

UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS
MINNESOTA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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IN THE MATTER OF:

THE FACT FINDING MEETING ON
RACE RELATIONS IN THE CITY
OF MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

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BEST WESTERN RED RIVER INN AND CONFERENCE CENTER

600 30TH AVENUE SOUTH

DAKOTA ROOM

MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

MAY 25, 1999

1:00 p.m.

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MINNESOTA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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RACE RELATIONS IN THE CITY
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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken in the
above-entitled cause, taken before ALAN WEINBLATT,
Chairman of the Minnesota Advisory Committee of the United
States Commission on Civil Rights, taken on the 25th day
of May, A.D., 1999 at the Best Western Red River Inn and
Conference Center, 600 30th Avenue South, Dakota Room,
Moorhead, Minnesota at the hour of 1:00 o'clock p.m.

1 APPEARANCES:

2 CHAIRMAN: ALAN WEINBLATT

3 COMMITTEE MEMBERS: JOHN MORROW
4 CAROL WIRTSCHAFTER
5 LAVERNE ORWOLL
6 T. JEFF BANGSBERG
7 GERALDINE KOZLOWSKI
8 LESTER COLLINS

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1 (The meeting was convened at 1:30 p.m.)

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Let's begin now. The
3 spring meeting of the Minnesota Advisory Committee to the
4 United States Civil Rights Commission will now come to
5 order.

6 We have scheduled for this afternoon a
7 community forum on race relations in Moorhead, Minnesota.
8 Before we call on a number of persons who have agreed to
9 give their testimony to the Committee, let me introduce
10 the members of the Committee, all of whom are volunteers
11 and all of whom have been appointed by the United States
12 Civil Rights Commission to serve on its Minnesota Advisory
13 Committee.

14 Beginning on my left is Clint Collins.
15 Next to Clint is John Morrow. To my immediate left is
16 Carol Wirtschafter. To my immediate right in geography
17 is Laverne Orwoll and to her right is Geraldine Kozlowski.
18 We will have one other member of the State Advisory
19 Committee, Jeff Bangsberg will join us shortly.

20 The Minnesota Advisory Committee to the
21 United States Civil Rights Commission is charged with the
22 responsibility for reviewing issues and subjects of civil
23 rights and civil rights enforcement throughout the State
24 of Minnesota. It has been some significant amount of time

1 since the Committee has held a hearing outside of the Twin
2 Cities Metropolitan area and when we met last fall for
3 purposes of determining what issue or issues we would
4 hopefully examine this year, the consensus of the
5 Committee was that it was high time that we look at issues
6 facing not only the Twin Cities residents, but residents
7 of the State of Minnesota as a whole and in particular,
8 greater Minnesota.

9 We are here today to review those
10 issues that the members of the community choose to bring
11 before us. Our proceedings of this meeting are being
12 recorded by a court reporter and the transcript will be
13 available to the public after it has been created. The
14 testimony and information received at this meeting as well
15 as staff background research will be formally submitted to
16 the Committee and we will adopt a report. The report will
17 be adopted sometime late summer or early fall and then
18 will be presented to the United States Civil Rights
19 Commission. It will also be presented directly to the
20 President and to the United States Congress and to the
21 members of the Congress and to the legislature of
22 Congress. . Most importantly at least from our position as
23 lay members of the committee it will be made available to
24 the citizenry to the State of Minnesota for consideration

1 for reflection and as appropriate for action. There are
2 fortunately precious few ground rules by which we are
3 bound and let me tell you briefly what they are. During
4 the hearing we will not allow any person or organization
5 to be defamed or degraded by any member of the public or
6 by any member of the Advisory Committee or any other
7 participant. Any individual or organization that feels
8 defamed or degraded by statements made in these
9 proceedings will be given an opportunity to respond. We
10 are going to maintain a schedule that is set forth in our
11 agenda this afternoon and tomorrow. It's very important
12 that we try to keep to our agenda, not only as a courtesy
13 to all of the persons who have expressed a willingness and
14 desire to participate and the time they are giving us from
15 their busy schedule, but also so that we can cover the
16 full gamut of the issues to be presented.

17 The general procedure of this meeting
18 is for the invited guests who are on the agenda to make an
19 opening statement of from five to ten minutes at the
20 conclusion of one or more likely two statements. We will
21 reserve the balance of the time for questions from the
22 members of the committee to the participants. If there is
23 additional information that the invited guests and
24 participants would like to offer, the record of this

1 hearing will remain open for 120 days after tomorrow
2 during which time such information may be submitted to the
3 Committee in writing at the Midwest Regional Offices of
4 the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and I will give you that
5 address.

6 To accommodate those who have not been
7 specifically invited to make a presentation to our
8 committee, we will offer an open forum on the subjects
9 that are to be addressed tomorrow afternoon. And so if
10 there are any members of the general public, either today
11 or tomorrow who wish to present a cogent or at least
12 thought through statement of their views on the subject,
13 we invite you to sign up with either me and you'll find me
14 or with committee staff who is over by the door.

15 The Minnesota Advisory Committee
16 appreciates the willingness of all participants to share
17 their views and experiences with the committee.
18 Discrimination is not merely a matter of past injustice,
19 American society is not yet free from all social
20 injustices, but the issue that our committee looks at is
21 are we making progress? Are we doing better? Have we
22 come to realize that discrimination in employment in
23 education, in health, in housing, in equal access to
24 justice among other areas based upon factors not related

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1 to merit, but based upon ethnic, racial, gender or
2 disability are ways, if you will, unjust and not worthy of
3 our great state and nation. Our state advisory committee
4 is in Moorhead to examine and listen to the good, the bad,
5 and the hopeful regarding racial, religious, ethnic,
6 gender and physical condition, discrimination.

7 We have no pre conceived conclusions.
8 We come to listen, to be educated, and to ask questions.

9 I have made only one error so far, not
10 too bad, and let me just apologize and correct that at
11 this point. Our committee's newest committee member is
12 Lester Collins and Lester is the Executive Director of the
13 State of Minnesota Council of Black Minnesotans and Lester
14 I do apologize and I owe you more than one.

15 With that introduction, let me call
16 upon our first witness and I would ask Mayor Morris Lanning
17 to come forward.

18 Mayor, thank you. On behalf of the
19 Committee for the hospitality and we know that you chose
20 the right day and you must have issued an executive order
21 to have the sun out bright and shining.

22 MR. LANG: Yes, I would hope you appreciate
23 that.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Yes, we do. Please go

1 ahead.

2 MAYOR MORRIS LANNING

3 MAYOR, MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

4 Mr. Chairman and members of the
5 committee, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Moorhead,
6 welcome you to the Red River Valley, River North, Welcome
7 you to the west coast of Minnesota.

8 I appreciate it very much and Mr.
9 Chairman, your comments about wanting to get out into
10 greater Minnesota, those of you who live especially on the
11 fringes of the state oftentimes feel forgotten by people
12 who live and work and concentrate on the metropolitan area
13 and so we appreciate it very much when people like you are
14 interested in coming out and finding out more about those
15 of us who live in greater Minnesota and particularly on
16 the edge of the state.

17 Moorhead is a part of a metropolitan
18 area of about 170,000 people and the two counties of Cass
19 and Clay comprise that populations of Cass
20 county is 52,000, Moorhead is 34,000 people. And as I
21 think you probably know, the Red River Valley of the North
22 is about the most fertile and productive agricultural
23 region in the world and so aggra business is very
24 essential to our economy, but you may not know

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1 that Moorhead is also center for education. In fact, I
2 often refer to our community as the education capital of
3 Western Minnesota. We have three colleges in our
4 community. Moorhead State University that has an
5 enrollment of about 6,500, Concordia College, a private
6 church-related institution that has just under 3,000 and
7 Northwest Technical College that consists of several
8 campuses and their enrollment here in Moorhead is around
9 1,100, 1,200 students. And so when you add that to the
10 K-12 population, education really is Moorhead's biggest
11 business and the majority of our population is engaged in
12 education either as students or faculty or staff for those
13 institutions.

14 And so the topic at hand here today is
15 the topic of great interest to our community because of
16 the nature of our community and the characteristics of our
17 community.

18 Let me share a little bit by the way of
19 demographics. Historically our community, of course, was
20 predominantly white, predominantly northern, European in
21 terms of it's cultural influences over time. We have
22 become more and more diverse and that population has been
23 increasing. The latest information we have from the
24 demographers would indicate that our population of persons

1 of color has gone from 4.5 percent in 1990 to 6.1 percent
2 in 1997, an estimate, and the people who are Hispanic or
3 Latino in ethnic background, 2.4 percent in 1990, and 3.4
4 percent in 1997.

5 The population of the persons of color
6 has increased in those eight years by 39 percent and the
7 population growth among Hispanic, Latino population has
8 been 49 percent and so we have seen a real change in the
9 make up of our community. We have had people moving here
10 from southern United States, from Mexico, and many people
11 coming from other countries. We have a significant viet
12 namese population and refugees from all over the globe who
13 are settling here. I think that this community is a
14 community that by and large appreciates and celebrates its
15 diversity. I think this diversity is welcomed by the vast
16 majority of the people in the community. We have had I
17 think a relatively low incidence of hate crimes and overt
18 racism. But, to the extent that we have had bad things
19 happen, we have as a community been concerned about that
20 and have undertaken a number of things to try and deal
21 with bad things that can happen, do happen. And what I'd
22 like to do is to sort of highlight a number of actions
23 that we've taken in the community to not only better
24 appreciate and understand each other and our

1 cultural differences, but also to deal with any instances
2 of overt racism or discrimination that may exist in the
3 community.

4 The first thing I want to mention is
5 that back in 1990 the city council established a Human
6 Rights Commission and I probably should have mentioned
7 earlier that I've been Mayor all that time. In fact, I'm
8 in my 20th year as mayor and so my history here on these
9 matters is significant. In 1990 we established a Human
10 Rights Commission and that Commission over the last ten
11 years has worked in assisting people who have had problems
12 or complaints or concerns relative to discrimination.
13 they have worked to mediate disputes that have arisen.
14 they have done a number of educational things throughout
15 the community during that period of time. And, one of the
16 neat things that I think our Human Rights Commission has
17 done is to establish a human rights award where they have
18 celebrated and recognized people who have done good things
19 with respect to human rights issues in our community. And
20 we as a community not only want the challenge and deal
21 with bad things when they happen, but I think if you want
22 more good things to happen, you need to celebrate and
23 recognize people for the good things that they do and this
24 has been very well-received by the community, these

1 awards. I might note that one of our city council members
2 who I appointed to our Human Rights Commission is also
3 currently president of the state association of human
4 rights commissions and so Moorhead has been very active on
5 that level as well.

6 The second thing that we have done in
7 the community goes back to 1994 and actually the work on
8 this started before that. The leadership of our
9 metropolitan area recognized the increasing diversity that
10 was occurring here in our community and we wanted to have
11 a positive and constructive approach in addressing that
12 diversity and so we put together a grant to the Pew
13 Partnership for Civic Change and we received a major grant
14 from Pew to set up a cultural diversity project in the
15 community and that project continues on this day. It now
16 is close to starting it's sixth year. They have done a
17 number of programs over the years and training people
18 related to diversity, doing workshops and educational
19 programs throughout over the years. They've provided
20 translation and interpreter services. They have also
21 established a minority leadership training program and I
22 had the pleasure of speaking at their graduation ceremony
23 just recently and what a delightful experience that was to
24 visit with people who have come from different cultural

1 background and moved to this community and have been
2 encouraged and prepared to assume leadership roles and
3 become active in the life of the community.

4 The Pew Diversity Project has also
5 provided employment and housing services for people.
6 Another thing that we have done in Moorhead is to
7 establish throughout the community neighborhood block
8 clubs and this has been one of the most significant
9 developments I think in our community over all the years
10 that I've lived here. Like in so many urban areas, people
11 have had a tendency to lose touch with their neighbors and
12 become disconnected with their neighbors and then people
13 become suspicious or you end up having a climate where
14 people maybe don't know and understand each other and may
15 think ill of each other'. As a result, these neighborhood
16 block clubs have reconnected people to this neighborhood.
17 We have 42 active neighborhood block organizations
18 throughout the community and a number of the neighborhoods
19 where we've had active block clubs have been neighborhoods
20 that have had significant populations of people of color
21 and people from other ethnic backgrounds. We have also
22 been successful in grant applications to what's called the
23 Weed and Seed Program that has targeted a couple of those
24 neighborhoods in particular where we have been able to pay

1 some particular attention to solving the problems in that
2 neighborhood improving the housing, reducing crime, doing
3 activities for children. I think a classic example of the
4 kind of thing that's happened in Moorhead. We have a
5 local business order owns a motel in really in again two
6 of the neighborhoods that have high population of people
7 of color and what he has done the last several years is to
8 sponsor a Christmas party for the children in the
9 neighborhood and there were some over 200 children that
10 participated in that this past December and that event has
11 grown into a real neighborhood builder and a program that
12 affirms the value of our children. We also have been
13 active as a community in making good use of our community
14 development block grant funds and undoubtedly you will
15 hear some complaints about that during the course of your
16 time here, but I want you to know from my perspective that
17 in all the years that the city has received community
18 development block grant money, I believe that we have
19 followed the intent of the law in making sure that those
20 funds are directed towards helping low to moderate income
21 people. We have spent most of the years, the majority of
22 our funds on improving housing. Helping people to make
23 sure that they have quality housing with their program.
24 We have also through this program supported the cultural

1 diversity project and supported another very important
2 project that I want to mention and that's called the
3 Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative. I don't know to
4 what extent members of this community are aware of the
5 research and activity done by the search institute out of
6 the Twin Cities, Dr. Peter Bensen. But Moorhead was
7 really the second community to really get a healthy
8 community activity established based on that research and
9 this initiative has done wonders I believe in addressing
10 the needs of our children and building the assets as Dr.
11 Bensen would describe of the children. We have done
12 wonderful things I think with after school programs. We
13 have a mentoring program now where we're hooking up
14 adults with children who really need additional adult
15 influence in their lives and we have many of our children
16 of color who have been involved in this program over time.
17 That's another thing that has been supported by our
18 community development block grant. We have also, as a
19 community, worked hard in trying to make sure that we have
20 affordable and quality housing available through -- we've
21 followed a scattered site public housing approach rather
22 than concentrating. We do have some concentrated housing
23 units, but we've also tried to follow a strategy of
24 scattered site public housing and we have 18 units around

1 the community. Wit that we have a down payment
2 assistance program and first time home buyer's mortgage
3 program that assists people and we are currently in the
4 process of working with a developer to redevelop some
5 rental property that has- really gone down hill and we
6 know that we're going to have people who are going to
7 need to be relocated because of this and we have made a
8 commitment that we will see to it that anyone who is
9 relocated is relocated in the comparable housing in our
10 community. So, we have done, I think, a lot to try and
11 deal with the issue of housing.

12 There's one other thing that has been
13 going on here. In the September month, that I want to
14 call your attention to because I think it illustrates the
15 commitment of the leadership of the community and that is,
16 we started last fall embarked on a visioning project
17 involving the whole metropolitan area, really both Cass
18 and Clay counties and trying to get the community a cross
19 section of the community to take a good hard look at what
20 do we want our community to look like in the future what
21 are the issues that we need to address and obviously one
22 of th central issues that came out of that or coming out
23 of that is the dealing with the issues of diversity with
24 race relations. It's been a central theme or focus of

1 this work and the people involved in this visioning
2 project have made a very deliberate effort in bringing in
3 representation from all the different ethnic groups
4 represented in our community on a cross section and we
5 look forward to getting the final recommendations that
6 what we can do as a metropolitan community to better
7 celebrate and appreciate our diversity and to improve race
8 relationships in our community.

9 Well, I could go on and talk about
10 any one of these things a lot more. I have sort of
11 highlighted a number of things that others who will appear
12 before you yet today or tomorrow will add further detail
13 to what I've had to say, but let me just say and make it
14 very clear that we want as a community to appreciate and
15 celebrate our diversity and we want to deal with
16 discrimination and bad things that happen in race
17 relationships and deal with them effectively as a
18 community. We are committed to do that.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.
20 If I just may pose a question and then I will ask other
21 members of the committee to pose any questions that they
22 may have for Mayor Lanning. Two things, Mr. Mayor. Does
23 the City of Moorhead or either the counties involved have
24 any affirmative action programs in hiring of minorities

1 and persons of color generally?

2 MAYOR LANNING: Yes, we do. And we, of
3 course, track that as we're expected to do in terms of
4 progress that's being made. We aren't making the kind of
5 program that I would like to see or that others would like
6 to see it need to be an ongoing commitment in activities
7 to try to make sure that we do have a representative work
8 force in our community.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And lastly, are there
10 reports of the Moorhead Human Rights Commission?

11 MAYOR LANNING: You have a copy of the annual
12 report that they just recently produced. I'd be happy to
13 leave a copy of that if you'd like.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: That would be greatly
15 appreciated. Thank you.

16 Other questions? Carol?

17 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: While we're speaking of
18 reports, I have heard of the Pew Grant work here. Is
19 there a report of that organization? That would be
20 helpful to this commission.

21 MAYOR LANNING: There would be progress
22 reports. There isn't any kind of final report. It's
23 still ongoing.

24 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: Right.

1 MAYOR LANNING: But, I believe Yoke- Sim
2 Gunartane is going to appear before you later and you
3 could ask her for those materials. I might mention I did
4 mention this before, but we can't disclose the details of
5 it yet because it's supposed to be still confidential, but
6 our -- the project and our two communities, Moorhead and
7 Fargo, are going to be receiving a national award with
8 respect to the work that we've done with this project and
9 I wish I could tell you more, but I've been pledged to
10 secrecy until they're ready to make the announcement.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Collins?

12 MR. COLLINS: Yes. I guess the question I
13 would have, just listening to the various activities which
14 are really encouraging. I'm wondering how comprehensive
15 or connected are these activities or have they been in
16 your mind?

17 MAYOR LANNING: I think very well connected.
18 You will hear from our police department representative,
19 people who have worked with our community oriented
20 policing and with our neighborhood block clubs have been
21 very much connected with the diversity project and the
22 diversity project has been connected with them, the
23 healthy community initiative they've been connected there,
24 that's a very important thing. We're not a big enough

1 city where we can afford to or we have to be working
2 together and these key initiatives, I think, are well
3 connected with each other so that they're not duplicating
4 or that they're complementing each other and supplementing
5 what the other is able to do. And I think they've done a
6 very good job with that.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Geraldine?

8 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I just want to know if on the
9 programs that you have, do you normally have advisory
10 committees if people of color are represented on those
11 committees and just for my information, is there a
12 representative of the communities of color on the city
13 council?

14 MAYOR LANNING: There's not on the city
15 council that I'm aware of. No one has indicated in any
16 way that they have a background that would qualify under
17 that description. We do not have a citizen advisory
18 committee like we once had and we found that that
19 committee found it difficult to operate. They provided
20 the -- they worked with the citizens input fashion on the
21 community development block grant and the committee
22 became very frustrated. It was a large committee I think
23 almost thirty people totally and they ultimately
24 recommended that the committee be disbanded. I can't give

1 you a count right offhand as to the number of people on
2 different committees that represent other cultures. I
3 don't -- is that information at hand?

4 MS. KOZLOWSKI: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Laverne?

6 MS. ORWON: I have a comment.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Laverne?

8 MS. ORWON: I was very impressed by the fact
9 that your human rights commission does recognition of
10 people who have done good work in human rights because
11 I've known some people who would not like to serve on that
12 committee because it's so depressing with the kind of
13 problems that they deal with all the time and I think it's
14 wonderful that you do something positive and I think
15 that's something we could spread out to other communities.

16 MAYOR LANNING: Well, it's been a great thing
17 that they've done and I think that's the way we do the
18 most good in our community buy catching people doing
19 things right and yes, we have to deal with people who do
20 things wrong, too, but can't just focus on that.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Yes. John? Mr. Morrow?

22 MR. MORROW: Mayor, I just have one question.
23 I would like to know what the role of law enforcement in
24 with the various initiatives that you have included in the

1 past ten years?

2 MAYOR LANNING: Very heavily involved. I
3 couldn't be more proud of our police department in the way
4 in which they have been actively engaged in the life of the
5 community and the community oriented policing has been a
6 great success story in Moorhead. Things that they've done
7 with neighborhood block clubs, with the weed and seed
8 program. We have really turned neighborhoods around,
9 neighborhoods that people were afraid to live in or be a
10 part of very real change and a lot of that is attributed
11 to the work of our department and so they're very much
12 engaged in the life and all these activities that I
13 described.

14 MR. MORROW: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Mayor, thank you very
16 much for appearing and please express our appreciation to
17 the members of your city council.

18 MAYOR LANNING: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: The next speaker is
20 Harvey Stalwick, Professor, Director of Social
21 Work at Concordia College and as well, Richard DuBord
22 Professor, Department of Social Work at Moorhead State
23 University.

24 All right. Again, thank you both for

1 taking time out from your schedule, and I don't know if
2 you have talked between yourselves as to who would like to
3 go first.

4 HARVEY STALWICK

5 PROFESSOR, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

6 CONCORDIA COLLEGE

7 Good afternoon, members of the
8 Commission. I'm very pleased to be here and I would just
9 like to begin by reminding all of us of a saying that goes
10 around this globe many times in the past and continues now
11 that it's not enough that justice be done, but it's even
12 more important that justice be perceived to be done. And
13 I'd like to title my brief remarks to you as rethinking
14 attitudes.

