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Mrs. B. Ethelda Mullen

Interviewer: Could you by any chance describe some of your duties for [inaudible] family that you recall or what you'd like to say for the families?

Mrs. Mullen: There's so many things.

Interviewer: Well, you can in general [inaudible] from the [inaudible] whether ...

Mrs. Mullen: Well, let's take first of all because this is the simplest thing. Let's take a woman who has just lost her husband, who died or is deserted and she has three, four small children. She can't go away. She can't work -- to leave them to go to work and here she is. What do you do about this thing?

What did you do about it? Well, in the old days, there wasn't too much you could do because there were not these state agencies set up. You didn't have a Aid to Dependent Children program. And the best you could do was to give that woman enough to get along at the same time seeing that she carried out all of her responsibilities in the spending of the money and the rearing of the children.

Now, that will be a simple thing. Then you have a much more complicated situation where a man and a woman are about to break up, the marriage is going to fail and here are children here or maybe there aren't but usually there were.

What do you do in a situation like that? You go in there and you see the woman or you have her come to your office and you have the man come to your office in the evening after work. And you discuss the both sides of the situation, the way he tells it and the way she tells it, knowing that both are colored a little by their feelings.

Then you come back at both of them. Maybe not in the first interview but maybe in the second or later, how do they feel about the children? No, they both love their children. He doesn't want to go and leave the children. He doesn't want to stay with her. What's the matter with her? Well, she doesn't do this and she doesn't do that.
Well, you resolve with each one of those as nearly as you can their own particular problem in relation to this thing which may be very different.

Then you bring the two together and have another company and you find that a lot of this falls away if you got the thing in time, a lot of this falls away. And they agree that they can try again. And there is where the support of the agency worker comes into the picture. They both know she's there. They can go back before something gets too bad.

She's their friend. She's a person who knows or they think so anyway. She doesn't know or think she knows herself but they think so. It's the supportive kind of thing that a case worker does more than what she says. Sometimes she just listens. Sometimes just listening is what they need to have.

I told you, didn't I, about the woman who came in and I couldn't help her. She just -- but she said I had helped her just listening, and you listened. We had a very interesting family over at 3rd Street bridge. The man was a huckster. He was Polish, the woman was Irish. And he made a pretty good living. Nothing phenomenal but he kept his family with three children.

Well, she had been talking, I went to a worker when she came in about she couldn't stay with him much longer. If it wasn't for the children, she'd quit and all those kinds of things. And we had never seen him. So the worker said, "I think I need to see Mr. so and so."

So she had said when the worker asked her, "What are the things that he does that you don't like? Let's look at them. Don't just say he does a lot of things. Let's look at the things and see what they are and see if they can be changed."

Well, one of the things was that he came in from being on the huckster wagon all day and went to bed with his socks on, his dirty socks on. She kept a clean house and she couldn't stand this going to bed with the dirty socks on. Well, this had irritated her to the point where it had become the perfect mountain [phonetic] [0:05:23]. It was just a tiny little thing. But to her it was an awfully big thing.

So he came in and I happened to see him. I happened to be the one who was handling him. And he came in one evening. We sat there in the office
and I said, "I think I understand things aren't going too well." He said, "No, my wife doesn't love me anymore."

And I said, "I think she does. I really think she does. Otherwise, it wouldn't worry her." And he said, "You think so?" And he said, "I love my wife." And he said, "I love those children. And I work hard." And I said, "She thinks you do." I said, "She said you work hard and you bring all the money and this is fine."

But I said, "There's more to it than just working hard when you have no money." And he said, "Well what can I do?" I said, "Well, can I tell you one thing?" And I said, "If you knew that when you came home from your work on the huckster wagon all day that you would bathe and not go to bed with your socks on that you're wearing all day."

Well he says, "That's a little thing." And I said, "Yes, it's a little thing." But I said -- he's, "Of course I can do that. Yes, of course I can. I thought she was just nagging at me." It's just to get them to say what's wrong. And this can only be done if they believe in you, if they think you care and if they think you can help.

You've got to get their confidence first. You've got to like them. And you've got to build up a rapport or nothing works. You can't just tell this guy home, take off his socks. He's got to see that this is the little thing that's brought things to head.

