

**Annual Report
1945**



Edmonton Council of Social Agencies

CONDENSED REPORTS OF THE EDMONTON COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES

PRESENTED TO THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING, MARCH 25th, 1946.

FOREWORD

The activities of the Edmonton Council of Social Agencies during the year 1945-46 were reported to the annual meeting of the Council's constituency, in four sections. Part was presented by the Chairman of the Child and Family Division, Mr. John McIntyre; part by the Chairman of the Group Work Division, Mr. Harold Fazackerley; part by the Chairman of the Health Division, Mrs. W. F. Barfoot, and the balance by the Executive Director, Miss Hazeldine Bishop. These reports, somewhat condensed, are reproduced here in the same sequence. Considered together, they give in summary, a fairly complete picture of the nature and scope of the undertakings in which the Council has engaged during this period.

FROM THE REPORT OF THE CHILD & FAMILY DIVISION

The Child and Family Division is the most recently organized of the Council Divisions and got off to rather a late start. Despite this handicap and its relative youth and inexperience, it was asked by the Council Executive Committee to undertake a major and very responsible job - namely, to make a study of child welfare services in Edmonton. After consideration, the Division decided to study first those services which relate to the care of juvenile delinquents. Accordingly, three broadly representative committees were appointed - one, to deal with Juvenile Court and Probation Services, one to study Detention Homes, and a third, to consider Training Schools. The first two committees have encountered some difficulty in securing factual material required and progress for that reason has been much slower than originally hoped for. The Training Schools Committee, however, has practically completed its work and now awaits the results of the work of the other two, in order that all may be integrated into one report. ~~It is hoped that it will prove possible to bring this work to a conclusion within the next month or two.~~

One meeting of the Division was devoted to discussion of the Alberta Child Welfare Act, when we were privileged to have Mr. C.

B. Hill, Superintendent of the Child Welfare Division of the Provincial Department of Public Welfare, as speaker.

One matter referred to the Division and completed was the preparation of recommendations relating to standards for inspecting and licensing baby shelters and foster homes for children. This was undertaken at the request of the Provincial Department of Public Health and it is regarded as an outstanding example of the type of inter-agency cooperation and mutual assistance for which the Council Divisions have been created. We sincerely hope that our efforts in this instance will prove of value to the Department.

FROM THE REPORT OF THE GROUP WORK DIVISION

The Group Work Division endeavoured to hold regular meetings approximately once per month throughout the year and without exception, these meetings were exceptionally well attended by a most representative group of enthusiastic workers.

Among the highlights of the activities sponsored by the Division were:

Leadership Training - In cooperation with the Civic Recreation Commission, a course for the training of leaders was held during the week of July 9th to 15th at the West Glen High School, and more than 30 registered.

In-the-City Camps - were again sponsored quite successfully in representative areas of the City.

Civic Recreation Commission - A brief was submitted to the Civic Recreation Commission, which was adopted in principle, insofar as playgrounds were concerned, and the entire brief was received very favourably.

I.O.D.E. Camp - The Division was asked by the Municipal Chapter of the I.O.D.E. to advise regarding the desirability of extending the period of operation of Camp Elizabeth for girls this summer. After consideration, it was recommended that the camping period be extended from four to six weeks.

Miss Rae Abernethy's Visit - Arrangements were made for two special meetings to hear Miss Abernethy, National Personnel Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., along the lines of national trends in Community Recreational Services.

Recreation Week - The Division sponsored a joint demonstration by the In-the-City and Out-of-Town Camp children, during the City's Recreation Week. This included a parade, a community sing-song and exhibits of work and activities in store windows.

Mrs. Walter Elliot's Visit - A luncheon meeting which was very representative and well attended, was held at the Corona Hotel, to meet Mrs. Walter Elliot, Chairman of the National Association of Girls' Clubs and the Mixed Clubs in Great Britain.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation of the spirit of good-fellowship and cooperation amongst the members of the Division, and of their willingness to accept responsibility for the carrying out of the activities of the Division, all of which has made my task a pleasant one.

FROM THE REPORT OF THE HEALTH DIVISION

The Division's purpose is primarily to provide an opportunity for those interested in health matters to participate in discussion and planning for the improvement of health services and conditions in the community. It also endeavours to bring to the attention of member agencies and the community at large, advancements in science which have simple and practical applications for the betterment of public health.