15 Civil rights like justice needs to be
16 seen to be done. The following observations are intended
17 to pose some questions for reflection on these fact
18 finding hearings and the outcome of research on attitudes
19 now under way in Moorhead featuring a random survey of over
20 230 white, Hispanic and North American Indian households.
21 The key areas of this attitudinal study include
22 housing income employment occupational classification
23 education, social services and police arrests specific to
24 the various ethnic and racial populations. The guiding

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1 purpose is to lift up for this community attention and
2 action in regard to the desired realization of equal
3 opportunity as a human right by reducing any barriers of
4 disparity due to racism. Implementation of this research
5 includes Concordia College social work students as
6 volunteer interns. I believe ten were involved since
7 January, interns with the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.
8 They are Michelle Anderson, Michelle Misser, Nancy
9 Neihamer, Molly Nefsted, Chris Savy, Stacy Seeling, Dan
10 Simmons, Angela Stack, Tracy Thiel and Melissa Warren.
11 Joining this team in June for the summer and all phases of
12 the project will be Moorhead State University social work
13 professor Amy Phillips and seven Moorhead State University
14 students as volunteer interns with the Commission.

15 This afternoon there are five questions
16 I wish to explore why these five questions essentially
17 they are questions that were put together ourselves as we
18 listen to people in this community express attitudes in
19 the areas that I've just outlined. I'll be giving some
20 examples from what we've learned so far, but I wish to
21 caution members of this Commission that this is in no way
22 a reporting out of this research. We are just maybe so
23 barely one third of the way through, but I thought it
24 might be important to site some examples of what we have

1 heard so far.

2 The first question that I -- that we
3 put to ourselves and perhaps also put to this process is
4 does racialization of visible minorities express in
5 Moorhead. Racialization refers to people from those
6 ethnic groups whose visible skin color triggers a racists
7 response in a predominant white society. The color of
8 one's skin can become a code for sweeping generalizations
9 about persons. Generalizations which contribute to a
10 denial of equal opportunity and to social isolation. I'll
11 give you one example. And international students
12 attending Concordia raised on Columbia spent a few years
13 in a large metropolitan city before come to Concordia.
14 She sat in my office one day and she said, in effect,
15 what's with this community? I walk into a store and
16 people turn and they stare at me. And I feel their eyes
17 in the back of me following me. What's with this
18 community? To me this is an example of racialization; the
19 color of one's skin prompts a reaction. In this case,
20 it's simply a physical reaction of watching.

21 I'll move on to other examples. In a
22 racist culture, racial features can be used for grounds to
23 discriminate and exploit in the workplace and exploit in
24 the workplace as well as institution of education and

1 training and this can result in unemployment, high school
2 drop out, low literacy rates as well as low technical
3 skills. And the accompanied culture of despondency are
4 attributed to cultural shortcomings that people make
5 generalization saying why does this happen? They're lazy,
6 they lack discipline, or have a limited capacity for
7 acquiring skills and many of the responses provided as
8 comments at the end of our phone survey of attitude and
9 this is phone surveys of white households in Moorhead.
10 One can pick out such generalizations that explain why
11 minorities are the way they are in Moorhead. I'll cite
12 you three examples. Minorities are transients.
13 Transients nature causes problems. Minorities need to do
14 more, e.g. an eight hour job and they wouldn't get in the
15 trouble. Criminals are just like kids in the summer, too
16 much time leads them astray. Another example that is
17 minorities, Hispanic persons, it's a self imposed
18 creation of their own problems. They need to integrate
19 into the community. What is the nature of rejection based
20 solely on visible cultural features. For example, among
21 employed persons applying for employment, what happens
22 when they are judged by the color of their skin often an
23 us first and foremost attitude which we will call
24 ethnosensitism. —Being from a college I have to throw in a

1 word or two like that, is at the heart of this rejection
2 and it has negative consequences. For example, employed
3 members of a racialized community do not advance within
4 jobs at the same rate as members of the dominant culture.
5 an example given by a Hispanic person on a recent trip
6 sponsor on racial noted that he worked for over fifteen
7 years Fargo employers, always on the night shift. He
8 knows he's competent and he sees less competent white
9 persons moved to day shift jobs very frequently. Another
10 aspect unemployed members have difficulties advancing in
11 their job searches to the point of actually getting a job
12 interview. During attendance at a community meeting of
13 Hispanic persons who have children in the Moorhead public
14 school system, they gave an example of a Hispanic college
15 graduate who they perceived to have met all qualification
16 for teaching, but was denied a teaching position in
17 Moorhead. This person had to seek a teaching job
18 elsewhere. How does this happen? Well, their names are
19 on application forms, place of one's birth or country of
20 origin which can be gleaned from school or as well as
21 voice accents over the telephone are often used to screen
22 people out of color. Numerous examples of such screenings
23 have come to our attention in regard to minority person
24 being denied rental accommodation. The second question

1 that we put to ourselves and I put to you does the problem
2 of deracialization and the melting pot, how is the problem
3 of deracialization and the melting pot myth connected and
4 you in the judgment in the question, the melting pot is
5 viewed as a myth. Rationalized groups as described above
6 face an ongoing challenge to prove that they are, in fact,
7 normal human beings. For some they lead to a negative
8 giving in and living out forms of what has been a dual
9 consciousness. For example, racialized persons oftentimes
10 attempt to imitate the dominant culture. They may even
11 accept other's definitions and perception of how their own
12 culture is archaic and stale by despising their own and
13 identifying with what is an oppressive culture
14 rationalized. People seek to derationalize them to
15 assimilate to melt. In the long run many who have
16 attempted to derationalize themselves by accepting
17 wholesale the relevant and superiority of the European
18 culture re further rejected by the dominant culture. In a
19 sense it's a no win situation. In the early 1900s an
20 African intellectual, W. E. B. DuBois wrote about dual
21 consciousness. His definition assigning of always looking
22 at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring
23 one's sole by the tape of a whirl that looks on in assumed
24 contempt and petty end of his definition. Other aspects

1 there's great diversity in racialized members background
2 and this is frustrated by being viewed as "the same as all
3 rationalized groups". Persons unique assets, their
4 culture, their history, spiritual values, skills and
5 credentials all vanish into thin air because of this
6 generalization. They are the same. As a result of this
7 non recognition and how status as a citizen, they are
8 marginalized and alienated. What is needed is an emphasis
9 on multi culturalism and a celebration of this mosaic of
10 unique cultures, in a sense a celebration of people's
11 strengths and of people's hopes. Therefore, the myth, the
12 melting pot in it's sameness expectation of how everyone
13 is to melt results in an intolerance for persons who seek
14 to retain and build up their own culture identity. I gave
15 some examples and again, some examples from what we've
16 heard. One said she would like to see minority
17 assimilated more and she believes that we should forget
18 where we come from. We're all Americans regardless of
19 heritage and ethnicity. It's okay to appreciate heritage.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Excuse me for
21 interrupting, Mr. Stalwick. I hate to be the bearer of
22 this news, but we do have an agenda.

23 MR. STALWICK: Okay. I shall speed up very
24 quickly then.

1 The third question I'd like to put to
2 you is when is can't we just all get along too easy a
3 solution? With other depths of attention of white racism
4 and racialization as outlined above, the community could
5 rush to a really quick fix solution. I think that such
6 an analysis is lacking in most multi cultural diversity or
7 cross cultural workshops which are commonly implemented by
8 organizations with all the best intentions and I will just
9 depart from my script and say that often this attention
10 by employers and the community at large to learn about
11 other's culture is such a once over lightly effort and
12 after it's done, many say well, we've done that, we've
13 attended to learning about each other's cultures. When,
14 if we do not really dig in and ask perhaps more deeper
15 questions about what is going on here in terms of
16 understanding racism. For example, then such learning is
17 perhaps not real learning.

18 A fourth request is a cultural of
19 silence present in the community. Short answer could well
20 be yes, there is silence, but we shouldn't say anything
21 about it. This silence could be present when no more new
22 efforts could be made to counter rationalization in
23 society. I'll base this on twenty-five years of
24 experience as social education. In Canada I worked with

1 Canadian Indian groups on human rights for seven years and
2 I made comparative study about Australia, New Zealand,
3 aboriginal and Maui persons and I've been five years here
4 and I've made some comparisons with what I'm making in
5 this community and I've seen a similar pattern and I've
6 chosen to say yes, there is a culture of silence not only
7 in the community, but in, may I suggest once the word
8 "human rights" and anti racism become an agenda, the
9 picture changes. I found only one example from our
10 research here where a person stepped forward as an ally to
11 work on these issues and she's said how she'd gone with a
12 Hispanic family to seek rental accommodation and noted how
13 it worked well when she as a white went, but she knew when
14 they went alone often they were turned down. And I think
15 for that person what she's chosen to do is break the
16 silence and say I'm going to act on what I understand to
17 be present situations of racism.

18 Finally, the fifth question, when does
19 social amnesia become a necessary allusion? There's a
20 definition of social amnesia which is the willful
21 repression of what we already know. Because to remember
22 has social, economic consequences we do not wish to face.
23 Such may be sharing resources and acting on
24 legislation that is there to protect people in terms of

1 human rights.

2 I'd like to close by reminding you of,
 3 and all of us of the late Senator Barry Goldwater's
 4 campaign slogan which I believe was, "In your heart to
 5 know what is right." Of course he was hoping people would
 6 remember what is right and vote for him. Social amnesia
 7 suggests in this context and the way I'm using it is I do
 8 believe in a community like this, in people's hearts they
 9 really do know, most of them, what is right. For some
 10 reason, which is difficult to sort out, there's willful
 11 repression of this an a failure to act in such a way that
 12 it does advance people's well being.

13 Why do we shy away from being good
 14 neighbors, but in our heart we'd like to know differently.
 15 Should we not know differently? How are we to define a
 16 civil society and how is civil rights like justice seem to
 17 be done?

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Before I open up to
 19 questions, what I would prefer to do, with your
 20 permission, is to call on Professor Richard DuBord.

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RICHARD DU BORD
PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
MOORHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY

Just to make sure we're all together,
I'm on the faculty of Moorhead State University in
Moorhead, Minnesota. I've been there for twenty-six
years. I was born in Fargo in 1940 and spent the first
eighteen years of my life in this community. I spoke
French as my first language and I remember how difficult
and painful that was to be short and darker and Catholic
in this community and speak a different language. That
was a long time ago. I spent, after eighteen I spent
twelve years going to college and graduate school and my
first two or three jobs and I've been at Moorhead State
for the next twenty-six years.

As a part of my life here at Moorhead
State and in Moorhead I've been somewhat active in the
community, involved in community meetings and served on
the planning commission for six or seven years.

How I was first interviewed or
encouraged to come before you today was a piece of
research that I'm doing this spring semester which is a
qualitative piece of research about Mexican Americans and
I'm going to use that term because my subjects prefer to

1 identify themselves in that way. Mexican Americans who
2 they themselves, their parents were involved in migrant
3 farm work for a significant portion of their lives. These
4 same people who somehow made the transition to college or
5 university and successfully completed and earned college
6 degrees. Fascinating interviews. And the information I'm
7 finding is just a wonderful story and one of the reasons
8 I did this study was to counteract the negative media
9 press about Hispanic students and migrants and other kinds
10 of folks and we seem to enjoy all the articles about drugs
11 and crimes and violence, et cetera, et cetera and the
12 sort of people who have gone to college, have earned
13 degrees, is an untold story. I hope to help, after I get
14 it all written up and I hope this next year i'll find
15 willing audiences to hear this story.

16 That's how I first got introduced to
17 your organizer for today and he asked me to also talk
18 about my impressions about these issues based on living in
19 the community for these twenty-six years and my
20 involvement on the planning commission. My general
21 anecdotal and impressionistic view will not be quite as
22 optimistic as the Mayor's. It will be more like Harvey
23 Stalwick's; some of his concerns and issues. Since, as
24 our mayor points out, that the public school education is

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1 our biggest business, I'd like to make a few comments bout
2 the public schools. Of course my children went to the
3 public schools. The Moorhead public schools are wonderful
4 schools, if you're bright, good students or a very good
5 athlete. If you're not one of those two, I think it's a
6 lot more difficult and a lot less welcoming and probably
7 overwhelming because of its size. What I think the
8 public schools need to do, easy for me to say, is this;
9 they need to help people of color. American Indians,
10 Hispanics as janitors, yes, as secretaries, yes, but as
11 teachers, as social workers, as coaches, so that they will
12 be role models for those young students that they will be
13 liaisons, especially the social workers between the
14 school and the child and their families; particularly
15 families that do not have or have not had good experience
16 with large public schools. Indian families from a small
17 reservation in rural Minnesota or North Dakota is going to
18 have trouble with the school the size of Moorhead High.
19 Hispanic students who have traveled often have gone --
20 some of the people in my sample, by the way, had gone to
21 14 different schools before they got to college or other
22 students who left school early in the spring to be
23 migrants and got home to Texas late in the fall because
24 the crops weren't done, they had truncated or shortened

1 years. How will such a student thrive at Moorhead High
2 without extra help?

3 The second area I want to talk about is
4 community services and the Mayor listed a number of
5 programs that I think we should be very proud of and are
6 doing good things. And the community is very proud, very
7 proud of its Scandinavian heritage, very proud of its
8 christian tradition, but my experience on the planning
9 commission and my experience over many meetings, over many
10 years has been that my fellow citizens are not a generous
11 people. They are not generous with people who are browner
12 than they are poorer than they are. There's almost a
13 phobia for browner and poorer. If you wonder whether I
14 come at philosophically at this, the U. S. Catholic
15 Bishop's statements entitled: Economic Justice For All,
16 although boring to read is an incredible document and they
17 say that the people on the margins and fringes of our
18 society should not get just the leftovers, but rather they
19 should get the first cut. We ought to go out of our way
20 to help them folks first; just so you know where I'm
21 coming at personally.

22 Over the years I've been to virtually
23 every public meeting that was about a group home for the
24 developmentally disabled, women alcoholics, mentally ill,

1 the homeless, and the citizens of our community frequently
2 loudly stand up and fight and oppose the location of group
3 homes in their neighborhood for the developmentally
4 disabled, for women alcoholics, for the mentally ill, for
5 homeless, time and time again. And the scattered site
6 program that the mayor mentioned, every house that went up
7 for scattered site location neighborhood people were there
8 and opposed it loudly, consistently. Not in our
9 neighborhood, for several years. Yes, we have a scattered
10 site program, but each one was hard fought. Each one.

11 So, Moorhead is a wonderful place to
12 live. It's a fine community. The winters are long and
13 cold, but it's a good place to live. However, there are
14 lots of problems that we should not cover up and there's
15 this attitude of silence that we shouldn't be saying these
16 things in public and I'll hear about this no doubt. But,
17 when you're little, you learn to fight early just to
18 survive, especially if you start off in a different
19 language which is a little harder. So, with that, I'd
20 like to say it's a good community. The good is good, and
21 there's all kinds of wonderful things, but we need to be
22 much more generous to the new people that are coming to our
23 community. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you both very much.

1 Let me open it up to questions from members of the panel.

2 I do have one question that I would put
3 to both of you. Before I do that, let me tell you, if
4 you would, Professor Stalwick, convey to the interns that
5 have worked on the project up until this point as well as
6 to the interns who will be working on the project during
7 the summer our very, very deep appreciation for their
8 volunteer work and for the contribution that we know they
9 will be making to the outcome of the report and the other
10 response to that then is because these are the people of
11 commitment and hopefully that they will be infectious in
12 their commitment to the right thing.

13 MR. STALWICK: I will convey the same message
14 to the students that worked with me.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I do appreciate it so
16 much.

17 The one question that I will put to
18 both of you, and that's given the statements that you've
19 both given us is that this is a fine community in which to
20 live, where is the breakdown from the fine community in
21 which we live, in which to live to putting into practice
22 the tolerance, the acceptance, the encouragement of those
23 who are maybe of a different color or different ethnic or
24 racial or religious background? What's broken down?

1 MR. DU BORD: If I taught at the other school,
2 I would have a theological explanation for that, but I'll
3 pass at this time, unless Harvey wants to deal with it.

4 MR. STALWICK: That's a very difficult
5 question, especially in the sense of feeling and being an
6 outsider, being here five years and I was rather taken
7 back in the sense that there was really no major
8 oppositional forces organized within the community that
9 had what I would call authentic indigenous leadership
10 among people of color. I'm used to coalitions against
11 racism being in communities, and not being accepted as
12 yeah, we need that, we need mechanisms to keep our
13 existing skeletons at least of how to have human rights
14 honored to keep them honest, to keep them on their toes
15 and I found very few examples of systematic oppositional
16 forces here. And when people do speak out, who are people
17 of color? I think they are belittled and they are
18 identified as being not representative of their people and
19 it's rather disturbing to me as an outsider to watch this
20 happen.

21 A second observation which may get me
22 into real trouble Dick, too, but I'll call you. I think
23 there's a veneer of religiousity that's not really taken
24 ethnically. The responsibility of the codes that the

1 various churches, synagogues, congregations saying more in
2 private, but have not found ways to act on them in public
3 and is simply a view that those who are on the seat of
4 social justices. I know historically the origin of it are
5 rather surprised when a community that is on the surface
6 at least so committed to espousing forms of
7 religiosity, yet the actions, the talk's there, but the
8 walk really isn't there.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

10 MR. DU BORD: Or the community is viewed so
11 narrowly that they don't extend it beyond their own church
12 or their own socio-economic group and the theology I was
13 getting at here I think was they really don't understand
14 the mythical body concept that we are one community, we
15 are one family all of us, from the very rich to the very
16 poor.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. We do
18 appreciate your opinions. Yes, Geraldine?

19 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I have one question. As both
20 of you work in the department of social work at Moorhead
21 University and Concordia College, I would be interested in
22 knowing how many students of color are in your departments
23 as students and do you do any follow up as to after they
24 graduate, are they employed by the, for instance, the

1 public agencies or do they get to work with people of
2 color after?

3 MR. STALWICK: It's embarrassing. I can't
4 think in the five years more than one person of color in
5 the program at any given time or follow up, yes, we are
6 doing a six year follow up of graduates now, but I can't
7 tell you where persons of color have gone in their career.

8 MR. DU BORD: Our numbers would be a little
9 higher because we're just a bigger place and also because
10 we're a public institution, our tuitions are probably more
11 affordable for people of color. I'd also say that we do
12 follow up studies on our students in our particular
13 department in the social work department. We've had a
14 number of Hispanic students and Indian students who have
15 graduated over the last ten, fifteen years, not many, but
16 every one of them as far as I know of, one is working in a
17 professional capacity as a social worker for county social
18 services, schools or probation, parole, something like
19 that, work in their profession or related social services.

20 MS. KOZLOWSKI: Thank you. You have our
21 appreciation.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Bruce Anderson will be
23 our next speaker.

24 Let me disclose to the members of the

1 committee that Dr. Anderson and I are acquainted with one
2 another in a previous life. Bruce, you were superintendent
3 of schools in West St. Paul where four of my kids
4 attended. Good to see you again.

5 Just before I proceed, Dr. Anderson,
6 let our record show that we have been joined by Jeff. I
7 recall you have some connection with Moorhead.

8 MR. BANGSBERG: This is my hometown where I
9 grew up. I'm proud to say I'm a Moorhead spud.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Again, Dr. Anderson, just
11 before you commence, would you please introduce Mr.
12 Jernberg and he can give some information about himself
13 for my colleagues.

14 MR. JERNBERG: Robert Jernberg, Assistant
15 Superintendent for Teaching and learning, Moorhead
16 Schools; J-e-r-n-b-e-r-g.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you, please go
18 ahead.

19 BRUCE R. ANDERSON

20 SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

21 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 152

22 The way we've chosen to respond in
23 terms of the invitation that was given is to identify some
24 general issues that we perceived exist in Moorhead Schools

1 and Mr. Jernberg will present a snapshot of many of the
2 activities and programs within the school district that
3 are being undertaken to move us towards our mission in
4 Moorhead which is to develop the maximum potential of
5 every youngster to thrive. The word thrive means to grow
6 vigorously in a changing world and we take that we, when I
7 say we the school board administration and staff take that
8 mission very seriously. As a part of that mission it's
9 our goal to develop what I like to call an authentically
10 inclusive environment for all of the youngsters in
11 Moorhead School so that each staff member and each student
12 feels valued and experiences a sense of human rights and
13 dignity. Those are kind of lofty words; let me kind of
14 jump right into some of the issues that do exist and that
15 will probably be and I'll be pretty candid on those and
16 then we do want to show and tell with many of the things
17 that are being done systemically throughout the school
18 district to move us towards the mission that we
19 identified.

20 As an overall strategy, we're not
21 interested in inauthentic inclusivity, but systemic
22 inclusivity throughout the whole school district. So, the
23 first issue in essence I've been speaking to the first
24 issue is the need to ensure that every student, every

1 staff and every parent does, in fact, feel valued and
2 treated with respect and dignity. Do all feel that way in
3 Moorhead Schools, no, I would say that would not be a true
4 statement. Are we making tremendous strides and do we
5 think that's true for the majority of youngsters
6 regardless of ethnicity, I think the answer to that is yes
7 and we can give some examples as we go, too, if you'd
8 like. An issue in Moorhead and I won't use the caveat
9 that it may be true in other districts, we're talking
10 about Moorhead. We certainly need many more role models
11 for our increasingly diverse ethnic population at
12 Moorhead. We have many languages that are spoken and it's
13 our desire through various postings and soliciting of
14 staff to have a representatives of the various ethnic
15 groups to be represented on our staff. That's not an
16 easy task. It's a goal, but it's certainly an issue and a
17 need that we recognize.