And that's why it seems to me that people ought to go in to social work unless they really care about people and care about them as being people like themselves not somebody down here which is on a [inaudible] [0:07:45], with somebody who needs what you have to give of yourself. And I believe that till the day I die because social is case work is dealing with person by person. This isn't a group work.

You get to know a person and you get to know the members of the family. You got to know the children. A man said to me one day when I've written some articles to the paper and I took it up to this man, he was a publicity -- of a big company, a public relations man and he said, "You can't take that stuff." He said, "It isn't bad enough."

I said, "What do you mean bad enough?" Well, he said, "People like to hear about the window being broken out and stuff stuffs with rags and the children being dirty and barefooted." I said, "Family Society would be ashamed to have a family under its care whether windows were broken
out and the rags were stuck in and the children were in their bare feet and dirty."

These are the things we try to help the people to realize for themselves that we don't believe that way. And when they get -- when they get the feel, they're so proud. They're so happy about the whole thing.

But it takes -- I used to think sometimes I came home at night, I was drained because it takes so much of you together with the knowhow you can't just go slop all over everything but it takes so much of you that goes in to this thing.

Now, I picked up the paper, now I see a name that I know and I looked to see that this man is the man that I knew is a boy, was a little boy. And I'm so pleased and proud of what he's done and gets the paper. And with the girl was pleased about seeing my picture in the paper, wanted to cut it out. Now, our relationship was certainly something more than just a hand I think.

[0:10:09]

Even, to care about the paper, couldn't care less. But you can't do it. But at the same time you can't go to pieces of these things. You've got to think how will we get out of it? You've got to keep yourself sane about it. You can't come home and weep over it at night. I mean whether a doctor can go home and weep over the woman that he operates for cancer, thinks she's going to die the next month. He doesn't do that but he's awfully sorry.

And he's doing everything within his power to make her comfortable. So that you give of yourself in this kind of job. That's the reason that sometimes it's a little difficult but as I said before very, very sad thing.

Interviewer: [inaudible] [0:11:15] was there a settlement house?

Mrs. Mullen: Yes, the Peoples Settlement house. That was going early in the game when this pile started them in this pile who had been up to North Stanton [phonetic] [0:11:30]. No, Northfield, Massachusetts and had taken a course in group work up there and she died so far many years ago and she's very old when she died. And she started a Peoples Settlement way down at 11th and Church Streets in a store front and made a success of it. That was the first settlement there was in Wilmington.
But we had nothing to do with the other -- we were interesting in many of our youngsters went to the settlement but I couldn't claim any credit for it, for the agency. There was the west end neighborhood house too was the other settlement which is a very good settlement, very well rounded.

Interviewer: \[inaudible\] [0:12:15] for you?

Mrs. Mullen: Yes, Peoples Settlement is on 8th Street in the new [inaudible] 0:12:20 got a different kind of a program now than they used to have. There weren't at that time the athletic opportunities for youngsters that there are now. There weren't the baseball diamonds and there weren't the place where -- the schools didn't have playgrounds or athletic fields. And they tried to provide a recreational program for these people and they tried to teach the mothers how to make homes better into that kind of a family program thing, all the family signed up in it.

And then [inaudible] 0:12:54 Christina [phonetic] [0:12:54] too at 47 Street [inaudible] 0:12:58 that's another one. I was on the board for years.

Interviewer: Why would a family go to the settlement house rather than to the Associated Charities?

Mrs. Mullen: They wouldn't go to the settlement house for the same thing. The settlement house provided within the settlement house, recreational opportunities, some few training opportunities like selling for the girls and things of that sort.

The Family Society provided an all-embracing service. If we saw the need for the youth to the settlement house, we included it. But when talked about family we talked about all the needs of the family, the family's job, the family's income, the family's housing, the family's -- what they ate, their health, their education, their school, if they had church affiliations, be sure that they were strengthened and got we involved the pastors of the churches in our deliberations. And it was an all-embracing thing, all of the things that a family might need.

