING : ITS EFFECT ON SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Human Rights Association is very sensitive to the fact that the environment has an effect on the social behaviour of people; that tight rows of little box houses, encircled by pavement, concrete and more little box houses, with no vistas to the mountains, sea or sky, have a deleterious effect on human behaviour. To guard against the continuation of that type of housing development, the Association recommends that stringent guidelines be adopted which would guarantee that new housing developments would be designed in such a way that the houses fit into the landscape and that the natural contours of the land be maintained, and that marshland, streams, ponds and small woodlots that exist in the area be incorporated into the housing development to give an ecological and visual balance to the whole scheme.

ST. JOHN'S HARBOUR

The Association recognizes that the area of St. John's Harbour and lower St. John's is still one of the more visually pleasing of its type in the world (notwithstanding the Royal Trust Building which would have been better placed in another area of the city). The Association therefore urges the City Council to be militant in its guard on that section of the city and allow no further building there that would block either the view from the harbour or the view of the harbour from the higher levels of the city.

NEW TOWNS

As more people build homes in the metropolitan areas and commute daily to jobs in the inner city, traffic is becoming more and more congested on the main roads. To relieve this congestion a great scar of a super highway is already being built down the scenic South Side Hills. The Human Rights Association deplores this action and suggests that in order to prevent further mutilation of the countryside, the City Council undertake a study of the concept of New Towns, which in principal means that one of the levels of Government would acquire tracts of land large enough to sustain the building of a town of from 10 - 20 thousand persons and new industries would be deflected from the City to that area, so that such a town would become self-sufficient, with all the amenities. People would then live near

their work, and the pressure of over congested highways leading into the city would be alleviated and the need for super highways slashing through the city would be eliminated.

In closing, the Human Rights Association congratulates the City Council for setting up this Conference on housing, which has given an opportunity to citizens to make suggestions as to what alternatives in housing and living conditions they would like made available.