18 We in Moorhead, we do the Bob's good
19 effort. We maintain some real careful data on all of our
20 students on about anything that you can imagine and we do
21 that because we want to measure growth against ourselves,
22 not someone else. And one of the areas that is an issue
23 and is a need that we're certainly recognizing as we look
24 at the data, the grades for in terms of lower grades. By

1 lower grades; Ds, C, Ds in some cases not passing for some
2 of our minority groups do not represent the general
3 population. The drop out rate for the ethnic minority
4 groups in Moorhead aren't as favorable as the general
5 population, so those are issues we recognize as we look at
6 the data. Our purpose is not to sweep that under the rug,
7 but to identify those pieces of data and then what's it
8 going to take to move every child to meet our mission?
9 What specific programs, activity can do that? There's a
10 growing need throughout the country, but again,
11 specifically in Moorhead for alternative delivery systems
12 for all youngsters. One of my four did not respond well
13 to the sit and get kind of teaching approach where
14 students learn. That particular child needs a lot of
15 hands on activities. So, many, many areas we're seeing
16 the need for a whole variety of instructional strategies
17 that adopt them to student's learning skills.

18 Another area, another issue I would
19 call it or a need that we have in Moorhead as you look at
20 our alternative programs, the percentage of youngsters of
21 an ethnic minority in Moorhead have a higher percentage for
22 our minority students than do the regular population.
23 Again, we're trying to respond to individual student's
24 needs and if we take our mission seriously, then we do

1 need, in fact, to provide an environment to which each
2 child succeeds. But, at this point as we look at the
3 data, the percentage of students in our alternative
4 programs have a higher percentage of minorities than the
5 majority and it's our goal to first of all meet our
6 mission as I said, but there's something that we're aware
7 of. We're working on and it's kind o a catch 22, but
8 that's an area that we're addressing. With our
9 increasingly language population that I talked about,
10 there's a need for interpreters for non English speaking
11 families. We're getting many of the Baltic areas,
12 Kurdish students, besides our Hispanic population. So,
13 we're having a growing number of families whose home
14 language is not English. And so we're having a growing
15 need for interpreters that we can use as para
16 professionals, staff members in various categories to
17 assist us in working with our non English speaking
18 families. I think another issue is just working with our
19 non English speaking families to ensure that we do have,
20 in fact, high expectations for their students as well as
21 we do for all students. It's that ongoing daily
22 communication in their language if we need to through
23 people that we have who speak their language to help them
24 move to that next skill level and academic level in

1 education.

2 Again, as we look at some of the data
3 in our school district, one of the pieces that -- of the
4 data that sticks out is the level of participation in our
5 after school programs by other minority population doesn't
6 represent the general population. So, the number of
7 students in place in sports, et cetera, isn't as great for
8 our ethnic minority as it is or the general population.
9 We in Moorhead in particular are aware of how critical
10 that is because of a very wonderful effort that's
11 encouraged and supported by our Mayor and many people in
12 the community called the healthy community initiative that
13 identifies the values and characteristics that need to be
14 present in youngster's lives if, in fact, they're going to
15 succeed and one whole powerful set of those assets relates
16 to meaningful activities after school and Bob will refer
17 to a little later. We think we're doing some powerfully
18 good things and we can demonstrate that especially in
19 terms of after school activities. I'm starting to preach
20 on you now, so you'll have to forgive me, we're doing some
21 very important things in this area of need and that's
22 increasing, significantly increasing the meaningful
23 involvement of youngsters after school because that's when
24 a lot of kids have their problems. So, as it relates to

1 these assets associated with our healthy community
2 initiative is that we look at those data. That's one of
3 the concerns we still need to see a much greater
4 percentage of our young people meaningfully involved in
5 all kinds of after school activities. One that probably
6 goes back to number one and it's not on the material that
7 you have in front of you, but I think it deals with having
8 each person feeling valued and this came up at one of our
9 recent human rights committee meetings within the school
10 district. Each student and each staff needs to know if
11 there's a concern that may not be at the level of a sexual
12 harassment concern legally, sexual harassment concern. It
13 may not be at the level of some sort of violation that
14 would be covered by law or policy, but just a heartfelt
15 concern of one of our students. In and out during the day
16 they need to feel that there's an avenue where they can
17 take that concern and I think is the best word that that
18 concern can be heard and they note it's not just told to
19 a counselor and a teacher and that's where it stops. So,
20 that's one of our efforts as we look into next where is
21 what are some appeal processes that fall well short of
22 some very serious harassment where all of our youngsters
23 feel valued because if they have a concern, it is, in
24 fact, heard.

1 I think I was told we had about 30
2 minutes, so I tried to crystalize some of the majority
3 issues and what we'd like to do if we could is have Bob
4 identify just a snapshot of specific activities that we
5 think are supporting our efforts addressing these issues.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: As you are doing that,
7 could you also give the committee some information about
8 the demographics of the school population.

9 MR. JERNBERG: Yes, our population is
10 slightly under 6,000 students about 14.9 less than 15
11 percent of our population is a minority population. We
12 also have 18 percent of our population serve in special
13 education which is quite higher than the state average of
14 12 percent. So, our elementary schools have a larger
15 population of ethnic minority groups than does our high
16 school. That's a concern for us, especially we seem to
17 attract young families especially in the hispanic area to
18 look at the details to find out where they've gone, find
19 the family of older children; I'm talking high school age
20 to not necessarily continue to migrate back and forth
21 that's a concern for us that we continue to have more at
22 the elementary level than we do at the secondary level.

23 Our greatest ethnic minority is the
24 Hispanic population, the native American population.

1 However, we have quite a variety as I will comment and
2 what we did is we ended up asking our staff to provide some
3 information. You have a copy and I'll refer to a couple
4 of attachments and you as the chair have copies of those
5 as we go through them.

6 First of all, I'd like to comment about
7 our multi cultural interpreters who we use through the
8 cultural diversity project. The community uses those
9 tremendously in the medical field. We attempt to use them
10 when necessary for parents/teacher conferences, meetings
11 with parents, principals, educational planning. We do find
12 it a concern. It's probably an issue we didn't list and
13 the issue is to have people who we can converse well with.
14 The large number of people from a various -- from a
15 variety of areas. Number 3 on our list you will notice we
16 do have and this helps us in our high school, too, we do
17 have para professionals who are native of our area such as
18 expertise in vietnamese socially and kurdish, hispanic
19 areas. I did list in attachment A, we've had these
20 individuals also listed, the vital components, for
21 example, of social tradition for American school staff for
22 those areas. We tried to have them not only be para
23 professionals in our classroom, but also provide
24 information about cultural understanding for our staff so

1 that we do have a better understanding of staff of
2 preaching the strengths, the diversity issue and also
3 maybe knowing some of the cultural differences that can be
4 utilized. We also have many of the documents. Most of
5 the documents in our special education area translated
6 into several languages as needed. The languages currently
7 the four languages that we predominantly have are Spanish,
8 vietnamese, somalian and the people that are kurdish
9 people have grown in our community. One of our schools
10 this year that indicated when school opened that said what
11 was your biggest concern, it was conversing and being able
12 to communicate well with the kurdish people in Moorhead.
13 So that gave you an indication. I'd like to just hit a
14 couple of years we have a lot of celebrations and
15 discussions of the special days for those students in our
16 classroom. So, they can have pride, district wide events.
17 We've had Native American Pow Wows in our school this year
18 and we don't -- we do want to do that annually. We have
19 an American Indian Committee that's very, very active and
20 there's also work with Moorhead State University with Dr.
21 Olivera Melrose in doing some research in that regard,
22 especially with language acquisition issues so we can work
23 better with those students. On the second page of what
24 you have, I'd like to comment on page No. 8. You probably

1 heard this or will hear it, our district has worked with
2 the cultural diversity project and Moorhead State
3 University. We have in our community greater community
4 Fargo/Moorhead community celebration of diversity for a
5 diversity week and there's a lot of events and so forth
6 that happen and I would like to say a real thank you to
7 Yoke Sim who works with the cultural diversity project in
8 our community for her efforts in that regard. Other
9 things that we have done, you'll find an attachment
10 labeled C that talks a little bit about our inclusive
11 education plan and our district human rights committee and
12 what they have been doing this list, this area and also
13 they have worked diligently in looking at materials,
14 curriculum materials, media materials and we found a need
15 and in fact we are responding to that. A year ago we
16 added additional methods two years in a row for new ethnic
17 material in our school. So we try to be responsive to
18 those issues.

19 We continue to bring groups into
20 our community. Number 11, you will notice a mix blood
21 theater with the Green City who come regularly to the
22 Moorhead High School on a regular basis. The Production
23 of the life of Martin Luther King, celebration of Hispanic
24 Family customs, a variety of things to try to bring the

1 highlights to people. Our junior high jobs had a problem,
2 a diversity dignity and differences where students had
3 some training regarding that followed up by service
4 learning project with 35 community agencies and then
5 followed up where students in the classroom. We tell what
6 they had done, what they had learned and how that was
7 valuable. So, they could grow and we need as you probably
8 heard in other areas to have these students to be
9 ambassadors to their parents and to have us have an
10 inclusive feeling where inclusive is valued and racism
11 does not exist. And we know one of the ways that can
12 happen over time is to have our students be more sensitive
13 and hopefully bring that back to their parents in the
14 community which they live.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Could I just interrupt
16 for a question? One of the things that Dr. Anderson
17 mentioned and I think we recognize is the importance of
18 after school activity, what types of programming are going
19 on now, if any?

20 MR. JERNBERG: I was going to get to that.
21 I'm going to skip one and come back. If you'll look at
22 Number 16 on that list you'll find minority students have
23 been recruited to operate junior high school stores,
24 participate in healthy community initiatives, homework and

1 after school activities. One of the things we found very
2 successful, ESL, teacher was picked to coordinate the
3 program and as a result in our after school program we
4 found in that section of them the majority of students
5 were multi ethnic minority students. So, we found that by
6 using that key effort of how can we involve the key people
7 that will do this, for example, involvement of Native
8 American people or of English as a second language people
9 or so forth to actually conduct those activities have role
10 models and specific contact rather our athletic activities
11 we have been very concerned because the ethnic minority
12 population is not well represented in those, so we made a
13 major effort in this and think it's making a difference.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Like soccer?

15 MR. JERNBERG: Like soccer and we have ethnic
16 minorities I just looked at a track meet and one of the
17 girls that is going to state is a black individual. We
18 have several there, but we're not represented as well in
19 the traditional athletic activities and that's a concern
20 for us. We're looking at areas. In fact, we're just
21 talking about activity fees being -- sure, if some of it
22 is economic that we waive those fees and some issues
23 there.

24 MR. ANDERSON: We didn't bring the data, but

1 we'd be happy to provide it for you later. I think I
2 refer we actually did a survey through the healthy
3 community initiative. We actually did a survey of the
4 youngsters from grade 5 through 8 and asked the students
5 the kind of activities that they would most like to, that
6 they would most enjoy after school. And so the after
7 school activity for that age group actually were tailored
8 around the needs that they identified and the most
9 significant increase in terms of population was our
10 minority population in an area and i think that's one of
11 the areas that has encouraged us and that's just not
12 athletic activity; everything from pets to chess to
13 whatever.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Are they all economic
15 issues? The need for some students to work after school
16 or are there transportation issues the difficulties of
17 transporting other than a time of transportation?

18 MR. JERNBERG: We've looked at all those
19 issues, yes. They're all there. Another thing we have
20 done, I think at our high school a couple of pictures you
21 might want to pass them around to your community. We are
22 involved, in fact, I think you have a couple, but I'll
23 pass a couple here. These are pictures of two murals
24 that are about eight feet wide and one of the things that

1 we're trying to do to prominently look at those issues is
2 to ensure that the mural project which has had one third
3 of the students involved in doing this, this is student's
4 work in our high school, have been minority students. So,
5 we've had prominent issues with them. In fact, if you
6 look at item 29 and 30 I'd like to comment just a little
7 bit. It's an ongoing project. The first mural you see
8 the picture of it is entitled United and show the
9 diversity of cultures that historically make up the
10 Moorhead area. So, that's an issue. The second depicts a
11 Native American culture and you can see pictures there and
12 we're now in the process of a third one that's currently
13 in process to celebrate Hispanic contributions. So, we
14 had some things that we are a mural in our high school
15 when it was developed about 30 years ago, 32 years ago in
16 the new high school or the high school was new and it was
17 not multi ethnic at all and so we felt there was a real
18 need to do this. In fact, the dedication of the Native
19 American mural. We just had Eralbow Hyde, Native American
20 singer and dancer in to be there. We had about a hundred
21 members of the community to celebrate that and to have it
22 there so that people continually are looking at signs
23 within the school. The junior high school also has kids
24 working on ethnic mural projects to sort of bring that

1 issue that if you see those things, you're thinking of
2 inclusive and those issues. So, we continue to do that.

3 The district has also attempted to have
4 a part in the effort of the community. I myself served
5 for six years on the Cultural Project Board and I have
6 been replaced by our principal just recently and we have
7 four principals on the Moorhead Human Rights. So, we
8 continue to have efforts. So, I guess in comments you'll
9 find I just hit a few of these. We've tried to do a lot.
10 We've also communicated with the greater community Fargo
11 and West Fargo and Item No. 26 does -- I'm sorry, proud of
12 it, was north of both states and that's what we call the
13 learning bank between Fargo/Moorhead and West Fargo and
14 ultimately we've moved more in the area are. But what we
15 do is have every student in Kindergarten through grade 6
16 have an authentic art experience in a location where it's
17 helpful and you can see this year some of the things that
18 were included, Chinese acrobats, Japanese folktales,
19 Native American hoop dancers, theater of the deaf,
20 taiwanese dancers. So, you can see that we use the art
21 when we can in a cultural way to try to show that
22 experience. We want every student to thrive in a changing
23 world and we know that our students are coming, living
24 throughout the world. My own daughter last year spent the

1 year in Haiti and this year she's in Korea and I know
2 that's not atypical of some of our students that leave our
3 area and others become expert in the area of human rights.
4 I'm pleased that Jeff Bangsberg is here. I've known Jeff
5 since he was fairly young and it's great to see people
6 participating. So, I think we want to comment and say .
7 yes, there are issues, yes there are pockets of people who
8 have racist attitudes and so forth, but to let you know
9 that we at least as a young Asian community are working
10 diligently to try to make efforts to make inroads in
11 ensuring that we have high expectations for all in a real
12 inclusive environment.

13 MR. ANDERSON; Maybe just one more example, if
14 I may.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Just because it's such
16 tight time, let me just ask one request of you, rather
17 than as a question. If the district has an affirmative
18 action program in the employment area, could you provide
19 that to the committee staff, to Peter and so we can have
20 it included in our materials and I think that's unless
21 there are --

22 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: I have one question about
23 the size of the high school.

24 MR. ANDERSON: About 1,800.

1 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: 1,800 in the high school.

2 MR. JERNBERG: 1,800 students, closer to 1,900
3 overall. That includes those who are in the alternative
4 program, around 1,750 to 1,800 in the high school itself.

5 MR. BANGSBERG: I was quickly -- I was
6 realizing that we are going to be touching on many topics.
7 Are we going to be coming back to issues going on within
8 the schools later on today or tomorrow? Is that going to
9 be looking at --

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: The answer is yes, but
11 Dr. Anderson and Mr. Jernberg may well not be here for
12 that.

13 MR. BANGSBERG: Because many of our questions
14 have to do with some of the perceptions that I've heard
15 about within this school system and that's why I may have
16 some questions and some of them are kind of tough, they
17 may take a few minutes to answer.

18 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I'd be interested in receiving
19 some statistics regarding the achievement levels of the
20 various racial groups, including this grade basic skills
21 test, some parent participation, especially for parents of
22 color. What recruiting efforts are being made or what the
23 status is of the teachers of color within the system. The
24 special ed, how many students of color are in special ed.

1 I would also like to get some statistics regarding the
2 retention rate for students of color as compared to the
3 general population.

4 MR. ANDERSON: We'd be happy to provide that
5 or --

6 MS. ORWOLL: Can I ask one more question?

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Sure, go ahead.

8 MS. ORWOLL: I'm a little mixed up. When you
9 talk about the young children being here of, lot of the
10 migrant workers in particular and the older members of the
11 family are not here that they're staying in Texas or --

12 MR. JERNBERG: We're finding if we look at
13 our population and i'll give you that information of the
14 demographics, our elementary schools K through 4 have 18
15 to 19 percent minority population or high school is about
16 11 percent and that's a disparity number.

17 MS. ORWOLL: You only have those students part
18 of the year, too?

19 MR. ANDERSON: Some are part of the year;
20 however, what I do is I do have statistics annually that
21 we do in October and again in February and those are
22 fairly we find the same thing consistent over about a
23 five year period. I do have a profile of our district
24 that has that information. We'll make sure this committee

1 has a copy of that information.

2 MS. ORWOLL: Because that must be difficult
3 when you only have them for part of the year.

4 MR. JERNBERG: The mobility factor with some
5 of those areas are high. You will note as we look at
6 mobility that has been a concern for us in our alternative
7 school this year as we look at the basic standard results,
8 we had 33 percent of mobility in alternative programming
9 and so that does make it difficult.

10 MR. ANDERSON: One of the programing that
11 we're implementing next year that I think a lot of us feel
12 good about is that spanish immersion program beginning with
13 the kindergarten and first grader and we talk about that's
14 not unique for the word it's in Canada for many, many
15 years and other parts of the country. But again we talk
16 about being research based and data driven and that's why
17 data is important to us and one of the four salient parts
18 of the research on immersion on "emergent students and
19 families are much more aware of other cultures and show
20 positive attitude towards other cultures and our goal is
21 to start through kindergarten and move that right on
22 through the curriculum and I think it sends a lot of
23 positive messages about how we can focus those resources.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And I didn't compliment

1 Professor Stalwick, but you have in Moorhead one of the
2 best resources for just that in the program at Concordia.

3 MR. JERNBERG: They have been very helpful and
4 that was included in the information. I couldn't hit all
5 the highlights and do you have a copy?

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Let Jeff read the record
7 into the record and then I could ask -- perhaps, Peter,
8 what we'll do is have him do that during our break.

9 Next we'll call upon Jeff Kamick,
10 President of Norwest Bank Minnesota West and Ron Jordan,
11 Senior Vice President, State Bank of Fargo.

12 Mr. Kamick and Mr. Jordan, we
13 appreciate the time and the community background that you
14 take. Unless you have decided otherwise between you, I
15 would ask Mr. Kamick if you would go first.

16 JEFF KAMICK
17 PRESIDENT, NORWEST BANK MINNESOTA WEST

18 Well, number one, I would like to thank
19 you for the opportunity. As a member of the Norwest
20 system as you are probably aware, we cover 21 states
21 through Wells Fargo Company or Norwest. So, as one of the
22 larger companies or affiliations within the market, we
23 also assume the leadership role in a lot of our
24 initiatives and that responsibility that goes along with

1 lending and products and service delivery within the
2 banking industry. We are primarily a midwest and now
3 western headquartered agency or affiliate. I'll speak on
4 behalf of primarily of the Moorhead/Fargo market today
5 because of my responsibility within that market. The
6 Moorhead bank has holdings of \$235 million of which loans
7 or lending is \$105.6 million, deposits of \$201.6. We have
8 been in the Moorhead community 106 years, established in
9 1881. Our affiliation with Norwest and North Wells Fargo
10 goes back to it's inception in the 20s and a little bit of
11 personal history on myself. I have been within the market
12 for fifteen years. The past five years as managing
13 officer of the bank. I feel as if we do have a strong
14 commitment and lasting commitment of serving a segment of
15 the market and I plan on going through a few examples.
16 Number one, with regard to out sourcing CRA rating we
17 received in 1997 by the OCC examination team that was in
18 examining the Minnesota West facility of which Moorhead is
19 the headquarters, also including Fargo, Sea of Red River,
20 Detroit Lakes, we take pride in that and exception of OCC
21 standards have changed with regard to more tangible
22 evidence of investment and lending practices since that
23 examination. Secondly, we feel part of our success in
24 that area of the CRA or Community Reinvestment Act,

1 participation, whether on a local level in the CRA
2 employee committee whereby we analyze the market and the -
3 various segments, whether on an income or racial
4 background of the various segments of the market. In
5 addition, the need of production and services that we
6 provide. We have also had a history of hiring bilingual.
7 individuals to assist us in particular niches within our
8 market; such as Hornbaker's facility which is located in a
9 grocery store and I believe perceived within the market
10 and our focus groups with minorities as an area in which
11 they congregate as social setting. We have also
12 participated in the region 7 and when I refer to region 7,
13 I apologize for the jargon, some of our terminology, I
14 live and breathe it. But region 7 being North Dakota, and
15 Northwestern Minnesota, northwestern regional alignment as
16 our participation within and a leader within that region
17 we are a participant in the region diversity council of
18 which is also an employee driven organization dealing with
19 external and internal diversity issues. And have been
20 historically in the last five years reimbursing and
21 employees particularly in spanish courses; tuition
22 reimbursement, in order to allow them the opportunity to
23 converse with what we feel is one of the larger minority
24 groups within our market according to the demographic

1 information we've supplied.