A settlement house was to provide recreational opportunities and neighborhood house the same way, specialized services like the Children's Bureau for special children services where children could not be taken care of in their own homes, where people with no children wanted children and can tie these children in with this family or they can. But there were all services for children.
And then we began to well organize the Girls Club of Wilmington which is doing a marvelous job at the downtown area for girls, teenage girls that we didn't have -- well, we had the good many years I was on that board too.

[0:15:16]

They're giving those girls all kinds of things in the girls club similar to a settlement house teaching them to cook and teaching them to set tables and serve and sell and make their own clothes, all that kind of things. But they're special services for special groups of people, YMCA is the group for men, YWCA is the group for women and you have the Jewish organization, Jewish Welfare, Jewish Federation has all kinds of different activities it has.

It has its program for children that, now an active program for children, much as other things because the Jewish families don't break up like this so the other families go there. They're kinder.

And you're out here but Jewish child, and that it loses its parents having to be taken out of a home, you know that. There's more closeness of home and you'll always specialized agencies and should have. Those are tied together to your council of social agencies, you see which is a part of your red feather proposition.

It used to be by itself, youth council was a separate organization that we're taking in. And they're the ones who integrate the services of the various agencies and evaluate what they're doing.

You take a study even inside Wilmington and you've got what would be a great, big, wide [inaudible] [0:17:10] thing everybody on their own little stunt by themselves and getting not nowhere but getting -- only getting along on one foot maybe. Where if you can pull up all together and get the services for children, if you got the family that comes in and for some reason wants, that needs a place for the children temporarily and you go to the Children's Bureau.

You don't try to place those children through the family agency. And this is true of the Jewish Welfare, this is true of the Catholic Welfare, same way. They don't try to place through their family agency a child who needs placement.
I talked to the young woman this morning whose mother died and she was about 11 years old I would guess. There were three children. Their father wanted to keep the home and employed any number of housekeepers, one after another. He was a stationary engineer, he made a good living for those days. He was a fine man, fine man. And he had any number of housekeepers although they didn't work out.

They were just housekeepers. That was all. And these were young children who needed more than just that. And he came to me or came to the agency to see what he could do. And he didn't want to give up the children.

Well, we arranged -- we talked to him about the Children's Bureau. He went out to Children's Bureau. They worked out a plan for him. We were to take -- place two of the children, the two youngest ones in one home together and the other one in a house right around the corner.

And he would pay the board to buy their clothes and he would have them when he was off from work. Worked out beautifully. The man died about three years later. He developed tuberculosis, went out to Brandywine, was considered cured and we were all working together, the Children's Bureau, the Family Service, Brandywine to find a job which he could do because he couldn't go back to this job of going into the heat and out to the cold and all of this. We were all working together trying to get him a job.

He and another man went out for a walk one spring Sunday, they got soaking wet. He got cold, had pneumonia and died. Here was his three children and what do you do? Children's Bureau then takes complete responsibility. He's no longer there to pay their board.

That makes the difference, the Children's Bureau see. They're their responsibility. It isn't a family, it's a broken family and they had turned out wonderfully and I [inaudible] [0:20:17] this day. One of them's got grandchildren.

You'd use all the resources within your community then pull them all together to make a whole. The most embrace agency of all is of course the family agency whether that's Catholic Welfare or Catholic or Jewish or non-sectarian because it embraces all the needs of people, of grown people with children as long as it remains a family.
It's your responsibility using other resources for special needs. But you don't give up that case. You will still hold it while you use the other resources for the special needs of the family. You see what I mean? There's a difference between breaking up a family and trying to hold a family together.

Now, we could have said to this man when his housekeepers didn't work out. Well, you have to give up these children. He couldn't have given up his children. He loved those children. And he kept in touch with them and they loved him clear up the liver. I took them to their father's funeral. I went with the girl when she got married. This was family if you had no family.

You do all the things that people do for their families if they have a decent family life and care about their family. An agency like that, the all embracing agency does all of those things. No matter where the people go to, you never completely lose sight of them.

I don't mean all of them but I mean the ones you've worked most closely with. They come, visit you when they come back to Wilmington, and they write you a letter. I had a letter, one of the most rewarding things that came to me about, I think it was two weeks ago or three weeks ago maybe. Have I told you this about the boy who had -- well, his mother had -- they had flu, their father died during the flu epidemic in 1919. We got the family at that time. The woman never was mentally herself afterward.