One meeting of the Division was held jointly with, and at the invitation of, the Alberta Home Economics Association, to hear Dr. Graham Huckle on the development of orthopaedic work at a military hospital at Hairmyre, Scotland.

Since the Health Division had played a conspicuous part in convincing the Royal Alexandra Hospital that it should establish a Social Service Department, it was particularly interested in receiving a report from Mrs. Elizabeth Richardson, Director of Social Service at the Hospital, regarding the work of the Department after one complete year's operation.

The policies of the Victorian Order of Nurses were outlined in another address, by Mrs. W. J. Sellhorn, until recently Supervisor of the Order.

Outstanding needs and lacks in present provisions for the prevention of blindness, and for serving blind persons, were also

considered. In view of the apparent inadequacy of lighting in some Edmonton schools, the Division agreed to support the efforts which were being made by the Edmonton Home and School Council to obtain improvements.

"Can the Average Citizen be Adequately Housed?" was the subject of a public meeting sponsored by the Division. Dr. Mary Hunter, and Mr. Max Dewar, City Architect, were the speakers on this occasion, and a film depicting housing developments in Scotland, was shown. A resolution calling for a Dominion subsidized housing programme for low income families, was passed, and was later forwarded by the Council to the appropriate authorities.

Believing that an enlarged and expanded Visiting Housekeeper Service, if available, might provide a solution to many problems of child care, principally in cases of illness of the mother either at home or in hospital, a committee was formed to investigate the extent of need and submit recommendations if a definite need were established. This committee has not yet finished its assignment but a report may be expected in the near future.

Another matter in which this Division has been interested for some time is the formation of an active Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society in Edmonton. It is a source of gratification to know that this is now becoming a reality.

FROM THE REPORT OF THE HONORARY SECRETARY

AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

One of the primary purposes of the Edmonton Council of Social Agencies is to provide the means through which all organizations interested in promoting the social welfare of the community, may join forces and develop coordinated plans for this purpose.

Thus, it is, that a large part of the most valuable work of the Council is carried on in its three Divisions, where the delegates of member organizations meet and consider problems of mutual interest and concern. From the foregoing reports of the Divisions, it is apparent that they have undertaken important and sizeable jobs during the past year, some of which have been successfully completed, and others of which are still in process.

In addition to this, considerable work is carried on by the

Executive Committee and by special committees which it may appoint. Usually these special committees have been established when the problem in hand cuts across Divisional interests or when it is one which concerns only a small portion of the membership of any one Division.

One matter handled in this way was a study of intake and discharge policies and practices in children's institutions. The study was made at the request of the Community Chest and related more specifically to Chest member agencies. The report, which was completed last May, was a fairly extensive one, and placed at the disposal of the Chest much information which had never been available previously and which could be used as a basis for negotiations both for improving the financial position of the institutions, and for effecting certain changes in administrative methods and procedures for the benefit of the children under care.

Another major project recently undertaken by the Council is a community-wide recreation survey. The Group Work Division has been actively supporting the development of publicly financed, properly supervised playgrounds and neighbourhood centres, and it is following with keen interest the progress of the Civic Recreation Commission's plans. It is obvious, however, that public recreation services will not, for many years to come - if ever - be able to meet all the leisure time recreation needs of the community, and that existing private organizations and groups can and should be doing a bigger job. But - it is also most important that they should move into those areas where the need is greatest, and that there should not be competition and overlapping in their development. While considerable information about various sections of the City has been collected by the Recreation Commission, and by the School Boards and City Departments, and certain other organizations, nowhere is a complete picture of the City's recreation needs and resources available. This Council, therefore, with the assured cooperation of the Recreation Commission, School Boards, private agencies and others, has undertaken to try to get this over-all picture, the findings to be available to all interested to serve as a guide in working out their plans to the end that these might form part of a coordinated whole.

We are on our way - on this big and important job - and with the help of crews of volunteers working three nights a week, we are starting to tabulate the returns from our first questionnaire - 16,000 of them! It will take time, - considerable time, before the whole survey is complete - but we are confident that getting the facts about our Community is a necessary prerequisite to planning.

In addition to matters referred by the Council Divisions,

for indorsation and action, the Executive Committee dealt with a variety of other topics:

Representations were made to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice of Canada, urging that the recommendations of the Royal Commission which investigated the Penal system of Canada in 1938, be implemented at the earliest possible date.