2 Thirdly, our contributions which
3 you might say well that's in the largest part of your
4 business, but we do feel that has provided or afforded us
5 some opportunity to communicate with various groups within
6 the community, have been focused directly and at our
7 directive with the United Way to low and moderate groups
8 where we wanted the dominant share of our contributions in
9 excess of \$50,000 annually to United Way to go towards
10 low and moderate income improvements. We have also been,
11 whether on a monetary or voluntary basis, involved with
12 various groups that are in the audience. Take the public
13 cultural diversity project people escaping poverty project
14 the hispanic center habitat, Moorhead healthy Community
15 initiative. These have been on various levels, various
16 entities; whether on a monetary or voluntary basis.

17 Fourth, with regard to product
18 delivery, we were the leader and the first to the market
19 in the midwest with free checking which addresses a low
20 and moderate income need on the deposit side of delivery
21 of our products and services and also with our ATM or
22 delivery channel distribution we have encouraged use of
23 that through spanish interpretation on that or an option
24 on the ATM unit within our market was initiated

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1 approximately two years ago as far as marketing
2 initiatives.

3 Fifth item, we have found through our
4 participation with various groups and through our study in
5 the community reinvestment act, a need at times to not
6 necessarily attempt to educate or market our services and
7 product within the bank structure so-to-speak or through
8 our traditional channels. But more so out in the
9 neighborhood or where those groups associate more often;
10 such as, we've attempted public access marketing with that
11 one distribution and the Parks neighborhood to buildings.
12 We've also done it on the metropolitan transit system and
13 also most recently in 1997 a minimum housing finance
14 fix up program mailer to low and moderate income tracks
15 within Moorhead city limits.

16 As the last issue I'd like to talk
17 about or last area I'd like to talk about and try to have
18 materials I'll distribute later, specifically to our
19 lending activity. We are participating currently with the
20 legal services Northwest Minnesota and assisting in a
21 realtor forum on fair housing and have also been a
22 participant with the village family service center in a
23 credit where credit is due program whereby we waive
24 origination fees for individuals who have been through

1 this credit skills course encouraging them to enhance
2 their credit skills prior to applying for credit. Now,
3 I'd like to just, if you'll bear with me, talk a little
4 bit about some specific data which I will distribute that
5 has to do with our Humda data. Humda data is the only
6 credit data that we have that deals with race and gender
7 statistics. Otherwise, we regionally cannot ask for those
8 statistics. I also add that applicants or borrowers can
9 elect not to provide us with that information, but we are
10 required to ask for it according to the legislation. The
11 Humda loans include home purchase loans, home improvement
12 and refinance loans, secured by residents, unsecured loans
13 for general purposes and vehicle purposes are not secured
14 by the home will not be included on the information
15 provided as a rule. The number and amount of loans
16 originated to minority applicants reported may differ from
17 actual interpretation given that we may lend on an
18 unsecured basis. I'm not going to go through the details
19 of the information; however, make some general comparisons
20 with regard to the number of Humda applications and the
21 number of minority Humda applications over the past three
22 years. We have been at about 1.7 percent of our Humda
23 applications have been to minorities which you will find
24 is under what the minority population of the Moorhead

1 community is and we continue to direct and focus our
2 marketing initiatives at that along with our
3 communications with various groups or through our
4 association and seminars. Along the lines of the approval
5 rates on minorities, Humda originated loans compared to
6 the general total. Over the past three years the
7 percentage of minority Humda applications originated have
8 been averaging 77 percent as opposed to the total Humda
9 applications originated approval rate at 80 percent. So,
10 you'll see there's only a three percent disparity there.
11 I've also provided in the pack, it's as to the number of
12 Humda applications originalized, but the disbursement of
13 those originated include approximately 63 percent for home
14 purchase loans, approximately 7 percent for home
15 improvement loans and 30 percent for Humda refinance loans
16 which again includes residential real estate property and
17 then I've also attached within the information just
18 general products and services we deliver on a credit
19 basis, detailing in more depth the home purchase and home
20 improvement loan. With that, I would like to thank you
21 for your time and i'll be open to questions probably
22 after.

23

24

RON JORDAN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, STATE BANK OF FARGO

We, too, would like to thank you, the Chairman and committee members for allowing us to participate. We are kind of like the big guy little guy here. We're a local bank that originated out of Fargo, State Bank of Fargo. We have four offices in Fargo. We have a West Fargo separately chartered institution in West Fargo and recently, as of in 1997, November, 1997, we chartered State Bank of Moorhead. So, that's our affiliation is with Moorhead. We are very much interested in furnishing lending services to the -- banking services overall to the Moorhead community.

My function with State Bank is primarily in the lending area of residential homes. So, that's where my focus will be today. We are one of the major lenders in the metropolitan area. We do approximately 16 to 17 percent of the market share in the market of Fargo/Moorhead. In the market of Moorhead particularly, we're sitting at 9 percent market share of Clay County. We believe in trying to find ways to allow individual home ownership from different programs and Moorhead in particular has some programs I'd like to touch on such as the Echo Program which is a down payment

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1 assistance which is very much a valuable source for
2 individuals to obtain, allows them to get up to \$3,000 of -
3 down payment assistance money to get into a home. It's
4 used quite frequently and I just recently with State Bank,
5 have signed up to participate in that program once again.
6 Along with that we have also signed up for Moorhead Casa .
7 program which is a program founded to fund housing in
8 Moorhead again through the city. We also have signed up
9 with Minnesota First Time Buyer's Program which is very
10 crucial to get the first time buyer into the house and get
11 that step up progression for moving up housing in the
12 Moorhead market. Just a little bit as far as some numbers
13 on lending in the community of Moorhead and I'm going to
14 deal with Clay County because that's the numbers that we
15 can obtain data on Clay County because that's the numbers
16 that we can obtain data on Clay County. You're looking at
17 approximately 1,525 is what we're looking at approximately
18 financed homes in Moorhead. So, there's a large market in
19 Moorhead market and I think that the main thing we want to
20 do is try to find ways for people t o get into housing and
21 establish them in as a permanent resident of the Moorhead
22 market. As a bank we always look at, you know, look at
23 all full services we want to obtain that individuals from
24 the checking to the savings to the, you know, the home

1 improvement loan, the home loan and all aspects of
2 banking. We are a family owned bank, a locally owned
3 bank. We're out there, we'd like to be very participatory
4 in our community that we are in. That's part of the
5 reason why you see State Bank of Moorhead and State Bank
6 of Fargo. A State Bank of West Fargo. It's identity.
7 It's very important in the community and we feel very
8 important that that proceed. Like Norwest we're looking
9 at all the different aspects. As far as Humda
10 information, Peter mentioned that he was going to obtain
11 that for you folks and that you'd have that available to
12 you and if you look through there, we just like Norwest
13 are always concerned about looking at that information and
14 making sure that falls within the guidelines and as a
15 whole most of our programs we're looking at the
16 application versus the decline/cancel ratio, make sure
17 that's always within line and we found that looking
18 through the Humda report that that's in line and that's
19 within the 15 to 20 percent of the norm of all type of
20 applicants. So, those are the things, factors that we
21 look at. And with that I'm open for questions.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Just so I get an idea of
23 the scope, how many of the participants through your bank
24 are on the down payment assistance program?

1 MR. JORDAN: We have 1998 we did four deals,
2 in that 1999 we presently have done six.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And Jeff?

4 MR. KAMICK: That would be through our Norwest
5 Mortgage affiliate and I could get you that information. I
6 would not have that.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: That would be greatly
8 appreciated.

9 MR. KAMICK: Yes. If I can have who to
10 address that?

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Members of the Committee?

12 MR. BANGSBERG: In regard to the -- you said
13 the application versus canceled. Just so I understand
14 that number of people who applied for the loans for homes,
15 you're saying 15 to 20 percent which is the ballpark of
16 the minority community have applied or loans and have not
17 been able to receive them.

18 MR. JORDAN: What we look at is the normal
19 cancel/decline ratio.

20 MR. BANGSBERG: Can you explain
21 cancel/decline?

22 MR. JORDAN: Okay. You may have an individual
23 come in to apply for a loan and they applied for a loan
24 and for some reason they just cancel the file, i.e.,

1 deciding not to go through with it. And then you also
2 have those that come in and for some reason, either credit
3 or not enough cash to get into the home or something else
4 happens on the loan and it has to be denied
5 because of those reasons and that combination we look at
6 that ratio is that to stay within the certain parameters
7 of 15 to 20 percent of the total applications.

8 MR. BANGSBERG: So that includes people being
9 denied loans to apply for a loan?

10 MR. JORDAN: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Anyone else? If not, I
12 do have a couple of things that will be or both of you.

13 Do either one of your institutions have
14 any programs on credit counseling for low income persons?

15 MR. KAMICK: I think the one that I referenced
16 with regard to village family service. We've been a
17 sponsor of that and it's called Credit Where Credit Is Due
18 and I believe it's a booklet and a six part series and
19 most of the area banks were part of a sponsorship within
20 that. In addition, our mortgage originators to Moorhead
21 adult education forums throughout the season. It's
22 sometimes primarily in the fall and winter where there are
23 instructors with regard to how to buy your first home.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay.

1 MR. KAMICK: So, those are a couple of things.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And is the marketing
3 materials -- I'm addressing both of you -- the marketing
4 materials, writing materials and all the other, are those
5 at all bilingual?

6 MR. KAMICK: Ours would not be. At this point
7 we do have access to that; however, upon request we do
8 supply it because of affiliation with, for instance,
9 where there's larger minority clientele in Minnesota and
10 Denver, some of our larger metropolitan areas through
11 Norwest affiliations. The one thing we have found in
12 working with the hispanic groups approximately three years
13 ago is the interpretation sometimes is different within
14 different areas. There's a different slang, so-to-speak
15 as we understand it. We did have each -- nobody
16 understands banker's talk anyway. And that's the beauty
17 of it. See, no, we did have an attempt at some deposit
18 materials to have them interpreted locally once, but by
19 the time you get the materials interpreted, it seems like
20 legal requirements and regulations change, so you're lost.
21 We just haven't been able to keep up. There's also just
22 the general amount of activity that we see in that I would
23 go on to say probably two years ago working closely with
24 the center for the hispanic centers and I can't recall the

1 name of the group right now, was in that particular
2 section of the community, a very cash oriented in that
3 general not distrust, but concern for relinquishing cash
4 to a financial institution. We are working on a product
5 at this time to try to accommodate that. It's in the
6 prototype right now and hopefully by the year 2000 we
7 would be delivering something which I think would be
8 neutral to a checking account and that ability to access
9 cash.

10 MR. JORDAN: I'm not aware of any at this
11 point.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Lester?

13 MR. COLLINS: I was just wondering in terms of
14 link internships or training programs where the
15 populations, particularly of color, latino populations
16 here in particular, where they are beginning to be
17 oriented and knowing something of this market, I think
18 that they are your better advocates of in terms of
19 understanding information and I'm also wondering what in
20 terms of your employee population, what they are in this
21 given area and how many of them, if any, are persons of
22 color?

23 MR. KAMICK: With regard to the human
24 resources question, I can get you data. I do not have

1 that. If you want me to send it, I can provide that.
2 Within our region we feel it does mirror the percentage -
3 population and you're talking about a small percentage,
4 there's no doubt, especially in the Fargo/Moorhead as
5 opposed in some other, your other questions with regard
6 to youth. I believe we do youth education, whether those
7 chamber of commerce or in cooperation with Moorhead High
8 School, we are a sponsor with regard to the store at
9 Moorhead High School, we funded that. It's an economics
10 project for them. It's an active store in which students
11 run through their economics department. The success of
12 that we always were the sole sponsor of the Moorhead
13 junior High store and we also support business
14 economics education or the beef program are currently
15 researching some affiliation with a University of
16 Minnesota Economics Program and are a major sponsor in
17 junior achievement. So, we've close to current delivery
18 channels in the school system to try to accommodate. I
19 believe what you're focusing on--

20 MR. JORDAN: As far as the State Bank of
21 Moorhead and we're looking at a small institution of
22 probably about 14, 15 people employed over there, so
23 that's smaller institution in comparison and overall State
24 Bank of Fargo, again I'd have to get that data to you.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Jeff?

2 MR. BANGSBERG: You mentioned as far as
3 unsecured loans for vehicles and the like, you do not have
4 the data available. Do you have some, a guess, an
5 assumption how that success rate is at?

6 MR. KAMICK: From my perspective, it would be
7 purely speculation on that and legally we cannot
8 require that data on those type of loans because of
9 discriminatory, possible discriminatory actions.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Given that in mind, is
11 there any outreach into the community to advise persons of
12 color how income bilingual persons of the availability?

13 MR. KAMICK: From a Norwest perspective, part
14 of that gets to the educational aspect, the prior response
15 there also hopefully with our affiliations or some
16 volunteer contribution effort with the various groups that
17 I described also I believe you're talking to Tom and along
18 the lines of distributing information, I did reference
19 earlier our marketing initiative. We were finding that
20 the way we market isn't necessarily the way those groups
21 have access to our products and services. For instance, I
22 can do a lot of advertising in the Fargo Forum and yet low
23 income people perhaps don't have a subscription to the
24 Fargo Forum. So what we did was go out into, for

1 instance, laundromats and also neighborhood parks which
2 are free access and made up like these, that one deals or
3 calls this number and learns more about and then we had
4 products. Was it a gallant effort, I'm not sure. Can you
5 actually measure those deals? I can't say how many slips
6 of paper were brought in in addition with the metropolitan
7 transit. We felt that that was possibly an avenue in
8 talking to United Way and the various groups that that is
9 access to public transit. So, we did have advertising and
10 promotion on that called The Buck Stops Here, indicating
11 stops along the way in the mass transit or metropolitan
12 transit route. So that was our attempt.

13 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: If not, please accept
14 our great appreciation for your appearance and for
15 information you've given us and we will appreciate
16 receiving that data.

17 MR. KAMICK: If I can just reaffirm the date;
18 human resource statistics as to minority tomographics
19 within that and first time home buyers assistance.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We will stand in recess
21 for thirty minutes and to which we will continue with our
22 presentation of witnesses.

23 (A brief recess was taken.)

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Before I call on our

1 next two presenters, let me also indicate at 5:00 o'clock
2 today we will have our first open session at which time
3 members of the community who have not -- who are not
4 invited guests may make a presentation to the committee.
5 I would ask that if you want to make a presentation this
6 afternoon that you contact Peter Minarik our staff member
7 and just give him your name and address and any
8 affiliation that you might have, which is relevant and
9 then he will create a speaking order. Thank you very
10 much.

11 Our next two participants and I thank
12 both of you for your presence, are David Berg who is the
13 Vice President for Administration at Crystal Sugar and Ron
14 Baker, who is the Director of the Minnesota Workforce
15 Center. Unless you gentlemen have agreed on some other
16 order, I will call on Mr. Berg first.

17 DAVID BERG

18 VICE PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATION

19 CRYSTAL SUGAR

20 Thank you. I've got a fairly brief
21 written statement I'll go through it certainly and I'll
22 want to take any questions.

23 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Very good. I would
24 suggest, Mr. Berg, would you pull the microphone towards

1 you so we can hear.

2 MR. BERG: I'm sure if I did it would start
3 to howl. That's why I was reluctant to do it.

4 Good afternoon. I'm the vice president
5 of administration at Crystal Sugar Company which is based
6 here in Moorhead. American Crystal Sugar beet processing
7 firm owned by 2,800 grower shareholders. The company
8 employs about 2,300 people who operate five factories here
9 in the red river valley from Moorhead, Minnesota running
10 up north to Dramon, North Dakota. We are the nation's
11 largest sugar beet producer on far. The majority of our
12 people are directly involved in the production of sugar and
13 by products from sugar beets. In addition, we have a
14 relatively small corporate staff which supports our
15 agriculture and manufacturing operations. The corporate
16 office is located here in Moorhead. Finally, American
17 Crystal together with three other sugar processing forms
18 open and operate United Sugar Corporation which is the
19 second largest marketer of sugar in the United States and
20 one of the largest private employer in this region of
21 companies. American Crystal appreciates our opportunity
22 to discuss it's efforts to recruit and maintain a skilled
23 and diverse workforce. The company has worked for many
24 years to promote equal employment opportunity and has in

1 place affirmative action policy. Our objectives are to
2 first to make the best possible use of all of our human
3 rights sources while at the same time improving employment
4 opportunities for our employees and also for applicants
5 for employment.

6 It's long been the understanding within
7 American Crystal of equal employment opportunity,
8 affirmative action targets are in all that can only be
9 attained through consistently applying good faith efforts
10 throughout the entire company. American Crystal
11 recognizes that by providing equal employment opportunity.
12 We can continuously broaden and deepen our skill base.

13 I will now touch briefly on important
14 policies and procedures which American Crystal uses to
15 promote equal employment opportunity and affirmative
16 action. First, it's the policy of American Crystal to
17 provide equal employment opportunity to all qualified
18 persons regardless of their race, color, gender, or
19 national origin. We recruit, hire, train, promote and
20 compensate all persons in all jobs consistent with this
21 philosophy and without regard to membership in any
22 legally protected class. The company strived to, through
23 the employment process, specific examples including
24 recruitment, testing, and hiring of all personnel

1 completed to maximize diversity within the limitation of
2 our geographic area.** Individuals are upgraded and
3 promoted on the basis of ability, skill, experience, women
4 and minority employees who are qualified are actively
5 considered for promotion and advancement.

6 When faced with reduction in our
7 workforce, the company has made necessary job eliminations
8 and terminations on a non discriminatory basis. Finally,
9 the company's equal employment opportunity administrator
10 Carrie Jefferson-Meade, periodically with the appropriate
11 member of management to review EEO progress and certainly
12 to recommend appropriate, the entire affirmative action
13 plan is reviewed and updated once every year in
14 conjunction with preparation. Our reporting on FCC, EEO 1
15 reports.

16 American Crystal consistently worked to
17 disseminate inside and outside the company it's policies
18 relating to the equal employment an affirmative action.
19 This includes re-enforcement policy within employment
20 means usual work rules, training materials and also
21 posting on bulletin boards and other communication medium.
22 Special attention is paid to recruitment sources to ensure
23 the commitment to equal employment opportunity is clearly
24 communicated to potential applicants. As part of the

1 company's analysis and review of compliance, we pay
2 special attention to the utilization analysis of our
3 affirmative action plan. Based on a review of our
4 workforce analysis the company has concluded that minority
5 and women are not restricted to any particular job or
6 position within American Crystal where under utilization
7 may exist within this . A job group has been established
8 to remedy this situation. The company is also concludes
9 that both horizontal and vertical movement of minorities
10 and women employees is occurring satisfactorily levels.
11 American Crystal has began an aggressive attempt to
12 eliminate harassment of all kinds against company
13 employees on the basis of gender of race. We have recently
14 completed training on prevention of harassment of all
15 employees in the American Crystal at United Cigars
16 Corporation and also Midway Agra could employ it's by
17 product marketing subsidiary.

18 I'd like to conclude by prepared
19 remarks with the reaffirmation to American Crystal's equal
20 employment opportunity for all employees and applicants in
21 every personnel transaction. It's our intention to use
22 good faith efforts to accomplish our equal employment
23 goals always stated within affirmative action plan.
24 Thanks again for this opportunity to meet with the

1 Commission and I am more than ready to answer any
2 questions which you have on American Crystal.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Members of
4 the Committee, any questions?

5 MR. MORROW: Just a clarification. You
6 mentioned special attention and good faith efforts. Does
7 that equal official policy?

8 MR. BERG: Yes it does.

9 MR. MORROW: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: What's the results of the
11 policies that you've read to us, what's the result? Tell
12 us about what the employment picture in American Crystal
13 looks like at the management level and then below the
14 management level?

15 MR. BERG: As I mentioned, we have 2,300
16 employees, we operate five sugar beet factories. We are
17 in the valley and the workforce reflects within those
18 factories the population from which it draws. As you
19 know, our unemployment rate is extremely low here in the
20 O'Claire area and it would be foolhardy for us to turn
21 down any qualified applicants because it's difficult to
22 keep the ranks full. To be honest with you, it does
23 reflect the population of the value and I spent 1998
24 myself working at one of our factories and got to know the

1 workforce very well and it's a mix of all races and
2 national origins and gender that are present here in the
3 valley. You might say that it's a male dominated
4 workforce, but it's industrial manufacturing workforce.
5 We don't restrict employment opportunities on the basis of
6 gender, but the simple fact an awful lot of jobs there do
7 affect a male population.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: How about the executive
9 level, are there persons of color and women that are in
10 executive positions?

11 MR. BERG: At the corporate office I can't
12 give you a specific sample, but in the executive positions
13 at the top of the company, no, there's not. We are a
14 white male group and members of management report to that
15 group. We have -- we do have diversity in terms of both
16 gender and national origin.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Excuse me, no
18 disrespect, but the operating management is that what
19 you're referring to?

20 MR. BERG: Yes. We have a CEO and four vice
21 presidents -- I'm sorry, and those are all white males and
22 that's something that we identify as I've said in my
23 remarks we have identified that something we need to pay
24 more attention to. I recall sending an E-mail

1 congratulating in our marketing subsidiary, sending E-Mail
2 congratulating a woman colleague of mine being the first
3 vice president for breaking the glass ceiling and hoping
4 she didn't hurt herself going through. So, in our broader
5 enterprise, we have made-some progress that we haven't
6 made here at American Crystal.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: It's always the
8 impression, correct me if I'm wrong, this is a large
9 portion of manufacturing workforce, at least a significant
10 percentage were persons of hispanic or mexican american
11 background. Is that still the case?