And she had these children. She couldn't take care of her children. This boy was 12 when all of this happened. He was the oldest of four. And he has married. He has a son who was married and has a child. He has a good job which he held now for years, has a fine wife. Oh, it was toward my birthday. How he ever knew it was my birthday, I don't know. He sent me this lovely card and inside of it was written to a friend with a -- to a friend who has made me what I am.

And I hadn't made him [inaudible] [0:23:44] what he does. He made himself what he does. He had it in him when he made the exception. But it makes you feel good, the things that after all these years now has its production. And every Christmas and every Thursday comes a card. Since he was -- he was 12 years old selling newspapers on the street corner when all this happened.

These are the things that the family that has a -- not the time, but a family who has a son and a daughter and they've done the very best they
could, come from a very -- of fairly humble origin, decent people, good people, the boy gets in with the wrong gang and gets himself at [inaudible] [0:24:39]. No, he wasn't married. No, he wasn’t married but -- no, he wasn’t married [inaudible] [0:24:45].

Well, they were crushed. They had tried so hard to be some -- to be good parents and they had been good parents. He just got in with a gang that led him and he was ready to be led.

[0:25:01]

I don't excuse him for it but I mean that's -- I knew that's how it happened. Well, they didn't see how they were going to face this, what to do about it. I said, "I can't advice you what to do about it, he’s your son." This was years after I had known anything about the incident. I mean from agency standpoint. This you've got to decide what's best, let him take his medicine or try to get him off.

But I think you're the people who have to think this through. Well, they let him go to jail. And he -- they just told me that it was the best thing they ever did because he turned out to be a wonderful fellow. But he kept [inaudible] [0:25:51] with me. But you can't tell people this is what you must do. You got to say you have alternatives. You've got the right to choose. The minute you tell them what to do, then they become children and they won't have any sense of responsibility.

And who was I to tell them? I didn't -- who was I to tell them? I think they did the right thing and it turned out they did the right thing. He was quite young. But this is where you stand with some people and this is it through the years. It meant so much to me to still have people that I knew in the agency that you would not have expected as much of as they may.

But we've got to have the overall agency then we've got to have the specialized agencies who have ability, the training, education to deal with the special cases. Placement of children is an art in itself, it's a job in itself, where do you place this child? What do you do with this child? What's the best thing for this child? Foster home? Adoption? Institution? Or foster home while you observe him and then adoption.

These are special things which an all-around agency isn't equipped to do and shouldn't try to do. But we need them all. But we do need one, I say one, we've got three but that's -- they're all the same. I mean, except the other sectarian. But one that sees the whole of the family, sees all the
children and the father and the mother and maybe grandma who's there too making trouble.

**Interviewer:** Why would a woman -- a young woman in 1915 go in social work?

**Mrs. Mullen:** I don't know why I went to social work. I was quite young. As I've told you I had started this by, to be a kindergartener and had graduated. And I had a long illness. I was in bed from December, 1st of December till April and never out of bed during that time.

And this friend of mine was interested in the Associated Charities. And when I got better, she said, "You know what I think it would be nice if you'd come down one afternoon a week or one morning a week and volunteer down there." And I did. And I stayed.

**Interviewer:** What sort of people were given down ...

**Mrs. Mullen:** To work?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Mrs. Mullen:** Well, usually, it was a person -- not in every case, but usually it was a person with a college, with their four years of college. Not always but they were people who -- well, there weren't many -- for women in those days, there were school teachers and social workers and that was about it. That was about it. There weren't many woman doctors.

And I remember a friend of mine who went into medicine, pediatrics. She's about my age. And everybody thought she was utterly crazy and she said [inaudible] for that. That way it's better for her.

But I think it was the -- what I think with me if it's just something to do, I couldn't go back to my regular work. I couldn't go in there for a part of a day once a week till I got better and when I got in there, I got fascinated. I would say it had just happened fast with me. I don't think it was with everybody.