Consideration was given to a memorandum from the Canadian Welfare Council recommending that Provincial legislature be urged to enact legislation governing instalment sales and purchases, in order that desirable controls, established as a War Measure, might be continued without a break when the Dominion controls are lifted. Inasmuch as Alberta appeared to have had adequate legislation in this field for some years, no further action on the matter was deemed necessary.

At the request of the Family Allowances Branch of the Department of Health and Welfare, suggestions were made regarding people who might be approached for service on a Regional Appeal Tribunal.

The need for consideration at the first Dominion-Provincial Conference, of ways and means of making more adequate Government provision for the care of the aged was brought to the attention of the Premier and the Minister of Health and Welfare, and we are pleased to know that the matter is receiving consideration. Whether or not we shall think that the measures which will be proposed are adequate, is of course something for our agenda for the future. Study was also given to the City By-Laws requiring inspection and licensing of boarding homes for the aged.

Viewed in terms of future benefits to the organized social effort of the community, perhaps the most significant development during the year - from an organizational standpoint - occurred when the Council Executive Committee agreed to its Director becoming also, Secretary of the Budget Committee of the Community Chest. This is a pattern followed by community chests and councils in many cities, and it has proved to be a good one, in that social needs, standards of agency performance, and other information known to councils, are thereby naturally and automatically related to and integrated with the budgetting and financing of Chest agency services. The Chest has a responsibility to ensure that the money which it administers in behalf of the contributors is being spent as and where it is most needed, and the Council, because of its wider sphere of activity, is in a position to assist the Chest materially in adequately discharging this responsibility.

During the year the Council also responded to an invitation from Civic authorities to confer with them and with representatives of the Community Chest regarding the possibilities of working out some joint arrangement for dealing with requests for Civic grants to community organizations. The need for reducing the number of permits granted by the City for tag-days, and the desirability of establishing greater controls over various other types of appeals in the community for funds for charitable and welfare purposes, were also discussed. It was agreed that another conference would be called when the 1946 applications had been received, but nothing further has been heard about the matter by the Council to date.

Late last month Miss Nora Lea, Assistant Executive Director of the Canadian Welfare Council, visited Edmonton, and met with members of the Executive, and various other Council Committees, discussing with them particular developments in the Canadian Welfare field in which they were interested.

With a view to widening public understanding and support of the Council's work, a small publicity committee was appointed during the year, headed by Mr. Douglas Homersham and Mr. Robert Chapman. Through this committee's efforts, contacts with the Press have been greatly strengthened, and four issues of a monthly news bulletin entitled "Council Commentary" have been prepared and distributed. Plans are under way to extend the personnel and the activities of the Committee this Spring.

Within the Council Office, we have continued to operate the Social Service Exchange. Enquiries made of the Exchange during 1945 totalled 2,116 - an increase of approximately 300 over the previous year. 816 or 38.5% of all names enquired about, were identified as known to other organizations.

It is regretted that such a small proportion of the organizations assisting individuals and families in the City take advantage of this confidential means of preventing over-lapping and wastage of time and money. The high percentage of identifications among the enquiries received from the 13 organizations which did use the Exchange last year, gives some indication of the help which others might expect to gain from it. The Exchange appears to us to be the starting point for practical cooperation among social welfare organizations, and its effectiveness naturally grows in direct proportion to the increase in regular agency participation.

~~The Christmas Exchange - a confidential card index maintained for the purpose of preventing overlapping in the giving~~

of Christmas dinners, was also maintained again this year - 430 enquiries being made by 33 organizations and individuals, with duplications prevented in 32 cases.

With a view to avoiding as far as possible, conflicts in annual meeting dates, the Council Office again provided an annual meeting clearance service, which seems to have proved quite helpful.

The Library of books, periodicals and pamphlets, dealing with a wide variety of social welfare topics, available on loan to anyone interested, was maintained as usual, and judging by the use made of it, seemed to be filling an increasingly felt need.

During the year the Council welcomed to membership, the Edmonton Home and School Council, bringing to 63 the number of affiliated organizations.

1945-46 was a good year, and an active year in the Council, with increasing participation on the part of affiliated agencies and of citizens generally. Some very worthwhile things were accomplished through joint enterprise and cooperation. Other projects which were started have yet to be brought to completion. But the longer, and the more carefully one looks at our City, the more aware one becomes of the gaps and inadequacies in our present welfare services. Like every other city with a history of rapid growth, our needs have outstripped our provisions for meeting them, and they will continue to multiply in volume and complexity as the city grows. Groups of people everywhere are recognizing some things that seem to need attention, and some are prepared to spend money to do something about them. That we must spend money during the next few years for our community welfare work is certain, but our total financial resources - tax and voluntary - are not inexhaustible. It, therefore, seems obvious that when we do spend money for this purpose we have an obligation to see that we get the best possible value for our total investment, that what we sponsor or initiate is building constructively for the future, and that we are meeting first needs first.