12 MR. BERG: Are you speaking in American Crystal
13 specifically?

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Yes.

15 MR. BERG: I would say that's not the case.
16 Again, I took a year to learn the manufacturing side of
17 our business last year and people of hispanic origin at the
18 Moorhead factory, I would say represent the make up of the
19 population here in Fargo/Moorhead, but not a large
20 percentage, no, I would not say that. I wouldn't want to
21 venture a guess, but not a large percentage, no. We do
22 have seasonal employment, people who come to work for us
23 during the fall months when we're harvesting and piling
24 our sugar beets. They're harvested in the fall months and

1 pitted over the winter for storage for subsequent
2 processing and we do hire a large proportion of hispanic
3 people for those jobs.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: For seasonal employment?

5 MR. BERG: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And is a large portion of
7 that from a neighbor or two from the south of Mexico?

8 MR. BERG: That I don't know. I really don't
9 know the answer to that.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Is there a program that
11 American Crystal participates in for temporary or seasonal
12 with the Immigration and Naturalization Service?

13 MR. BERG: You have to understand between our
14 shareholders who are the growers, who produce the sugar
15 beet and American Crystal we take possession of sugar
16 beets after harvesting to process. A number of our
17 growers certainly do employ migrant laborers who come from
18 Mexico and other parts of the United States and employ them
19 on a seasonal basis, but that's something they make as
20 individual business people. We don't influence that at
21 the company level.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And at the company level
23 that's the manufacturing level, what is the fact with
24 respect to seasonal employees? Does American Crystal at

1 the manufacturing level participate in immigration and
2 naturalization surface temporary worker program?

3 MR. BERG: Not at the manufacturing level.

4 Again, that's the growers of sugar beets that our growers,
5 there's the piling of the sugar beets for which we will
6 employ people for two, three, four weeks during the fall.
7 months and I don't believe -- and during the fall months I
8 don't believe, and again this is a new job, I don't
9 believe we actively participate in INS programs to
10 attract, recruit workers for that job in the manufacturing
11 operations. We almost don't have seasonal workers anymore
12 because we process almost year round. So, it's basically
13 a very stable year round workers.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Jeff?

15 MR. BANGSBERG: Did you get a clarification of
16 that issue that was just talked about? Has American
17 Crystal Sugar ever been involved with recruitment either
18 in southern Texas or in Mexico to encourage hispanics or
19 mexicans to come to Minnesota to assist the farmers.

20 MR. BERG: This is before my time with the
21 company, but it's my understanding that several years ago
22 I'm talking here 20 and 30 years ago that it was something
23 that was done because farming practices at that time
24 demanded hard labor in the field. That company employees

1 were involved, did go down to recruit laborers to come
2 north for the sugar beet growers. But, again, because of
3 changes in agricultural practices, different planting
4 techniques, different chemicals, different mechanical
5 processes that are used, there's far less hard labor
6 that's employed.

7 MR. BANGSBERG: So, is that not going on?

8 MR. BERG: No, it's not done any longer.

9 MR. BANGSBERG: Do you know how long ago that
10 stopped?

11 MR. BERG: I would want to say twenty years.

12 MR. BAKER: The last year I think they did
13 that was 1976.

14 MR. BERG: That sounds about right.
15 People that I worked at who are now retired talked about
16 stories that they would have to go down and actively
17 recruit and bring in large numbers of people and times
18 have changed a lot. It's just not something that's done
19 in agriculture anymore.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: The other thing that I
21 mentioned was the affirmative action program at American
22 Crystal. Can you give us some examples of the fruits of
23 that labor? I didn't mean that as a pun at all. Either
24 the manufacturing level or at the management level, what

1 has been the results of your affirmative action program?

2 MR. BERG: In terms of changing the
3 composition of the workforce?

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Yes.

5 MR. BERG: I don't know if I can give you
6 specifications that this event occurred because of our
7 affirmative action plan. I think that what we've done is
8 we've gotten a consciousness throughout the company that
9 because we're an agricultural business, there's been a
10 tendency that we sort of stick with the white male profile
11 and that we need to avoid that mentality. We need to go
12 out and find ways that can utilize everybody who is
13 available to us and so I don't want to tell you that this
14 person is in this job because affirmative action. I don't
15 think that would be accurate, but I think that over time
16 that we have done a fairly good job of developing
17 opportunities for people wherever they come from.

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Laverne?

19 MS. ORWOLL: I'm just wondering about the
20 seasonal workers, do you know how old those workers
21 were, sixteen or even younger than that?

22 MR. BERG: Season in terms of piling crops
23 that we hire in the fall months?

24 MS. ORWOLL: Yes.

1 MR. BERG: No, I shouldn't say no, I don't
2 know for a fact. My guess is that it's not work that
3 we're going to be able to hire young people for. I think
4 typically employees, just based not on hard data, I can
5 get that for you, but I don't have that available to me,
6 my observation is that it's typically younger people that
7 do it because it's something that you can do for some
8 hardships for a few weeks and take the money and go home.
9 It's not something that you're going to find a lot of
10 young teenage kids doing. I think you'll find an awful
11 lot of younger people, but not youth. I wouldn't say that
12 we employ a lot of youth on that particular job.

13 MS. ORWOLL: Do you have any part time jobs
14 that you do have youth employed in?

15 MR. BERG: No, we don't. We're basically a
16 year around operation and because of the nature of the
17 work, it's not something that we hire people just for
18 short term sometimes.

19 MS. ORWOLL: I meant even short hours, do
20 you have students at all working in--

21 MR. BERG: No, I really don't think we do most
22 have low turnover both in the management and the hourly
23 ranges and it's not that they're -- they are full time
24 jobs. When people sign up, they typically sign up for

1 full time work year around.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Baker?

3 RON BAKER

4 DIRECTOR, MINNESOTA WORKFORCE CENTER

5 Hi, I'm Ron Baker. I'm the manager of
6 the Job Service portion of the Moorhead and Detroit Lakes
7 Workforce Centers. The Workforce Center is a partnership
8 between job service, ^s ~~and in this area of rural Minnesota~~ ⁱⁿ
9 ~~itself which is the jet sponsor and~~ ^{rehabilitation} ~~services~~ ^{and services} for blind and
10 rehab services. The partnership was formed as creating a
11 no wrong door for applicants entering for services. That
12 whenever they came in, whatever agency they would be
13 referred to the proper agency for the assistance they
14 need. We also run a migrant program and in Moorhead we
15 have wonderful time. Migrant labor counselors. In the
16 past we have employed seasonal migrant labor counselors.
17 That will not take place this year. Our Moorhead is a
18 significant office as designated by our department as a
19 service delivery point for migrants coming to this area.
20 Our activities towards migrants are monitored by state
21 money for advocates who then report to the department of
22 labor through Chicago. The Moorhead office has been in
23 compliance with those floor levels standards that we have
24 been presented with. The migrant program in this area has

1 been diminishing quite drastically over the years. I
2 think we had registered somewhere in the neighborhood of
3 2,500 migrants come from this area from the other part of
4 the United States looking for work. Last year I think we
5 were down to about 240. This year we're expecting that
6 number to drop by about 50 percent again. Changes in
7 agriculture, the raising of the sugar beet plants
8 genetically by mechanical equipment used have changed.
9 The land for hard labor in the field and at this point
10 it's almost a diminishing or disappearing part of the
11 agricultural sense here. We do have a complaint procedure
12 for migrants and all applicants. The complaint procedure
13 is divided into two areas; one is employment service
14 related complaints. That would be a person who would have
15 a complaint against a specific staff member and office of
16 the job service and it's handling of services to these
17 people. The other part of that would be complaints
18 regarding employers that have used the services of the job
19 service. In other words, the applicant was able to obtain
20 their job through the job service. The other part of the
21 complaint procedure is what we call non ES related
22 complaints. These are complaints again employers brought
23 to the job service that we then in turn would be referred
24 to the appropriate agency having jurisdiction over that

1 complaint. The job service as far as outreach is
2 concerned, participates in several job fairs around the
3 area. Most recently there was a job fair on a Whitter
4 Indian Reservation with an attempt to access or give
5 access to people who the services that the job service has
6 were also going on an online system beginning the middle
7 of this month which would allow applicants to register,
8 submit resumes and look for work at any internet site,
9 specifically in this area. We're looking at schools and
10 libraries, public libraries throughout the county that
11 people will be able to access on a 24 hour a day basis
12 to look for work and register for work. We also
13 participate in what is called the Clay County
14 Collaborative along with our partners in the workforce
15 center.

16 The Clay County Collaborative is funded
17 through the McKnight Foundation grant. The participant in
18 it includes educational institutions around the area,
19 public schools, school districts, public health, social
20 service agencies, both private and public, and the job
21 service and other interested parties. The goal of this
22 agency is to identify problems that are affecting service
23 delivery to customers and also to expand the knowledge
24 base of the various participants of the service rendered

1 by other agencies. So, you can deal with a person on a
2 whole persons basis.

3 That's all my prepared remarks and if
4 you have any questions?

5 MR. BANGSBERG: Regarding the Clay County
6 Collaborative, can you give us some examples of some
7 problems that would come forward and/or the number of
8 people who are assisting in that project?

9 MR. BAKER: The collaborative has been in
10 existence a little over a year now. The final evaluations
11 have been going on the last two months to evaluate the
12 first year efforts on that. The efforts are so diverse,
13 it would be hard to say, like one of the programs is
14 identifying two year olds for health issues so that they
15 are better prepared to enter into headstart programs and
16 into elementary schools. They also have one of
17 the partners is handling the WIC program for infants and
18 children. So, there are many different aspects of it and
19 at this time I don't think there are hard set goals as far
20 as target to hit at this time. More, it's an area of
21 feeling out the various agencies and finding out where the
22 nitch belongs in this group and how they can participate
23 with the rest of the organizations to deliver the services.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Baker, do you have a

1 working relationship with the school district in Moorhead;
2 in terms of their referring graduating students to you or
3 your section out there, graduates who may be in need of
4 employment?

5 MR. BAKER: Not a direct relationship, no.
6 There are some schools with work programs operating within
7 our area. Detroit Lakes and here. It's much more active
8 in the Detroit Lakes area right now and that is a
9 partnership between the school districts and the job
10 services and the various other service providers to
11 connect the students with potential employers in the
12 Moorhead area. No, there isn't a normal relationship with
13 the schools except Moorhead State University. We do have
14 a job shop that we operate on the campus basically for
15 Moorhead State University, but it's available for high
16 school students and other students of Moorhead or the
17 other colleges.

18 MR. BANGSBERG: So I take it just compared
19 with Detroit Lakes there is some way in which high school
20 students about to graduate can make use of the services of
21 the job service?

22 MR. BAKER: It is not so much for students
23 that are about to graduate. It's for students who have
24 been targeted as maybe 15 or 15 years of age that may not

1 be progressing with their counterparts in a normal
2 classroom setting. So, it's a combination of classroom
3 and on the work site work that they will provide. So they
4 might attend class for a course system of say three or
5 four hours in the morning and then in the afternoon they
6 would like work in a manufacturing setting or in another
7 setting to gain work experience.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And that's the jobs to
9 work program that you --

10 MR. BAKER: Right. School to work program.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: But there's not that kind
12 of program in the Moorhead site.

13 MR. BAKER: Not that I'm aware of at this
14 time. I'm not saying it doesn't exist, I'm just saying
15 I'm not aware of it.

16 MR. BANGSBERG: In regard to the workforce
17 center, I believe is it located up by the court house?

18 MR. BAKER: Yes. We're in the family service
19 center of Clay County.

20 MR. BANGSBERG: How is the, in recent years
21 it's been the connotation of vocational rehabilitation
22 along with the other aspects of employment to people with
23 disabilities frequent the office of the workforce center
24 and is there housing at that location?

1 MR. BAKER: We don't identify people with
2 disabilities. It's not a characteristic we identify any
3 more because we don't want our staff limiting their
4 abilities to go out on jobs. We'd rather have the
5 individual make the determination whether they feel the
6 job is suitable or not. The bus is accessible to
7 handicapped individuals or people with disabilities. It's
8 wheelchair accessible. There's public transportation in
9 Clay County, World Transit stops at our buildings along
10 with the city public transit stops at the building also.

11 MR. BANGSBERG: Are all of the VR services,
12 vocational rehabilitation services, are delivered in the
13 building?

14 MR. BAKER; yes. And also to add to that
15 later this month or early next month we are instituting an
16 equipment to a lot the hard of hearing and the people with
17 sight difficulties to access our services also within
18 the job service itself. We'll have an expanded graphics
19 and tape available for people with sight difficulties and
20 we'll have hearing systems for people that are hard of
21 hearing.

22 MS. KOZLOWSKI: Mr. Baker, you had mentioned
23 that 2,500 migrants coming in in the fall were at peak
24 level, but now it's down to about 240 people.

1 MR. BAKER: Last year.

2 MS. KOZLOWSKI: Are these families and if they
3 are families, are there any programs available like for
4 child care or headstart programs or anything like that for
5 their young children?

6 MR. BAKER: Yes, there is. There's a summer
7 school program for school age children that come up with
8 migrants. This is also through a myriad of agencies; one
9 has a meeting I think it's motivational employment. It's
10 an agency out of Texas I can't remember the name of it
11 right now, but services to migrants. They do offer head
12 start programs and some day care through affiliate
13 agencies. I would say agencies that are specifically
14 designed and funded to help migrants.

15 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I have one more question and
16 when families come up in the local community is here, is
17 it your perception that there's some discrimination or
18 racial incidents because of the migrants coming up for a
19 short period of time?

20 MR. BAKER: I don't think you could say there
21 isn't some racial discrimination in any community in this
22 country or overseas. I don't think that the problems are
23 as severe or as numerically large as they were quite a few
24 years ago. The strong economic and low unemployment rate

1 has dissipated a lot of maybe reluctance to hire people
2 into positions that maybe they wouldn't have been hired
3 into in the past.

4 MS. KOZLOWSKI: One more question. Are you
5 required for the seasonal workers that come up, referred
6 to, do you pay them at least minimum wage or do they get
7 pretty good money?

8 MR. BAKER: It's kind of a loaded question
9 there. The law does require that if a person is employing
10 migrants in the land, labor in the field, that they do
11 guarantee them minimum wage so that if most contracts are,
12 most employment situations are on a per acre basis where
13 you get paid on a piece rate basis, but even if the piece
14 rate pay does not equal the minimum wage times the number
15 of hours they put in, the employer would have to pay the
16 minimum wage in that case.

17 MS. KOZLOWSKI: Thank you.

18 MR. BANGSBERG: One question, quick.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Sure, Jeff.

20 MR. BANGSBERG: Do they get rights of the
21 agricultural minimum wage red versus regular wage that, of
22 course, a minimum wage for people who worked in
23 requirement would have been first versus like in the --

24 MR. BAKER: The only difference in minimum

1 wage is it's not based on agriculture or non agriculture,
2 it's based on the size of the operation. There are -- the
3 minimum wage question is becoming more complicated over
4 the last three or four years because there are two federal
5 minimum wages and two state minimum wages. The main
6 difference between agriculture and non agriculture is no
7 agriculture entities don't have to start paying time and a
8 half for overtime until after 48 hours per week where non
9 agriculture after 40 hours a week.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I just have one more
11 question, Mr. Berg, for you. As one of the larger
12 employers in the greater Moorhead area, the similar
13 question I asked, what, if any, is the relationship that
14 American Crystal has with the school district here in
15 terms of either it's educational function or your
16 employment function? Is there any kind of a relationship
17 that you have?

18 MR. BERG: The short answer is no. In the
19 past we've had relationships with different schools, which
20 we start treated as partnership those which we will assist
21 in different programs that they have that they would like
22 to have an addition perfective coming from the workforce.
23 They would like to talk to students about different
24 programs and ideas and we would bring students into the

1 work place to have some of the difficult things that would
2 happen. We provided them with some old computer
3 equipment and things like that that were more rural
4 schools that were agricultural. We had relationships with
5 our shareholder family schools, not in the City of
6 Moorhead, no, not in the Moorhead Schools and it would not
7 have been in my area of responsibility in the past, but I
8 can't think of any instance where that was the case. We
9 have not had a relationship with the public schools that I
10 can think of.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

12 MR. BAKER: One thing I'd like to add to that
13 is the relationships you might have with the public
14 schools or something is more on the area if they request
15 something, you would respond to it, but the Moorhead
16 office in the early 80s had 22 staff, today it's got 7
17 staff. Next year probably 6 or only 5. So, to cultivate
18 that relationship, you normally need staff and without
19 staff, you have to go more to a self help system.

20 And that's the direction that the job
21 service state wide and nation wide has been taking.

22 I have just one other thing. The
23 relationship to the strongest forces locally within the
24 education and is the Northwestern Technical College which

1 has computers in Moorhead, Detroit Lakes and a number of
2 other cities and we have a tremendous relationship
3 with them developing programs that would be the type we
4 need in our work force and just goes to the letter of my
5 post to send to about 25 people who were just a
6 meeting aside society degree programs targeting that
7 industrial electronics for that because that's
8 something that we use an awful lot of and that's when
9 a wonderful relationship because we found them to be
10 flexible and to put together programs that really work for
11 us as well as the population at large. I think for
12 working adults as opposed to I don't know whether we
13 would find advantage for our company with teenagers
14 with high school students as they get older and
15 develop interest and skills in things that we need to
16 make work facilities. Of course we'd be more than
17 willing to do that, but I think that to say we don't
18 do it with Moorhead High School doesn't mean we
19 aren't interested in doing it. We have a great
20 relationship with Northwest Tech.

21 MS. KOZLOWSKI: As being one of the largest
22 producing companies in the United States, does Crystal
23 Sugar and/or American Sugar have a foundation to give back
24 to the community.

1 MR. BERG: We don't have a foundation, no
2 reference -- we have had a contribution in the part which
3 have coverings an awful lot of different charitable groups
4 and organizations for the simple fact is right now we've
5 gone through a couple of-tough years and we have not been
6 turning a lot of money back into community. I wish it was
7 not true, but it is.

8 MS. ORWOLL: Is it getting to you enough so
9 that you can plan your crop?

10 MR. BERG: Yes, it is. We had a nice start
11 and a real slow period and now it's going again.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We do appreciate your
13 time. Now, Dianna Hatfield, the Director, Moorhead Youth
14 and Yoke--Sim Gunartane, Director, Cultural Diversity
15 Project.

16 YOKE-SIM GUNARTANE

17 DIRECTOR, CULTURAL DIVERSITY PROJECT

18 Yoke--Sim Gunartane, Executive Director
19 of Cultural Diversity Resources formerly known as Cultural
20 Diversity Project. The Cultural Diversity Resources was
21 established in 1994 as an outcome of the growing ethnic
22 diversity in the Fargo/Moorhead area and it's goal and
23 focus was really to address both the challenges and
24 opportunities for diversity in the Fargo/Moorhead area.

1 We do get funding from the four cities which cover Fargo.
2 We get Fargo, Stillworth and Moorhead and also Clay County
3 and Cass County, including also community development
4 block grants, money. Our program includes community
5 interpreter services program and that's to meet the needs
6 of the limited English proficient clients which means we
7 use the bilingual interpreters. We also have a diversity
8 training program and basically that is to educate the
9 community and prepare the residents about diversity issues
10 and being culturally sensitive. We have a housing and
11 employment program. In fact, the city money is to employ
12 half time housing and employment coordinator and to assist
13 clients with some needs and referrals and I would touch on
14 that later. We have a multi ethnic leadership program and
15 that's basically to create a larger pool of leaders from
16 very diverse ethnic background and also we publish a
17 quarterly newsletter keeping the community abreast of some
18 of the local and national issues on diversity issues and I
19 brought copies of that for you. We do an organization, a
20 community celebration annually and we, during the cultural
21 diversity awareness week which falls during Columbus Day
22 or Columbus week each year.

23 I want to touch on now a program and
24 that is more the housing and employment. Our office

1 provides office training and work experience for many of
2 our clients are referred from social service
3 organizations. We do not get a lot of cases of which
4 discrimination or that comes to our doors in a way because
5 we don't deal with those issues, but we do hear stories
6 and I could list maybe one or two examples to give you
7 a sense of what is happening. We have a person who works
8 in our office who's a hispanic person. She was interested
9 in a loan. She called, we encouraged her to call and she
10 had to mention her name three times, her last name is
11 hispanic by nature. She has to spell it and then she
12 was told over the phone that her income and credit did not
13 qualify her without any credit kind of check up and we
14 thought that was unusual. I'm very familiar with an
15 individual who happens to be a caucasian and she had a
16 lot of experience in looking for apartments because she
17 herself had to do with a lot of housing issues and she
18 said that she had heard from various landlords that would
19 tell her that they do not rent to hispanics. I think
20 there is a feeling that there should be an audit on
21 housing discrimination there. That landlords should be
22 provided with some kind of education and means to assist
23 tenants so that they do not stereotype or discriminate
24 based on one's racial background or just how people sound

1 or how people look. We have not been approached. We do a
2 lot of training. We have not been approached to provide
3 training to landlords and would be something to look into.
4 The other thing we realize is we work with clients, is
5 that there needs to be more english as a second language
6 classes to upgrade job skills and retraining because we
7 find that we have to help many of those kids and encourage
8 them to get into GED or to particularly go on further into
9 education in some of those areas if they want to get into
10 just the low paying grade jobs.