[0:30:13]

And I had a trained supervisor who was a devoted, dedicated woman and I think that helped me when -- you had to work under a supervisor even if you went in as a volunteer. And she was a woman who they brought here from Baltimore who had had the courage so they brought her up out --
stole her from the whole other agency which was one of the best in the country that time. And I think she got me fired up.

Interviewer: Was it mostly -- the chance to work, was it done mostly [inaudible] [0:30:45].

Mrs. Mullen: That's why there were very few men social workers. Although the first executive you have with the Associated Charities was a man member out here [inaudible] [0:30:51]. He didn't stay very long because they paid him with a -- that was a salary of $1,000 a year.

Interviewer: But the two mayors commission you mentioned ...

Mrs. Mullen: They're under different mayors.

Interviewer: Yeah. I'm just wondering about whether there was a sense of responsibility that could go toward better off sectors.

Mrs. Mullen: There are all the sectors. There are all the sectors, yeah. This is one of the [inaudible] [0:31:31] people realized the immense sense of responsibility that people in Wilmington have, people who are well-off have for the people who are less well-off and for what goes to help those people.

For instance, a man will give his money but he'll also take the top job for no pay on a commission and work like a dog to make the thing go. You have a man like late Mr. P. S. Scott [phonetic] [0:32:04] who gave -- oh, just gave the money away. Nobody will ever know how much he gave away because nobody ever heard of it.

He didn't like to be -- anybody know how much he gave. He just wanted to give it. But he felt that his wealth gave him a debt, an obligation because other people didn't have it. That he had been fortunate and that he owed it to give some of it back to people who were less fortunate and many, many people I know [inaudible] [0:32:42] but he felt a real responsibility for that relief commission.

He took that relief commission when I went down there right after Mr. Skelley [phonetic] [0:32:55] had then he took it. And Mr. Skelley [phonetic] [0:33:00] was a wealthy man. And the women too were the same way. These societies, this Provident Society I spoke about and the Female Benevolent, these were women who wouldn't be wealthy in these days but it was in those days.
And they felt responsibility toward the people of Wilmington. They didn't have -- they didn't get paid for any of this work. They just did it.

Interviewer: Yeah, is this -- well, this thing that -- as you mentioned, the women had so little choice of what they should do.

Mrs. Mullen: Well, there wasn't much that people could do. Wilmington had no big mills or places like that, like they have -- like garment places where they made garments, things that they could do like that or knitting mills. We didn't have those things for women.

Basically we had the [inaudible] [0:33:59] out here but that was men's work. Unless they took domestic service or were scrubbing some place in some office building or -- there really was very little for them to do.

It was true. Most of them of the poorer people were uneducated. That's the answer, I think, I hope. Most of them were uneducated people and they didn't have a chance. And there was nothing for them if they had. You couldn't teach school and you couldn't stay in the store.

You had to have some intelligence to sell in our goods store. And you couldn't be a cook in somebody's house or a maid. What was there for you? Social work. It was the only thing.

[0:35:08]

But then social work, that was too, after those early years became a profession. And people would go into it and be willing to put in six years to get [inaudible] [0:35:21]. And those that hadn't gotten it were going back and taking it like I did, by pieces.

Interviewer: Was the social workers involved in Wilmington involved in any political activity?

Mrs. Mullen: No, we didn't get tied up in politics at all. No. We had our own organization, an organization of social workers since I got started here. Pretty soon early in the game when we got to have more social workers then we had a chapter of the national association of social workers which I had a representative come here and help me organize.

But we had no unions. We had no politics.

Interviewer: There was no involvement in the women's rights movement with all of these?
Mrs. Mullen: Not among social workers.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Mullen: I guess they were too tired. Yeah, they were having all the [inaudible] [0:36:22]. They didn't have a lot of time really and truly. You didn't work nine to five. You worked maybe nine to nine in the early days.

And you worked Saturdays and sometimes you worked Sundays. You worked whenever you were needed. Of course, that passed. That time passed but there was a time when you were on call and people had your home telephone number and knew how to get a hold of you.

Interviewer: Was there any difficulties that the social workers of the charity organizations found with the legal system? Any [inaudible] [0:37:14]?

Mrs. Mullen: No, no, no. They were very good to us.