To accomplish this we must have a citizenry with a community point of view - who make it their business to know about the kinds of welfare services which are being provided by their tax money and by voluntary gifts - and who are able to see the value of, and need for, claims upon the public purse for work other

than that in which they may happen to be more particularly interested or associated.

How can this community point of view be obtained? Through a ~~strong, thoroughly representative coordinating agency or community council~~ -- A council made up of representatives of all public and private organizations and groups interested in promoting the health and social welfare of the City.

The relationship between citizens and their community council should be such that they, and the clubs or organizations of which they may be members, would not embark upon any project for social welfare purposes - no matter how convinced they may be that the idea is a sound one, - until after it had been discussed in the Council. Perhaps there is something else which is required much more urgently which they could advance greatly by their support. Perhaps the proposal they have in mind has already been considered and is being taken up by another group which may be planning to approach it by a somewhat different method. By joining forces, competition would be eliminated and the objective achieved twice as quickly. Countless other possibilities, of course, present themselves, when one thinks about it - all pointing directly to the value of cooperation and joint planning in Council, for the community's welfare.

The Council of Social Agencies, organized by a group of far-sighted Edmonton citizens, was designed to be Edmonton's Community Council, and I think you will agree that in its short existence it has achieved considerable success. I think that we must also agree, however, that it has not yet reached its maximum usefulness and effectiveness as a community council.

This is only realizable as all elements of the community recognize the need for proceeding together towards a common objective, and are ready not only to use the facilities which the Council provides but also to contribute from their time and experience towards furthering the work in hand.

We have a big job ahead. Let's all get together on it and work as one community for our community's welfare!

EDMONTON COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

1946

Alberta Protestant Home for Children
All People's Mission, United Church
of Canada
Beulah Home
Board of Health, City of Edmonton
Boy Scouts Association, Edmonton and
District Council
Boys' Work Board, Edmonton and
District
C.G.I.T. Board of Edmonton
Canadian Girl Guide Association,
Alberta Council
Canadian Legion, Edmonton Branch
Canadian National Institute for the
Blind, Northern Alberta Branch
Canadian Red Cross Society, Edmonton
Branch
Catholic Women's League, Edmonton
Senior Sub-Division
Chamber of Commerce (Junior)
Chamber of Commerce (Senior)
Child Welfare Branch, Alberta
Department of Public Welfare
Citizens' Volunteer Bureau
Council of Jewish Women
Department of Public Welfare,
Province of Alberta
Diocesan Council for Social Service,
Church of England
Edmonton Creche Society
Edmonton General Hospital
Edmonton Home and School Council
Edmonton Hospital Board
Edmonton Public School Board
Edmonton Separate School Board
Edmonton Trades & Labour Council
~~Elks Lodge of Edmonton~~
Family Welfare Bureau
Federation of Community Leagues
Good Shepherd Home
Guidance Clinic, Alberta Depart-
ment of Health
Gyro Club of Edmonton
Hope Mission
Imperial Order Daughters of the
Empire, Municipal Chapter
Junior Hospital League
Kinsmen Club of Edmonton
Kiwanis Club of Edmonton
Lions Club of Edmonton
Local Council of Women, Edmonton
Ministerial Association, Edmonton
Misericordia Creche
Misericordia Hospital
Navy League of Canada, Northern
Alberta Division
O'Connell Institute
Optimist Club of Edmonton
Our Lady of Atonement Home
Outpatients' Department, University
of Alberta Hospital
Registered Nurses' Association
Relief & Children's Aid Depart-
ments, City of Edmonton
Rosary Hall
Rotary Club of Edmonton
St. John Ambulance Association,
Edmonton Centre
St. John's House
St. Mary's Home
Salvation Army, Alberta Division
Sisters of Service Residential Club
Social Hygiene Division, Alberta
Department of Health
University of Alberta Hospital,
Women's Auxiliary
~~Victorian Order of Nurses, Edmonton~~
Branch
Young Men's Christian Association
Young Women's Christian Association