11 The other focus that I want to mention
12 is about the school. The Moorhead School District
13 provides quality education I feel and it's recognized in
14 the graduation standard; however, in terms of I know the
15 recent papers have talked about high percentage of passes,
16 you know, in the school district; however, they're
17 extremely low passes. I think was only 30 percent passes
18 in the graduation standard among some of the minority
19 groups who happen to be placed in the MCap program which
20 is also known -- which stands for the moorhead Community
21 Alternative Program. They're very low passes there and
22 that needs to be improved. I'm also aware that dropout
23 rate among some of the students; particularly Native
24 Americans is pretty high. It's almost 50 percent. Last

1 year the Moorhead School co sponsored a cultural diversity
2 celebration and they also had several focus groups
3 interviews. There were actually four major focus
4 groups, somewhere the kurdish community and hispanic
5 community and various other students have various
6 different ethnic groups, including the school and other
7 community members are. There were approximately maybe
8 about 40 individuals who were included in the focus group
9 interviews and I think I'd like to mention highlight some
10 of the recommendations that they have stated because it
11 gives us some sense of some of the issues that the
12 community would like the school or at lest a general
13 community addressed. One is to seek employment of
14 multicultural staff representing ethnic minorities in the
15 community. Another one is to create an increased
16 awareness of diversity issues and self awareness by
17 students, staff, parents, through discussion groups and
18 curriculum. Another way was also a question for a normal
19 process where people who feel harassed or otherwise
20 violated or who do not feel the complaints are being
21 pursued there should be some kind of a formal venue for
22 them to do that. Students should also be educated and
23 informed about whether there's available conflict
24 resolution and mediation revenues. That they should

1 maintain appropriate funding for all instructional and
2 staff development programs related to diversity.

3 There's also promoting and enforcing
4 zero tolerance for any kind of discrimination or violence.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Can I just interrupt for
6 one moment? Those recommendations are suggestions that
7 came from where?

8 MS. GUNARTANE: From the focus groups. From
9 the 40 odd individuals, as I mentioned when the school co
10 sponsored some of the celebration and as part of the
11 celebration we did the focus group interviews and there
12 were about 40 individuals from very diverse backgrounds
13 who were asked several questions and as an outcome of
14 those questions, this was some of the recommendations
15 coming from the focus group, and I have a copy for you of
16 that I brought, too.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

18 MS. GUNARTANE: I think the Moorhead schools
19 have to be commended for taking this first step; however I
20 think specific plans should be outlined about implementing
21 and enforcing these recommendations. There's a sense that
22 they need to be an outside neutral state body that should
23 review and evaluate the accomplishments of the school.
24 The school's diversity force and provide ongoing

1 assistance to all local schools. So, I'll stop here and
2 if there's any questions.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We'll hear from Ms.
4 Hatfield first.

5 DIANNA HATFIELD
6 DIRECTOR, MOORHEAD YOUTH

7 -I'm Dianna Hatfield. I'm the Director
8 of Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative. Maybe you've
9 heard about it a few times already today. I'm going to
10 start with some of the program information and statistics,
11 but if it's not inappropriate, I'd like to then share some
12 personal observations. I haven't heard a lot of that
13 today, but it feels important for me to do that.

14 Moorhead Healthy Community
15 Initiative was created by Moorhead Citizens in 1994 to
16 promote the positive development of youth. The mission of
17 our organization is to mobilize the community to provide
18 developmental assets to every child and teenager in
19 Moorhead. Developmental assets are basically protective
20 factors that help to increase resilience and reduce risk
21 taking behavior among young people. I think it's very
22 important to note that our mission statement is to provide
23 protective factors to every child and youth in Moorhead.
24 Two of our major projects are an after school activity

1 program and promoting the need for mentors. You've heard
2 about the after school program today from the school
3 officials. What they were referring to was the Moorhead
4 Healthy Community Initiative Programs which are provided
5 in the school system. We have this year 19 sites
6 throughout the community where activities are provided
7 free to every youth between the ages of 9 and 13. We are
8 fortunate to have a grant from the State of Minnesota.
9 They target the 4th through 8th grade set. They're too
10 old for day care and as a community standard we feel too
11 young to be left completely unsupervised, not to mention
12 the lost opportunity for positive development in those
13 risky after school hours. When our mission again provided
14 this program in 1997 through a pilot program from the
15 state, we took a hard look at the percentage of youth of
16 color who were participating or not participating in after
17 school or extracurricular activities. Our board members
18 and I should mention that the board, that our board is
19 made up of 30 members of the community, so it's a large
20 group and volunteers on something called the after school
21 hours assets team decided on the following policies for
22 intentional inclusion. The first is that every program we
23 sponsored will create a welcoming environment for all
24 youth program providers whose staff programs will receive

1 at least two hours of mandatory training which does
2 include training on inclusive parties. Last year we
3 employed 89 individuals part time through this grant. We
4 will also help create culturally specific programs to meet
5 the needs of youth of color. Currently two programs
6 represent this program. I Assiste Mexico which is a
7 community-based volunteer organization and we're just able
8 to support them by providing funding to bring in new kids
9 for training and the American Indian Cultural Awareness
10 Program. Third, a portion of afternoon grants will be set
11 aside to provide activity scholarships to youth of color
12 who wish to join traditional or fee-based activity.
13 \$6,500 was granted this year. We have already granted
14 that amount throughout the school year and 67 youth
15 received scholarships. Those scholarships are up to \$100
16 to be used in any way necessary for a young person to
17 participate in a soccer or athletics or art kind of
18 programs. Not only fees and registration, but if young
19 people need some supplies, some shoes and so on. Then
20 finally, community members saw what a good thing this was,
21 but we had the limitation of only serving youth between
22 ages of 9 and 13 and youth of color, so the community
23 created a scholarship fund for all youth for anyone
24 between the ages of 6 and 18 of any ethnic background who

1 wish to participate in positive activities and whose
2 family could not afford it. 32 scholarships were provided
3 this year. At this point, if it's okay, I'd like to take
4 off my director's hat and share a few personal
5 observations. I've lived in this community just under
6 seven years and I think I have still a bit of an outsider
7 view kind of looking in. I like Moorhead and I'm raising
8 my family here. So, these are just nothing more than an
9 opinion for what it's worth. I think there are many
10 members of the dominant culture who actively works to
11 reduce racism and empower community of color and I think
12 that's a good thing. I think there are many good people
13 out there who want to do the right thing, but they don't
14 know what it is and then they become uncomfortable and
15 then maybe white guilt sets in and then there's an
16 inertia. There are also some people who are blatantly
17 racist and spout their ugliness in newspapers and in
18 flyers and at meetings. And I have decided that I wasn't
19 going to tell the stories because I'm an advocate for
20 youth. I cannot speak for them, but just last night a
21 young friend of mine told me about something that happened
22 to hear and I want to share that with this Commission.

23 Two young girls went into a store, this
24 is a north -- on the north side. It's owned by someone

1 who community members are probably aware of. It's a
2 convenience store and laundromat. The north side tends to
3 be where more of our low income families live and so one
4 youth is caucasian, one is African American and the owner
5 of that store said to the caucasian girl when they walked
6 in, get her out of here. I don't want no n-i-g-g-e-r-s
7 in my store. I don't know how we combat it. I don't want
8 to use that word. I don't know how we challenge those
9 kinds of things. I'm from Kansas City and there we would
10 organize a picket and a boycott. But the size of the
11 African American community is so small here, I don't know
12 who can hear these kinds of painful things that are being
13 said to our children and how we then face those. I think
14 that systems are governed by members of the dominant
15 culture and I see that to the extent that there are no
16 persons of color in any elected office. And I think there
17 are very strong negative stereotypical beliefs for Mexican
18 Americans, stereotypical beliefs about Mexican Americans,
19 American Indians, and new immigrants in particular. And I
20 just have a wish list I would hope that this hearing is a
21 way to maybe help us change the dialogue. I think our
22 dialogue right now is white or white racism oppressing
23 Mexican Americans and I think that that's probably from
24 quantified the biggest issue. But, I think there are

1 other issues and I wish we could just broaden that
2 conversation. I wish we could talk about a barrier free
3 community where all persons are encouraged to reach their
4 full potential. With new immigrants in the community, we
5 have Muslims and I can see that many people don't
6 understand that religion at all. There's a very small
7 Jewish community here as well. So, religious minority
8 persons with disabilities, sexual minorities, we just
9 don't go there in this community and working poor and
10 working class people. When we talk about low income, that
11 seems to kind of feed a stereotype and there are lots of
12 people who are struggling in this community to be fully
13 engaged. So, the first of my wish list is maybe you can
14 help us change the dialogue here. I also would like that
15 governing body and employees of public system would freely
16 engage in comprehensive training to unlearned racism. I
17 would hope that the training would be experiential and
18 emotional and not use the cognitive sensitivity training
19 that someone had referred to earlier in the day that;
20 okay, I've done that now, so I'm not racist anymore. I
21 would also like to see an American Indian not for profit
22 organization. I think the Mexican American community has
23 been working hard to develop structures and organizations
24 and I think the American Indian community often is

1 forgotten, if you choose the word minority in this
2 community. I know some areas would like to develop a
3 spirit youth or cultural center for the regional American
4 Indian. I believe the American Indian graduation rate is
5 the most abysmal in the community. I would hope that
6 persons of color would run for and be elected into elected
7 offices. I also would hope that this school district does
8 indeed attract and hire teachers and other professionals
9 so that the number of staff members of color is
10 proportionate to the number of students of color.

11 My calculation that 15 percent, I think
12 they did earlier, and that's the data that I'm familiar
13 with. If my information is correct, there are
14 approximately three faculty members of color and I'm not
15 good at math, but I think that means that it's incumbent
16 upon the district to hire 63 persons of color in teach or
17 administrative positions. If somebody could check the
18 math when you get all those great reports for me. And
19 then my final wish is that this Commission again would
20 help move the dialogue, but tell us, teach us, help us
21 become a community that always practices intentional
22 inclusion and that can maybe become the regional letter in
23 empowering communities of color and say, you know,
24 Moorhead is the place to be if you value and appreciate

1 diversity. Help us work through the conflict. I don't
2 think we can reduce it until we face it and address it and
3 then help us find ways to increase understanding and
4 cooperation. And finally, in however long it takes, I'd
5 love to see the majority of this community truly
6 appreciate and honor people of all cultures.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Members of the committee?

8 MS. ORWOLL: I think you should run for
9 office.

10 MS. GUNARTANE: No, thank you very much. I'm
11 honored, but politics is not my thing.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Can you tell us the rest
13 of the story of what the young girl did that they've just
14 been run out of the store?

15 MS. GUNARTANE: They both turned around and
16 walked out and then the 12 year old African American
17 proceeded to cry for about two hours and I don't think
18 that that's, you know, a solitary story. This individual
19 I think you may be seeing a flyer from this individual
20 from someone who is coming tomorrow having to do with
21 moving the kids from the -- moving alternative schools to
22 another site and putting out a very racist flyer about you
23 don't want those kinds of kids in our neighborhood.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: So, Yoke--Sim, you

1 indicated that I think your Board has 30 members and was
2 established by the community?

3 MS. GUNARTANE: That's correct.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Can you tell me what is
5 the relationship to the existing city government?

6 MS. GUNARTANE: We're an independent
7 not-for-profit organization. The city handles a few of
8 our grants. There's the physical agent for instance for
9 the after school enrichment grant. One reason for that is
10 then there's another layer of insurance protection for
11 youth. The minimum league of cities has an insurance so
12 that if a kid was hurt, there would be a third level of
13 insurance protection and that's really the only learning
14 with the City of Moorhead.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And what about with the
16 Moorhead School District. What is your relationship with
17 it?

18 MS. GUNARTANE: The superintendent is on our
19 board as is a number of other elected officials. We could
20 operate with the community education division which helps
21 us get the after school program into the school. I have
22 numbers on the participants, too, in terms of inclusion.
23 If you need that, I forgot to mention that, but I think
24 the community created it as an independent organization

1 because systemic change was a part of what we were working
2 for. It's easier to do when you're not too closely
3 aligned with any organization.

4 MR. BANGSBERG: I have a question.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Jeff?

6 MR. BANGSBERG: In regard to the focus groups,
7 has there been follow up with some of the recommendations
8 that came out of those focus group, Yoke--Sim?

9 MS. GUNARTANE: No, it has been on paper, but
10 they haven't. That's why I mention about having specific
11 plans and steps. This is now put into the -- it's adopted
12 by the school human rights committee, but so we have yet
13 to see what action we will take.

14 MR. BANGSBERG: How old is that? How long ago
15 did they do the focus group?

16 MS. GUNARTANE: Just last year, October of
17 last year.

18 MR. BANGSBERG: But they have not acted or
19 made any recommendations?

20 MS. GUNARTANE: They have just recently added
21 that to the school human rights committee mission.

22 MR. MORROW: I just have a curiosity question.
23 Both your organizations were formed on or about 1994.

24 MS. GUNARTANE: Yes.

1 MR. MORROW: I notice the Mayor was talking
2 earlier that most of his initiatives and cultural
3 diversity had been instituted within the past ten years
4 and there was another presenter mentioning that they had
5 started within the last ten years. Also, my curiosity
6 question is did something happen within the last ten years
7 here in Moorhead that raised awareness?

8 MS. GUNARTANE: I did mention that because our
9 organization actually there were several town meetings in
10 the Fargo Moorhead area in 1994 and in the discussion they
11 came up with three issues; one was the low unemployment,
12 another was the question if dysfunctional families and the
13 third was cultural diversity. And I think the city's
14 choice to do something about cultural diversity, but they
15 saw the increased cultural diversity, but no systems or
16 programs were in place at all to deal with this new
17 phenomenon. So, that's how the project came about in
18 1994. So, it was because of the increased ethnic
19 diversity.

20 MS. HATFIELD: I was hired in '95, but I
21 understand that around the summer of '93 there was an
22 increase in youth violence in the Moorhead community and
23 it was the beginning of the "gang awareness" and so the
24 sense was things were starting to move in a direction they

1 didn't want regarding drugs and violence among young
2 people.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Carol?

4 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: Ms. Gunartane, is your
5 program the one that started the Pew grant?

6 MS. GUNARTANE: Yes.

7 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: I just wanted to clarify
8 that. How long would that go?

9 MS. GUNARTANE: The funding has already ended.
10 It was a three year project, but the cities have chosen to
11 continue it. So, that's why the name changed last year.
12 We became incorporated and became an independent
13 organization.

14 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: So, it's no longer the Pew
15 Grant?

16 MS. GUNARTANE: Yes, it's no longer the Pew
17 Grant.

18 MR. BANGSBERG: Two unrelated questions. Do
19 you perceive gang related activity to still exist and if
20 it does exist, is it still related to race?

21 MS. HATFIELD: I said that's terrible. He
22 said, do you want to take a stab at it? My own opinion
23 about the gang situation is probably my perception is
24 probably different than a lot of folks here. I'm from

1 Kansas City and it's very different kind of community. My
 2 sense was that the county sheriff took a very high profile
 3 role in making activities -- gang activities and law
 4 enforcement became very active and law enforcement now
 5 reports that things are "under control", but that there's
 6 still gang related drug sales going on. There's less
 7 graffiti I can say and I do note that our young
 8 adolescents crime rate is down.

9 MR. BANGSBERG: But, my second question then
 10 is, and I was wondering if that was relating to race, but
 11 the other unrelated question I have is is it difficult for
 12 the dominant community or the white community to, in your
 13 impression that you've seen in the last five to six years,
 14 to build inclusion or to find a way to participate with
 15 the minority community? You mentioned that in your talk
 16 about the barriers in your wish list and i'm wondering if
 17 you could expand on that just a little bit? I know we're
 18 ruining out of time.

19 MS. HATFIELD: And Yoke--Sim has something to
 20 add, too. I think regarding the race question, it sure
 21 seems to me that the stereotype is that any youth gang
 22 involved is hispanic youth. I think that's what most
 23 people would want to believe. It seems to me that
 24 cultural diversity is so new to this region that folks

1 have not had the benefit of knowing and working with and
2 living with friends of other cultures and so this
3 politeness, this minimum politeness. If they don't know
4 what to do well they couldn't go to a pow wow maybe
5 because they didn't know when they should stand for
6 honoring songs and it's uncomfortable. So, that's what it
7 just seems to me that there's just such a lack of
8 integration, if you will, or opportunities to learn from
9 the community of color that you know, if you're the
10 dominant culture, why do you need to go to them? I
11 suppose--

12 MS. GUNARTANE: Could I just add on to that?
13 I think anyone who is really deep into diversity issues or
14 being a person of color would know that all the
15 celebrations and festivals and meetings are very good and
16 fun, but it boils down to the hearing process, you know,
17 human resources issues. And we talk about the
18 participation activity levels of governmental unit. Those
19 are key issues because if you don't have that decision
20 making power and the sharing of resources. It really
21 means nothing to have all this celebrations and dialogues
22 and I think this is what i think some of the ethnic
23 community are saying, give us a chance to be able to be in
24 that position.

1 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: Last question. I just want
2 to follow up. It's really Jeff's question. The
3 traditional youth serving organizations like South 4H and
4 church groups are they seeking you folks out for training
5 for dialogue for participation in any way?

6 MS. GUNARTANE: We do training for a lot of
7 profit and non profit organizations and I would say that
8 we really haven't touched very much for the youth and
9 particularly in schools which is very much needed. You
10 know, again, it boils down to, I think we want to do it,
11 but whether the school district would allow us to get it
12 in there--

13 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: I was trying to get outside
14 of schools for a moment and think about those other youth
15 serving organizations.

16 MS. GUNARTANE: I know the boy scouts and
17 girl scouts have a very intensive diversity program within
18 their own organization, but I'm not aware of the others.

19 MR. BANGSBERG: Churches.

20 MS. HATFIELD: We have 11 church partners in
21 the initiatives and that's just basically information
22 sharing and so on. I guess I would answer the question in
23 the way it seems to me that the traditional youth serving
24 agencies are serving traditional youth as have been,

1 that's been their clientele and --

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We do appreciate very
3 much, both of your presentations, and thank you.

4 Our next two presenters will be Paul
5 Holtan, Campus paster, Concordia College and Abner Arauza,
6 Associate Director of Student Development Multicultural
7 Affairs, Moorhead State University.

8 Thank you for your presentations which
9 I understand will be on the youth program and generally
10 available at your two schools.

11 Mr. Holtan, we'll call on you first.

12 PHIL HOLTAN

13 CAMPUS PASTOR, CONCORDIA COLLEGE

14 As you said, I'm Phil Holtan, Senior
15 Campus Pastor at Concordia College on behalf of Concordia.

16 I'm a great believer that diversity and
17 racism are high priorities everywhere, not a high priority
18 to your -- not an easy task you can do yourself. Do we
19 want to be require homogeneous in ethnic and cultural make
20 up than we would like to be, but have undertaken my
21 initiatives in recent years to increase our diversity and
22 to respond to the need of our student and our neighbors
23 here in Moorhead fall in four areas. And first of all,
24 forgive my brevity for covering lots of programs in a

1 rather short time. I will welcome your further questions.
2 These initiatives falls into the four categories. First,
3 to increase the number of students, staff and faculty of
4 color. Second, to make the campus more hospitable, more
5 welcoming to people of color and partly that's an issue of
6 retention as well as recruitment. Then three, to make all
7 of our students and staff more sensitive to matters of
8 racism and diversity. Fourth, to make a positive outreach
9 in on the Moorhead community.

10 Let me deal with each in turn. First
11 came to be color. Increase it's percentage of people of
12 color to four percent of the student body, about 125
13 students and beyond that we host 34 percent international
14 students, most of whom are all students of color that
15 nearly double our percentage of a students. Add four
16 times that of 20 years ago we have a long ways to go. And
17 devote considerable staff time and money to that. We
18 pursued many methods of recruiting students. We have also
19 increased our financial aid. Just last year we added a
20 scholarship program in broader horizon targeted towards
21 minority candidates together with what we already had.
22 When we began this there were 21 scholarships and expect
23 that within 3 more years we will have 75 more students of
24 color receiving scholarships of up to \$40,000 for their 4

1 years at Concordia. We are pleased that our minority
2 students have a higher grade point average than the median
3 of all our students. That's a real priority of
4 recruitment to recruit students and help them so they can
5 succeed. We seek but do not find easy to hire faculty
6 from historically under represented groups. We make many
7 efforts in our hiring to broaden the pool and we have
8 increasing numbers, particularly in our languages
9 department which are very strong.