[Cross talk]

Mrs. Mullen: There was very good cooperation. The main contact with them, they go -- those people was one man which up for non-support or something of that sort and they all would back us and call up these witnesses and back us. I never had any trouble and most of the judges in Wilmington, well was my friends. We didn't have any trouble.

We didn't have any trouble with people but I don't think a private organization, I mean a privately financed and privately managed by a board of directors would we apt to have the same kind of -- as any of that or as much of that as an agency publicly financed for which people were taxed. I think there'd be a difference there, don't you?

Here's a board of directors who were willing to serve on this board with no pay, 15 of them. I think there are 18 now. Prominent people in Wilmington, busy people in Wilmington because they're concerned about that agency and what it does. It isn't politics. It gets them nothing.

And they're willing to meet and have regular board meetings, special board meetings, be concerned, be called upon for special things where I think a public agency with an appointed and elected board or an appointed board, government appointed board, there would be a chance for more politics. We kept it out of that relief agency when -- I'm referring
to relief agency because Governor Buck promised me he would and he did.

But it could creep in and does creep in, I know. But it's less -- I have never heard of creeping into a private agency.

Interviewer: You described what people did last time, the transference that took place and -- was it '34 or '36 from the state to go over a certain portion of the public -- when the public welfare department?

Mrs. Mullen: Yeah, that was in -- when was it? I had that here in the pieces of paper. I wrote those things down so I'd be sure where I was going. I think -- let's see.

[0:40:00]

Well, they took that over. Let me see. That was right after I was down there. I left there in '34. Right, '34. No, that was in '34 I went down and it happened. Yeah, that was in the early -- yeah that was back in '31 when we were asked to take or we were handling unemployment then, you see, on our own. It was too much for a private agency financially to handle.

And that's when the first mayor's committee was formed. That's when the first public picture appeared. And we hired additional people, the best people we could get. They were not [inaudible] [0:41:00] but everybody else was hiring you too in every other city on the same.

And we hired them, paid them out of the mayor's funds, kept the core of five people separate but under the supervision of the agency so that handling, we know what was going on, kept separate files and separate records for all those people so that when we did move it into the public agency all we did was pick up the files and records and transfer the people along with the records.

If we had mixed this all up that somewhere down in here, Mr. and Mrs. So and so were getting public relief when formally they'd been only in for emergency private help of some kind. We'd have a lot of them probably picking it out and taking it away.

I saw that from the very beginning. We kept it entirely separate. All those records were kept separate and each one had their own folder and they were dictated on regularly what went on. And the amount of money spent on everything was kept in their record so that when came the time
to move them into another building and have the public agency take
over, all we had to do was get a van and move the files and let the
workers walk.

Interviewer: Since the '34 when a public welfare began to grow and now it's grown ...

Mrs. Mullen: Yeah [inaudible] [0:42:38].

Interviewer: How has the role of progress of the family service changed?

Mrs. Mullen: Well, family service has changed gradually in the beginning when the
need for help was only assistance, money assistance, the separation of
that group. For instance, we got family [inaudible] [0:43:02] having a
record of a family in here we've known some time. All right, now if they
come on hard times, temporary in the middle of that we wouldn't
transfer them to a public assistance agency because we knew them and
their whole picture was here. And they knew us.

But if a family came in and said they'd lost their job or the man was sick
and couldn't work, we'd send them to the public assistance agency. You
see what I mean? The difference would be that if we had known a family
before and maybe we had known the man's job was a bit precarious, but
we were hoping he'd hold on and we would try to both stir up this thing.
And then he does lose the job but he has potential and we think he'd get
another job and we're going to do everything we can to help him get
another job, we wouldn't transfer that.

But during all of this process, we learned as I said before, the families
have other needs than bread and potatoes. I don't know why I talk about
bread and potatoes, they're awfully fattening. Because that's what most
of them lived on then.

They have other needs that come out. And we learned that we had to
treat those other needs and gradually we found families coming who
needed only other kinds of needs treated. So that family service and
these other agencies like the Catholic Welfare, Jewish Welfare, find the
result in a place of accepting a different kind of clientele. Some of whom
wanted to pay for the service and did pay.