10 Another kind of recruitment that
11 affects the Moorhead community perhaps more is training
12 and hiring person of color for staff positions. This year
13 we established both paid secretarial internships and 35
14 week trades internships were working with cultural, social
15 service; particularly in Fargo and Moorhead Technical
16 College to seek applicants for sports staff, internships
17 and for vacancies were establishing this training and
18 internships to give minority candidates the experience and
19 skills needed to compete for positions on our staff. We
20 have not had -- been very successful in recruiting those
21 students and we are adding our own training to bring them
22 into a competitive position in the second category. We
23 seek to make the campus more hospitable for students of
24 color. As a means to this goal we have begun extensive

1 study in cooperation with Ms. Davis at Albus Lutheran St.
2 Oluff, Sister Lutheran College with us in the region and
3 I believe you have in front of you a -- it has a very long
4 name, the Tegul Lutheran College Racial Ethnic Diversity
5 Climate Assessment. That's a mouthful. This professional
6 conducted study will provide further information about our
7 campus client next fall when we receive the results. We
8 know that we have the broad campus support to follow up on
9 what we find. In order to cultivate a respectful climate
10 for diversity earlier, we host dozens of community events
11 which value and celebrate diverse cultures. Last fall our
12 latino festival generated excitement with a Bala Corrical
13 Mexico City and other events and you see on Many Voices
14 brochure, just a variety of events that happen through the
15 year and we have had great excitement about the number of
16 programs that value and celebrate diversity. We invite
17 the Moorhead community to attend most of these events and
18 especially school children are targeted. We have an
19 office Native Program with a staff person, Joyce Stinnett
20 who recruits supports and do programs with Native American
21 students in the program and I think one of the success
22 programs in the Fargo/Moorhead is the tri college pow wow.
23 We take turns with Moorhead State, MSU to sponsor this and
24 I heard one person say that there were 5,000 persons and

1 We've never had an event in our field house that was
2 nearly as big as this and it was very exciting. So, many
3 of our students and staff participated as well as Native
4 American people from a large region. I work with worship
5 on campus and our worship which is essential to ground our
6 community in the faith that sustains us in our mission is
7 also a celebration of God's love for all cultures and
8 people and in our worship we use music, stories and et
9 cetera from many cultures both local and global and find
10 this a very positive way to connect us to the word. So,
11 our students are exposed to all sorts of cultures in lots
12 of different places on campus. You see the list of to the
13 events in that publication, Many Voices. One community I
14 think most of the events that make students and staff of
15 color feel more at home in our campus, contributes to our
16 third goals as we seek to make all of our students and
17 staff more sensitive and aware of the issues of racism and
18 multiculturalism about one third of our faculty have
19 participated in an intensive cultural immersion in a third
20 world funded by the Knight Foundation. A new round of
21 cultural immersion programs for faculty in regional and
22 intercity setting again this summer we have a whole new
23 crop of faculty that we are trying to bring aboard and we
24 know that beginning with faculty if our students are going

1 know that beginning with faculty if our students are going
2 to become more aware that begins with faculty. I work
3 with two programs with Student Habitat for Humanity. We
4 have the largest Habitat for Humanity student chapter in
5 the country and each spring break we send over 150
6 students. It's ironic that most of them go to other parts
7 of the country, but we are also involved in tri college
8 house and we built several houses in Fargo/Moorhead
9 generally with all with low income home owners. So,
10 there are many types of diversity training that takes
11 place for our faculty staff and students and although many
12 participate in those, we realize to have a comprehensive
13 approach to prepare our students for life in an
14 increasing diverse society. Many are going to be missed
15 by any other city for a class requirement. So, in a
16 current curriculum review it seems that a multicultural
17 requirement for all students is going to be one of changes
18 and we're pleased with that. And finally, in the 4th
19 category, Concordia sees the need to reach out to build
20 bridges in the Fargo/Moorhead community. There are a
21 number of programs that we have worked with the university
22 is a community education program that has been successful
23 for the last three years we have felt it to be a neutral
24 place where the community comes to talk honestly about

1 events and not necessarily about events in school, media,
2 law enforcement. We had a family celebration of hispanic
3 culture. Four sessions that went extremely well this
4 year. A discussion of diversity in the classroom that
5 brought professionals as well as families together to talk
6 about that. Hundreds on our campus and the community
7 have attended and the discussions have been very powerful.
8 This is the second year that Concordia has worked with
9 local Lutheran and Catholic churches, youth groups as well
10 as older people there with Moorhead State and the hispanic
11 community, especially the central cultural in hosting a
12 Miggost Concristo to this as a Christian day camp for
13 hispanic and other local children. There probably will be
14 60 of those children involved for a week this summer. We
15 bring a staff from Wilmer where the churches have had more
16 experience than we have in serving the hispanic residents.
17 So, we're kind of letting them teach us and I expect that
18 we will take over on our own next summer.

19 I think of all the programs I've talked
20 about so far, none make me more proud and more hopeful
21 than our students serving in the community. Our sources
22 for service program has 115 students this semester as
23 volunteer in the Moorhead agencies and schools. That's
24 dozens of volunteer tutors in the school, many helping

1 with English as a second language, with elementary
2 school children. Our students run an after school at
3 Rockney Park in the middle of what has been a largely
4 hispanic area for several years and it's been a great
5 experience for both those young students and our students.
6 Many of our education students observe volunteers and
7 student teaching community schools and are excited about
8 changes making them more diverse. Many of our classes
9 have a series learning component that sends students out
10 to make their work and experience in the community often
11 with people of color or are in economic difficulty
12 achieving motivation to learn more. I see Harvey Stalwick
13 is here in our social work department. They have a
14 rigorous amount of hours that they all spend in the
15 community for every class in social work that is common in
16 a number of classes. So, they are out there and they are
17 learning. I could list a number of more organizations,
18 but they're active. In summary, we have a long ways to
19 go. We have been something of an island and our learning
20 to reach out more into the community, but we are
21 appreciative of the opportunities that a more diverse
22 Moorhead gives us in teaching our students to live in a
23 more diverse world, and our mission as a college demands
24 it. The future of effectiveness of our students in

1 increasingly diverse community depends on it. Thank you.

2 And I look forward to your questions.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Again, we'll hold our
4 questions until Abner Arauza. If you please?

5 ABNER ARAUZA

6 ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
7 MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS, MOORHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY

8 Just at the beginning, my name is
9 Abner Arauza. I'm Associate Director of Student
10 Development, Multicultural Affairs at Moorhead State
11 University. I'm somewhat new to this community. I came
12 here about ten years ago. Before then I knew communities
13 as a migrant. We came here every summer to work in the
14 sugar beet field for the first 21 years of my life. My
15 office at Moorhead State is charged with the
16 responsibility to be active as well as proactive as well
17 as reactive to the needs of students of color. Our
18 program seems to be based more on the need as identified
19 or seen by the students and faculty and staff and our
20 programs reflect it. Moorhead State University; however,
21 first committed to a program for students of color in
22 1968. Service to students of color lie in several areas.
23 Recruitment is one of them, support services is another
24 one of them, whether it be in the academic area. Some of

1 the programs that Mr. Holtan identified at Concordia we
2 see at Moorhead State University as well as some of the
3 other institutions here in the area. A requirement, for
4 example, for multicultural study classes in order to
5 graduate from the institution is one of them financial
6 assistance services such as scholarships are also part of
7 our programs. Community service in like is also highly
8 encouraged for the students as well as for faculty and
9 staff.

10 While the multicultural affairs office
11 and other departments who get involved in diversity
12 awareness program, we would promote programs that involved
13 speakers, performers, lecturers and/or events such as the
14 tri college pow wow that was referred to earlier. As an
15 autumn festival, Martin Luther King Day observation,
16 Chinese New Years, Black History Month celebrations, I
17 will talk about two events simply because I know more
18 about those because I'm in charge of them. One of them is
19 my wife and I produced radio program, a weekly, hour long
20 radio program featuring latino music and information such
21 as Provotsedal (phonetic) standing latino historical
22 discussion of legislation, interview, news and views. It
23 currently aired in 31 locations throughout North Dakota,
24 South Dakota and Minnesota. The signal will carry all

1 over to Saskatchewan, Canada, Montana, Iowa, and
2 Wisconsin, North Dakota public radio and North Dakota just
3 picked the program up.

4 Another event of significance is a unit
5 conference. It's a day and a half of symposium comprising
6 seven workshops outstanding latino students award,
7 keynote, dinner, a traditional performance by a dance
8 group as well as a musical group, a poetry reading, two
9 videos with discussion. Now, I realize many universities
10 dow hat I'm describing now, so why this merits mention? I
11 think that it merits mentioning because one of the
12 processes we use in organizing and implementing these
13 programs is the high involvement from the community. The
14 university provides the funds, but it's the community
15 identified issues, format, workshops, speakers, et cetera.
16 It also merits mentioning that some of these events are
17 the only ones in this area such as the recognizing
18 outstanding latino students for high academic performance.
19 The important part here though i8s that the projects not
20 only serve to educate, share, and create cultural
21 awareness, but provides opportunities for community
22 organizations as well as individuals to own these events
23 through contribution of time, ideas, and funds, in some
24 cases. However, and all is not lost, I think we all know

1 that it takes much effort in creating an environment that
2 where we share cultures. However, there are some
3 obstacles that we need to overcome. Scholarships, Phil
4 Holtan referred to the scholarship fund. We have one not
5 quite as large as Concordia, but we have a scholarship
6 fund; however, and I don't know how far and I don't know
7 where the Civil Rights Commission would line this, but I
8 need to mention it some of the obstacles that we have
9 found this information, the rooting or interpretation of
10 proposed changes in the affirmative action stemming on
11 Milstone back in 1991, University of Maryland versus
12 Podbureski. I'm not sure if I'm pronouncing is
13 correctly, where the Fourth Circuit Court cited violation
14 of 14th Amendment because funds was being used for
15 students of color without having been designated by the
16 donor. So, if a university and Moorhead State does, so
17 operate on the side of caution, then it prevents an
18 institution from earmarking funds or donations for
19 scholarships of funds unless they have been specified as
20 such by the donor.

21 Another issue and probably a
22 significant and maybe even more foundational than anything
23 else, is the hiring growth or faculty and staff of color
24 in a community that's not very diverse, effective and

1 involved staff of color are more than just excellent
2 employees, they are the cornerstone for the infrastructure
3 for a support system for individuals of color in a
4 resource system for organizations serving minorities or
5 communities of color. Although I'm here to speak to
6 issues of higher education, I see as a community member, I
7 also see this carries over into other institutions in our
8 community, law enforcement, the school district and other
9 institutions of higher education in Fargo/Moorhead. We
10 have seen in this community excellent qualified home grown
11 students of color graduate from our colleges and
12 universities only to see them leave the area because they
13 were not hired here. And I think that I don't know what
14 role this Commission could serve in this, but education
15 may be the way to go. Our administrations will respond
16 when asked that they cannot find candidates for positions
17 when they are available, but we are graduating 30 to 40
18 students of color from Moorhead State University alone
19 each year, you know, and in many fields, although I don't
20 know in all of the areas, one of the speakers this morning
21 is from Moorhead State University from social work and he
22 may be able to address that. I saw him here just earlier.
23 Faculty and staff of color that are evolved effective,
24 create an environment of empowerment for students. It's a

1 place where they belong rather than where they are guests.
2 And when I refer to faculty of color, I'm not just
3 referring to some of our institutions will hire people from
4 Mexico, China, Africa and other countries and because skin
5 color is similar and because the language is similar does
6 not mean that this faculty or staff have a similar
7 background or experience to all students of color. And
8 I'm referring to all faculty and staff of color when I
9 refer to the individuals that I talked about. I'm also
10 referring to in hearing to professionals who can be in
11 positions that can effect change, can implement design and
12 implement programs and who have the status to advocate for
13 students and be heard or for population of color in this
14 community that can work with empowerment within the
15 institutions. What can the Civil Rights Commission do to
16 encourage our institutions to commit to building the
17 infrastructure needed to educate and support our
18 population of color in this community. And I'm not
19 recommending an affirmative action watchdog here, but
20 there's a need for staff of color and apparently our
21 institutions for them to find it easier to provide it than
22 to not provide it. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Members of the Committee?

24 -- Let me ask, if I may, you have

1 presented both of you, a picture of the diversity
2 situation, our campuses, but I'd like to flip it over
3 about 180 degrees in terms of both the faculty and
4 students of color that are on your campuses, what do you
5 hear or see or know about how they are welcomed, not
6 welcomed, what their experience generally in the greater
7 Moorhead community. I don't know if that's a town and
8 town question or if it's a university, but it's intending
9 to just seeking the inquiry how they are treated and
10 viewed in greater Moorhead?

11 MR. ARAUZA: I think that we've seen at least
12 on our campus and in the faculty that I'm familiar with I
13 think that we've seen the gamut from those who come here
14 and say I see no racism, I have not been discriminated
15 against, I'm one of the community, to those who have spent
16 a year here and their experience was so bad that they left
17 and stated that the reason that they left was a very
18 unwelcoming attitude in some of our campuses as well as
19 the community. Whether it was a perception that's neutral
20 or whether it's based on that individual's experience, I
21 don't know. For our staff on our campus, we have a -- I
22 don't know the percentages. We have a good number of
23 faculty of color, very few who are Americans of color. As
24 I think of the individuals on our campus, I think that

1 most of us are independent and aggressive enough that the
2 attitude that we have seen in the community of color do
3 not go unobserved and we're not totally unaffected by it,
4 but we feel that we must react to it and try to contribute
5 to the efforts in this community to remedy that situation
6 or at least to contract it in some form.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I can't think of a better
8 witness than you, sir, having spent your earlier years
9 here in one aspect of life and now coming back as part of
10 associated with academia and so I guess I'm going to ask
11 you a straight out question. If you take off your tie and
12 your suit coat and put on whatever kind of shirt or tee
13 shirt and walk down the streets of moorhead or attempt to
14 rent an apartment or go to the school where children might
15 be attending or look for employment. What kind of a
16 response is Abner to get with as compared without his coat
17 and tie?

18 MR. ARAUZA: It's not really an answer off the
19 top of my head because it's one that I've given much
20 thought to and i have experienced and have given much
21 thought to it in particular because I know I want to give
22 a studied answer to my children. I stay involved in
23 things of the community because I know that when my
24 children are out on the streets, they're not Abner's kids,

1 you know, they're simply latino, brown kids, latin@s in
2 the school and in the street and so am I, you know. And
3 the experiences haven't always been good, you know, to
4 this day, but more so ten years ago when I arrived here,
5 you know, between late and early May arrived probably the
6 places of business that required identification from me to
7 cash a check was quadrupled as opposed to in January and
8 February and the places of business that know me that I
9 sign the check and no questions were asked. Incidents of
10 that manner in the schools also my daughters have one of
11 them is 15, one of them is 10, both of them have
12 experienced not only rebuffs but active acts of racism and
13 I don't purport to having a secret to getting over that
14 because you can't get over it. I still remember incidents
15 of racism and prejudice when I was five or six years old,
16 but I do believe I can't dwell on that. That's not going
17 to put food on the table of my children and because I may
18 or may not be liked in this community, whether I may be
19 welcome or unwelcome in this community, I still have to
20 support a family and to me it comes down to that.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Not only could I not
22 think of a better witness on this subject than yourself, I
23 think that you also are an outstanding example of why it's
24 that way when we associate, don't glom onto the best and

1 brightest minds irrespective of color, national origin,
2 handicap or otherwise and I think it's proud to have you -
3 back.

4 MR. ARAUZA: Thank you. But I must add I, you
5 know, to that. I think that sometimes we do see obstacles
6 that in fairness to all individuals are difficult to
7 overcome and when we get caught at that level, it's
8 sometimes quite difficult to rise above that and that's
9 why we look to groups such as yourself to at a local level
10 to some organizations or programs such as the ones that
11 you've heard of today to people such as Phil at Concordia
12 that we must respond to acts that are negative and bad in
13 our community.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I don't mean to leave you
15 out, Pastor, but tell me about what's reported to you by
16 students at Concordia in terms of how they even though
17 they're small in number, how they are perceived, received
18 and otherwise treated in the greater Moorhead area?

19 MR. HOLTAN: I think I would really echo
20 Abner's comments that most seem to find a pretty warm
21 welcome here and we have our horror stories, too, and some
22 of those have resulted in discipline. I mean, I think
23 that action is pretty swift and I think our staff is
24 pretty aware of what needs to happen. I think that

1 retention is an issue. I think perhaps even more for
2 faculty and staff, but certainly for students, too, in
3 that I think there's a culture shock from urban settings
4 which is often where there are more students of color to
5 be recruited and it's one of the reasons that. For
6 example, African American students have been a hard sell
7 for us in recent years because I'm afraid this is not an
8 easy place for them to be home. And we used to have many,
9 many more African American students in the '70s and I
10 think it's one of the reasons we've concentrated our
11 efforts on American Indian students because we can create
12 a welcoming community for them, a supportive community in
13 the area, but -- and that's true for faculty, too, that we
14 have a lot at stake in Moorhead and Fargo being a good
15 place for them to live or they won't stay very long, even
16 if we can recruit them. And so it's an uphill battle and
17 but I think that -- I think the best test is that we find
18 that generally our students by the time they graduate we
19 have been able move them some distance perhaps from the
20 naivete and even racism of their beginning freshmen year
21 to being much more aware and ready to move in the world as
22 a senior and that's our goal and more diversity within
23 Moorhead and Fargo is really an ally to us in making that
24 happen.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: An important point. And
2 on a ray of hope, let me again thank you both for your
3 presentations and your participation.

4 We'll stand in recess for ten minutes.
5 If there's any other persons who would like to present to
6 the committee, please see Peter, our staff person.

7 (A recess was taken.)

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P U B L I C S E S S I O N

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CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I indicated we reserved some time for public comment by members of the community who were not invited speakers. Because there are so many, the Chair is going to request that the members of the Committee, that if you have any questions that you want to ask of the presenters, if you could just write them out and pass them down and I'll ask the questions. With the cooperation of everybody, we'll try to give everybody who has requested an opportunity to be heard on the list that opportunity and our ability to do that depends on your being, the presenters being concise, making the point that you have to make and the members of the Committee, if you have questions, put them in writing and we'll hopefully get the succinct answer.

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In order to try to give everybody an opportunity to make a presentation, I'm going to ask each of you to limit your initial comments to five minutes and then that will give us a chance to ask perhaps a question or two of each presenter. So, I took off my watch and I'll try to be a faithful timekeeper.

The first presenter is Pete Padilla.

1 Mr. Padilla, I understand you've had experience with that,
2 so if you could give us your full name and your address?

3 PETE PADILLA

4 Pete Padilla, 301 Broadway, South
5 Crookstown, Minnesota is where I work, 56716. I move
6 around a lot.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And for the benefit of
8 the members of the Committee, it's my understanding that
9 Mr. Padilla is a member of the State Advisory Committee
10 for North Dakota.

11 MR. PADILLA: Exactly.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Go ahead.

13 MR. PADILLA: First of all, I've got to do a
14 disclaimer. It's after 5:00 o'clock, so I'm not
15 representing any agency, nor am I representing anybody
16 except migrant farm workers.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

18 MR. PADILLA: And it's another way to get
19 close to the water, too. But, anyway, one of the things
20 that through the questioning that I've heard this
21 afternoon, I want to clarify about hispanic migrant farm
22 workers in the area. There were a lot of numbers thrown
23 around by earlier representatives. One thing that has to
24 be understood is that migrant farm workers do not work for

1 American Crystal Sugar. They are hired by the grower
2 themselves; however the growers own American Crystal
3 Sugar. There's also some other employers of the hispanic
4 migrant farm workers come up here. You've got the potato
5 crops and you've got the wheat, so you have the Potato
6 Growers Association and Wheat Growers Association. I
7 think they should be asked next time about their
8 employment practices and stuff.

9 The other thing that is still to come
10 out is that migrant farm workers are automatically
11 hispanic, automatically migrant farm workers. There's got
12 to be a distinction between migrant farm workers and
13 seasonal farm workers and that has got to be done and then
14 you have a third category which are people that have
15 settled out. There are people behind me right now that
16 have been migrant farm workers, Mr. Arauza was one, but
17 there are several behind me that are now going into other
18 career choices, other career fields.

19 One thing that happens around here and
20 it happens to me, ask Abner, the same thing when I take
21 off and I dress like this and I take off my tie and stuff,
22 a lot of times I'm automatically a migrant farm worker and
23 so are my kids. One of my kids was asked at K-Mart one
24 time why aren't you out in the field where you belong?

1 She wouldn't know a sugar beet if she saw one.

2 The other issue I'd like to address is
3 the non recognition of the work that the migrant farm
4 worker has done and is still doing in spite of what they
5 say will continue to do for this state and in particular
6 this area. I visited -- my job is to move around the
7 state. I visited several museums in the towns I've been
8 in. I have yet to see one exhibit that credits the
9 migrant farm worker for any of the contribution to that
10 area. You can go to the state fair and I made a bet with
11 members of the State Minnesota Historical Society, I'll
12 bet you my house, my car and my kids against your paycheck
13 that we can go to the state fair right now and go through
14 all the exhibits and you will not see one that says thank
15 you to migrant farm workers, and there wasn't. He didn't
16 take me up on it. But, until that kind of non recognition
17 is corrected and until people are really given -- people
18 of any color, are really given credit for what we have
19 contributed to this area, folks that chasm is going to be
20 there because there cannot be acceptance, you can't
21 respect -- many people tell you respect the work that they
22 do. And like I said, a lot of times I'm not here for my
23 agency or anything, but a lot of times it turned out to
24 where issues when they come up for people of color a lot of

1 times it's a money issue. And all of a sudden I think
2 there's money in that brown skin. Unfortunately sometimes
3 they give just enough, but not enough to really solve the
4 problem. And now I'll stop there and if you have any
5 questions, clarification; like I said it's just strictly
6 migrant season farm workers.

7 One thing I would like to clarify,
8 up until I believe it was last year American Crystal Sugar
9 did recommend wages that would be paid out to field
10 workers, okay. So, we're talking about the minimum wage
11 law.

12 Any questions?

13 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Just one. I will put to
14 you the same question that I put to Abner before and that
15 is when you or your children are walking down the street,
16 you gave us the examples that you did today, in current
17 Moorhead, what will be the reaction to you or to them?