Some of them would pay -- well, we had people come in there who were
employed by the DuPont Company who wanted to pay $10 a visit
because they wanted the kind of help that so and so was getting.

[0:45:00]
I had a very wealthy woman call me some years ago. She had brought a -- it was during the war, the Second World War and she had brought a niece here from England to get her out of the war area and the girl was not accustomed to American living was starting to get haywire.

And she didn't know how to handle it. She was a sweet lady and all of that. And she said, "Why can't I pay something and you help me like you helped these other people? Why can't you help me with this problem like you helped these other people? Just because I've got the money and they're poor they're luckier than I am, they can get the service."

So we began to realize that people did come and they did come and then we put in a homemakers service which of course brought a lot of people to us which means that if a woman who's going to hospital to have a baby or if somebody goes 70 miles that goes out of the home to have an operation or becomes very ill at home, we'd put a homemaker in there. And she does what the mother would do.

The father, he doesn't have to stay home from work. He goes on there and gives money, which makes sense. And the homemaker goes in, looks after the children and does the marketing and the washing and the ironing and whatever the mother would do. And if the family can pay and many times they can pay the full amount, they pay the full amount. If they can pay part of it, they pay part of it. If they can pay nothing, they get the same homemaker.

But there are people who couldn't take it for nothing. I think that's what you're asking. How did the aspect of helping change? It changed as we realized that there were people like Mrs. Vancrock [phonetic] [0:46:47] who called me who wanted to be poor so she could get the help.

And we realized that there were many people who might want to come, who could well afford and would want to pay for and would come if they can pay for it but wouldn't come. That's why we dropped the name charity when we did so we can help more people.

Interviewer: One final question.

Mrs. Mullen: Yes sir.

Interviewer: For the summary. How has social work changed over the years? The role of the [inaudible] [0:47:23], the role of the administrator? What's happened ...
Mrs. Mullen: Well, social work has gotten bigger. Everything that gets bigger, as you well know, gets a little further away from bay. Do you agree with that, that the man at the head of the welfare agency, of the public welfare agency couldn't be as close to individual situations as the executive of the Jewish welfare for instance or family service or any one of them. I think that's one of the things that he is the administrator and that's what he does.

Now then down the line there are different people in different ranks of what shall we say? This was going to be a supervisor and this was going to be a county supervisor and this was going to be another supervisor under her or him. And this is going to be the business manager and this is going to be the -- and yeah, so this would have a big organization that does the very best it can, doesn't have half enough workers, can't keep up with its clients, hand them a check through the mail and doesn't know whether they're sick or dead or well.

I mean it's -- now, I'm not criticizing. I'm not for one minute. But it's bound to be when a thing gets so big that it loses some of its person to person business. It has to be that way. Things are the way they are and you couldn't possibly handle it with private funds. You couldn't possibly handle this of course if you had 10 more people.

But it's a grueling kind of job for the people who care, I mean the workers who really care about their people and can't get to them and can't do for them and with them the things they'd like to do. I think that's the minus side. I think plus side is that a lot more people are being kept from being hungry and children are being kept from being out of school, selling newspapers on the corners when they're 12 years old. I think it has a lot of plus to it.

But you've got to -- I think that you've got to learn to use both kinds of service. If you can use the public agency, if the man is just out of work and that's all and the family life also is good and you can supply the need until he can get back to work.

I think the public agency can do that very well. They can set up standards and set up standards of living costs and all that kind of thing because all that were paperwork in a public agency with a private agency. But I think you've got to determine what the man needs. And I think they're coming to it. The public agency is saying to the private agency, we'll put the necessary money in. Will you help with the problem up here?
Will you help the family? We'll put the money in. So that you got a service cooperative kind of thing. Well, it's a -- you do it together and maybe it'd work out. Now, I think that's moving up. Not very fast, but I think it's moving. And that could be a possibility.

For instance, now here's one thing we're going to do. Okay, this one thing as a specific instance I do know. Homemakers service which belongs to family service, is supported by family service, is supervised by family service. It has a supervisor in that department to whom all those homemakers are responsible.

The welfare agency is considering buying for their people from family service, the service -- the homemakers service. Now, they haven't done it yet but it's a possibility. So, that's that.

[0:52:04] End of Audio