18 MR. PADILLA: It depends on how I'm dressed,
19 but a lot of times the color of my skin will
20 automatically, you can see the fear in people because they
21 fear that, oh my God, I'm not going to be able to
22 communicate. He's going to speak with an accent, et
23 cetera, et cetera. I've gone into places looking for work
24 and I'm 22 year veteran of the military, okay, that

1 doesn't show, and I get asked about my citizenship. I get
2 asked surely I'm applying for a cleaning job or something.
3 There's a lot of lip service given to -- we're going to
4 move you up and all this stuff. And we're going to do a
5 lot for you. A lot of times it's just bunk and I'm going
6 to put it as blunt as I can. Like I said, I'm speaking
7 and I'm not, again, I've got to clarify that, too, I'm not
8 speaking for migrant farm workers because I'm not that
9 good. But, I'm passing on the message. The only
10 acceptance, true acceptance, 1992 Brooking, South Dakota,
11 I was on my way back on a trip from Texas and a friend
12 asked me to tee pee their pow wow. That was the only time
13 I felt that for the military service that I had done
14 because the one tradition they have, they invite all the
15 veterans to come forward. That's more than I can say for
16 anybody else.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: If you were to be given
18 the ability to request the majority white community in the
19 greater Moorhead area to do one thing to reduce racism in
20 this community, what would be the one activity that you
21 would first request be done?

22 MR. PADILLA: Let's talk about the best world
23 and the agency world. Get out from behind your desk and
24 get out where the community is. Don't expect the

1 community to come to you. Number 2, stop being scared.
2 don't act like, oh, my God, I can't go down there. The
3 heck you can't. Don't come in with an attitude that we're
4 better, don't come in that we're doing this for you.
5 Don't patronize and give the minority community, the
6 community of color the same respect you would give anybody
7 else. And Native American population has been here longer
8 than any of us and I see sometimes where they don't get
9 the respect and if anybody deserves it, they do. Thank
10 you very much.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: One of the members has
12 asked, I don't know if you heard the testimony of the
13 representative of American Crystal Sugar in terms of
14 recruiting employees down south in Texas, Mexico, do you
15 have any information?

16 MR. PADILLA: It's hard. It was history, they
17 don't do it any more. I think my reasoning is give the
18 liability is what stopped that. It wasn't so much
19 anything else. It was the liability. But the follow up
20 to that, by the time that was done, the establishment of
21 families coming from Texas was already set. Another
22 factor that had something to do with that was World War II
23 because -- and the other thing with respect to migrant
24 farm workers every year there's a darn study on migrant

1 farm workers or what the problems are. Migrant farm
2 workers have been coming here for over 70 years, almost
3 over 80. The problems are the same, but nobody fixes it.
4 Somebody gets paid to do another study or they shuffle it
5 off to Buffalo or St. Paul.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We do appreciate it.
7 Thank you very much.

8 Can you also for our record, Sonia
9 Hohnadel, tell us the spelling of your name and your
10 address.

11 SONIA HOHNADEL

12 My name is S-o-n-i-a H-o-h-n-a-d-e-l.
13 My address is Post Office Box 2433, Georgetown, Minnesota,
14 56546 and this is my daughter, Vanessa, V-a-n-e-s-s-a,
15 last name Y-z-a-g-u-i-r-r-e and the same address as mine.

16 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Go ahead.

17 MS. HOHNADEL: And as Mr. Padilla said, I'm
18 here off the clock. I'm a parent and advocate for kids.
19 What I felt myself in the community, I served on the Human
20 Rights Committee that the Dr. Anderson spoke about and I'm
21 not saying anything behind Dr. Anderson's back. I did
22 tell him at one time that I felt that the Human Rights
23 Committee was cosmetic, looked good on paper. We didn't
24 have any type of power in discussing issues. Dr. Anderson

1 served as chair of the committee and; therefore, made the
2 agenda for the committee. Most of it was looking at the
3 great things the school has done. We are now having all
4 this money, ten thousand dollars as stated for multi
5 cultural books in the library. We have studied our
6 curriculum and every three years we address a different
7 issue, change the textbooks to make it more inclusive in
8 the curriculum. But, when it comes down to the issues of
9 kids, their feelings of feeling welcomed in the school,
10 their feelings of being considered, look at and treated
11 different, those issues never are addressed or come up or
12 allowed to be. He did address there was a need for
13 training for teachers. I was part of that training.
14 Seeking an education, equity in diversity, it's called the
15 Seed Group. I was trained as a facilitator and had a
16 group, facilitated a group of community leaders and school
17 personnel. Yes, it's offered to the faculty, the teachers
18 that chose to take it are teachers that are sensitive
19 teachers that want to learn, teachers that want to grow,
20 teachers that want to know. It's not -- it's an option.
21 The teachers who really need it don't take it. They don't
22 have the time. There was one time a few years ago that
23 the school district did pay for some students to come in
24 and it was during the day and the teachers were allowed to

1 take time off and now the school district doesn't do that.
2 So, the numbers have grown less and less and teachers -
3 participating.

4 I wanted to address also Dr. Anderson's
5 remarks to like recognizing that there are lots of needs.
6 The school district has done a great job in recognizing a
7 lot of needs, putting things into action to meet the
8 needs, plans to change things. For instance, the focus
9 groups, things that, you know, Yoke--Sim talked about from
10 cultural diversity. We participate in those focus groups.
11 We came up with some of those suggestions to the school
12 district. The Human Rights Committee suggestions to the
13 instruction and curriculum statement that you guys got in
14 the school district's packet, that was just drawn up a
15 month ago. Someone said it needed to be done. It needed
16 to be done now for the five year plan. He pulled in four
17 groups. I was fortunate enough to be asked to be part of
18 that. So, the wording compared to what was stated in the
19 inclusiveness plan included words that were positive. The
20 inclusiveness plan used to talk about recognizing things
21 that make us unique and special. There was wording it in
22 that was not welcoming for people. If you pick it up and
23 you read it, a parent who was coming into the school
24 district, it was not welcoming. So, to say that there has

1 always been a plan, that new statement was just drawn
2 up.

3 As far as the school personnel, the
4 kids really, really need the role models. They frequently
5 state that they would like to have teachers of color
6 within the school district. Yes, there are
7 paraprofessionals who work in title programs or in ESL
8 programs. The majority of other students who are in the
9 mainstream classes don't have the exposure.

10 I need to tell a couple of stories and
11 a couple of stories because they hurt and they hurt kid
12 and that's what I really need to tell. One thing I do
13 recognize is that Vanessa brought home a videotape from
14 the prom that happened the last year. There were two
15 lesbian couples that attended the prom at the school who
16 were graduating or were going to graduate this year. They
17 attended and they participated in the grand march. The
18 post prom committee then tapes the grand march to sell.
19 They sell it for \$20. That helps raise funds for the
20 following year for that following prom party. The two
21 couples were cut out of the video. The school had nothing
22 to do with it because they were not the ones who produced
23 it and sold it, it was the parents group. So they, of
24 course, washed their hands of it. The school had nothing

1 to do with it. It was not part of a school activity. To
2 me that's already being blatantly prejudice towards the
3 gay community.

4 Another incident that happened is a
5 young man was reprimanded for a wrongdoing in the school,
6 an altercation with another fellow. There have been many
7 altercations in the school district. When it comes to the
8 jocks against the either minority students or students who
9 cannot defend themselves, smaller boys, not necessarily
10 kids of color, but smaller boys. The one young man was
11 told that for his safety he should go to the alternative
12 school because at least there he would not be picked on.
13 More or less, there were more his kind and he should go to
14 the alternative school for safety. This was brought to
15 the parent's attention. And another thing that did happen
16 that I'm aware of is that the newspapers for these schools
17 did publish a statement from some students, some things
18 happened three years ago and there were some students who
19 were getting harassed and because of the harassment, my
20 daughter, along with another group of students, wrote a
21 letter to the school. The school then cosmetically made,
22 I call it cosmetic because nothing was ever done after it,
23 a school environment committee. Vanessa suggested some
24 names, the principal brought in his own group of people

1 from within the school district. They were supposed to
2 discuss issues within the school, all they did was share
3 stories at a one time meeting and nothing was ever brought
4 out of this. And since then there's still things going on
5 in the school. This committee no longer exists. They
6 only met a few times that one time to address the letter
7 that she wrote and it -- I'll let her read the letter.

8 MS. YZAGUIRRE: It says, to whom it may
9 concern. Words, remarks that can cut like a knife and
10 visible stares that can stay with a person. The rest of
11 this, every person is to be created equal. Well, if
12 only that were true? Then maybe our world or our school
13 would be a better place today. Hopefully one day soon
14 that dream will come out. Hello, we're writing you in
15 regard to the many problems the school has been having due
16 in part to racial tension that has been rising in the past
17 weeks. First and foremost we believe for you to have
18 ideas on where we're coming from, we should tell you who
19 we are. We are a group of people that feel something
20 needs to be done about the problems and situations that
21 are occurring in our school. We are a group of Mexican
22 American teenagers who feel our voices need to be heard.
23 Though we do not make up a huge population of the school,
24 we feel that it should not make a difference the value of

1 our words. We feel that the school environment should be
2 a good, comfortable, enriching experience. Lately it has
3 been the exact opposite. So, we are afraid to come to
4 school due to harassment, unnecessary remarks and tense
5 situations. Sometimes we feel we have the short end of
6 the stick or so to say. It's hard enough to go into
7 society and face some of the stereotypical thinking or
8 ignorance, but to come to school and encounter the same
9 thinking by not only some students, but teachers and
10 administrators, it's just not right. We should not be
11 afraid to come to school or walk down the halls by
12 ourselves. School is supposed to be an equal opportunity
13 place of learning. So, should we not have the same
14 opportunity to learn as any other student does? We would
15 like you to know that we do not picture ourselves as
16 totally innocent of any wrongdoing, but we do take full
17 responsibility for our actions that have contributed to
18 the problems, though we feel we are not the only ones to
19 blame. We will say that we are guilty of one thing. If
20 wanting to feel safe at school is a crime, I guess you
21 could say that we're all guilty. As for now, we are
22 telling you that we want these problems to stop
23 probably more than the school does and we will help in any
24 way possible to make that happen.

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1 We felt that if we all work together
2 and compromise, a solution can be reached. Hopefully it
3 will make our school a more comfortable school for all of
4 us. Thank you for your time and we hope to hear a
5 response and soon maybe we can all resolve this situation.
6 Maybe our dreams will come true after all. Sincerely,
7 students of Moorhead Senior High and we had over 150
8 students of color sign it.

9 MS. HOHNADEL: And to address the --

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: How old are you?

11 MS. YZAGUIRRE: Now I'm 18.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: When you wrote that?

13 MS. YZAGUIRRE: 15.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Are there any questions
15 from members of the Committee?

16 Is this the alternative school?

17 MS. HOHNADEL: That's the Red River Area
18 Learning School used to be known as the Moorhead
19 Comprehensive Alternative Program. It's the alternative
20 school that the youth are sent to after disciplinary
21 action. Usually that they're not able to function in the
22 student body and they do get more specialized teaching.
23 They do get more one on one. They do get more opportunity
24 for special attention than what you do. The classes are

1 from the school, the number of kids of color there are
2 very disproportionate to the numbers of students at the
3 student body.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

5 MR. BANGSBERG: Please understand the reason
6 why I'm asking this question is I'm trying to figure out
7 some of the root of the problem, some of the problems that
8 are going on. I'm from this town and I've been hearing
9 lots of pretty bad stories, either one of you two, do you
10 know if the faculty or the teachers of the schools, does it
11 appear that they are either intimidated or afraid of the
12 hispanic community and as a follow up, have they -- I've
13 heard rumors and I don't know if this is true, have they
14 been told or is there anything about them fearing to want
15 to discipline students of the hispanic community of any
16 way without fear of reprisals in the entire community?

17 MS. HOHNADDEL: I don't think there is a fear
18 from the teachers. One of the things that we came up with
19 in the focus groups and then again in the Human Rights
20 Committee, there should be a no tolerance type thing.
21 Teachers don't take the initiative to enforce that.
22 Teachers themselves make statements in the classroom.
23 Vanessa has experienced a run in with a teacher, a history
24 teacher who at that time in history O. J. Simpson was a

1 big thing. Who made a statement as to if it was not for
2 the fact that there were black people on the jury, he
3 wouldn't have gotten off.

4 MS. YZAGUIRRE: If it was in a normal place,
5 meaning LA was not normal because of the population was
6 African American. If it was in any other place, he
7 wouldn't have gotten off is what he said.

8 MS. HOHNADDEL: Then you have teachers who make
9 statements in reference to their own opinion when it comes
10 to bigoted remarks as far as I'm concerned. There was an
11 incident here where there were some hispanic youth
12 involved in a crime and the same teacher, unfortunately
13 Vanessa got him another year, made the statement also
14 about all of those kids should fry, his exact words were,
15 those damn Mexicans should fry is what he said in his
16 history class.

17 MS. YZAGUIRRE: He used the word nigger in
18 class a couple of times and I just ended up dropping the
19 class. It was a college course and I ended up dropping
20 the class because I knew he would upset me when he said
21 things. So he would purposely say things and turn around
22 and looking, waiting for me to say something back or
23 waiting for me to defend or tell him that he was wrong.
24 I don't know if he got a kick out of it or what it was,

1 but I ended up just getting up in the class, one day and I
2 didn't go back.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Did either one of you --
4 were either one of you aware of Moorhead Human Rights
5 Commission during the period of time where this was going
6 on? Were you aware of it's existence?

7 MS. HOHNADEL: Not at that time. Not of the
8 existence. Since then, the teacher has been suspended.
9 Apparently there's a lot of other incidents that have
10 happened with him that he has been suspended from the
11 school district. I think they probably were enough
12 complaints where he was suspended. One other thing that I
13 needed to address was the athletic part of the kids of
14 color being involved in extracurricular such as speech
15 odyssey of the mind, knowledge bowl, student council.
16 There are no kids of color there. There's a great concern
17 because there is usually not a welcoming atmosphere in
18 student council or Vanessa was at one time she would make
19 suggestions, a festival for multicultural. It was always
20 downplayed and never followed through. So, her
21 suggestions were never taken seriously. It was said that
22 it couldn't be done. The athletics part, there are a lot
23 of hispanic young men who are very capable of playing
24 basketball. They take on Michael Jordan on the street

1 corner, on the basketball court in the park and do
2 wonderfully, but they don't make the basketball team at
3 our school. The summer programs that are available for
4 kids who have the affordability to pay for junior golf
5 travel teams, volleyball teams that travel during the
6 summer, they have the opportunity because they pay \$245 to
7 \$355 to take these camps to join the travel teams to
8 improve their skills. These ar the kids, because the same
9 coach ends up coaching them at school, make the
10 basketball team and the volleyball team. Kids of color
11 who can't pay the \$345 to attend the camp or join the
12 travel team try out and don't get the same opportunity,
13 even if they're good. The coach knows he can work with
14 this person or she can work with this person because they
15 worked with them during the summer. There are no kids of
16 color on our athletic teams, but you go out and recruit
17 them at the parks, they kick but, but the school doesn't
18 give them the opportunity to make the teams. So, those
19 things do need to be addressed also.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you very much. I'm
21 going to have to cut you off. Let me just ask you as a
22 parting question, are you graduating this year?

23 MS. YZAGUIRRE: This year, yes.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And then what?

1 MS. YZAGUIRRE: I don't know, maybe MSU for my
2 basics.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you very much.

4 Our next presenter, Anita Sunigi, Jenny
5 Sunigi. If you could give your name and address for our
6 record and I'm going to ask you again to limit your
7 presentation to five minutes.

8 ANITA FLORES SUNIGI

9 Okay. My name is Anita Flores Sunigi.
10 I live here in Moorhead, 1700 Third Avenue South in
11 Moorhead, Graywood Traveler's Court. I'm the third
12 generation of migrant workers here. My grandpa has been
13 here since '40 and my father and my children are the
14 fourth generation and I'm must speaking concerning what
15 I've gone through here in Moorhead.

16 I was born here though, you know, every
17 summer I had been here with my mother, she's Native
18 American, my father is Mexican. They met when working in
19 the field because they Native Americans too long time ago
20 work in the field and my parents too they suffer a lot of
21 discrimination in housing, but for now I have got through
22 many problems. I've been homeless with my family, six
23 children and I couldn't find a home because six children
24 and two adults, they will not allow us in the 3 bedroom

1 and it was hard to find 4 bedrooms or 5. The landlord
2 said it's rented or whatever and sometimes a lot of people
3 have to lie to say in order to live, to have a home. But,
4 I didn't want to lie because I know I would get in
5 trouble. By telling the truth you wouldn't find a house.
6 All right. So, finally I've had problems with -- it's a
7 long story, but I'm just going to tell you some little
8 points, problems like I said in housing, health care. When
9 I take my children to the doctor, to doctors, you know,
10 when they're like my daughter did surgery, real rude, kind
11 of harsh and kind of cold and my daughter's finger is not
12 okay. And I've heard other people have problems, too.
13 Also, police, my children has been harassed by police
14 asking if they know who sell drugs or whatever and asking
15 those questions. Also in about two years ago I heard a
16 sheriff said if he was elected, he promised he would get
17 rid of all the Mexicans in Moorhead, Minnesota, which is
18 happening. They used techniques or whatever and also
19 utilities. A lot of people there's utility shut down. I
20 know in the winter they don't do it, but when people need
21 help for emergency like recently now there's an incident
22 where this elderly woman and elderly man they're not
23 eligible for emergency assistance any more and their gas
24 is shut off. Their furnace is broke, there's no help for

1 them and it's during the winter. They have problems, we
2 have problems. Also schools. My kids in junior high, a -
3 teacher told them, Manual you're not in Mexico, you're
4 here in the United States to learn. Just because he was
5 talking with a kid. And I asked after school, is it true,
6 because he told me he said yes, mom, it's my fault, you .
7 know. I cook at home, you know, home made food. I said,
8 well, I don't think it's your fault, what happened? Tell
9 me exactly. Did you disrupt the class or something
10 because, of course people if we do wrong of course we have
11 to get grounded or punished, right? But he said well I
12 was just talking with my friend. Any teenager once in
13 awhile gets out of hand and I didn't believe that was
14 right. All right. Also my son kept asking me, mom,
15 there's going to be a fight in school. There's going to
16 be a fight. He kept mentioning. I was working that
17 night; oh, yeah, what's happening? The skater kids, those
18 skateboard kids just those white pants, they're harassing
19 us. they're calling us spiks, names and telling us stuff
20 and the Mexicans, we're getting tired of it and there's
21 going to be a big fight at school, junior high. So, my
22 neighbor came upstairs, my mom wondered if you needed
23 something from the store? I said no. Is it true that
24 this is happening at school? Yes, this is happening,

1 blah, blah. Okay, we went to school and tried to fix the
2 issue, us two parents went there and we want to prevent
3 this. Can't you do something, an assembly or something so
4 people can get along together. No, we cannot get our kids
5 out of school because the parents will get upset. Well,
6 what can you do because if our kids are getting tired of
7 putting up with this and if there's a fight, I know that
8 the Mexicans or Native Americans or Blacks, they'll get
9 suspended from school, but what happened to the other
10 kids, no, nothing. I've learned that so many times. So,
11 if this happens, I said we would like to see equality,
12 both of them get them together, we want to prevent this
13 fight. Well, we can't do nothing. We'll just send you to
14 the police, that's all they did to solve the problem.
15 All right, also my daughter in school sometimes they don't
16 want to go to school. Why? Because well it's not the
17 kids fault because kids they learn from parents. Why
18 don't we want to go to school? Because this little girl
19 doesn't like me. Why? Because she said she doesn't like
20 blacks. I said, well, you know, don't worry about it
21 that's a little problem that's going on at the park. Her
22 kids call my kids, you should go back to Mexico where you
23 belong. Food pantries, the lady at the food pantry,
24 why don't you go back to Texas and Mexico and get food?

1 Why do you come here and use our food? We have that
2 problem running around going all over the place, dances,
3 employment for our kids, it's hard for our kids to get
4 employment, but lately I've been seen that they're hiring
5 kids of color. Our children want to go out to a dance and
6 then they're not allowed in school because, the dances,
7 because they wear baggy pants. But they let me -- why do
8 they let the skaters go in? So, that's, you know,
9 refusing to serve our kids to go to have a little
10 recreation. As this young lady was saying about
11 recreation for many of our kids don't participate in
12 recreation because our kids know that they're not wanted.
13 they know that for sure.

14 There's so much, but this is all I want
15 to say that what's going through my life here. Thank you
16 very much.

17 MR. BANGSBERG: Did you want to say one more
18 thing?

19 MS. SUNIGI: No, that's enough. I've got so
20 much to say, but you don't have, it's not enough time for
21 me.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Earlier today we had a
23 presentation by Dick DuBord who has indicated that after
24 5:00 o'clock personal he wanted to take another minute or

1 so to give us a little more information.

2 RICHARD DU BORD

3 Dick DuBord, 6169 24th Street South,
4 Moorhead. I'll take about two or three illustrations.
5 First the social work job, what do you call seven white
6 kids, a peer group and Mexican Americans, a gang. I think
7 that kind of thinking happens a lot here. The other one
8 you've asked Abner and a few other people how they were
9 treated on the street when they took off their ties.

10 A few years ago in late August after I
11 had spent the summer working in my garden I was very dark
12 brown. My goatee was longer and very much blacker back
13 then and I walked into -- there are only two men's stores
14 in Fargo and Moorhead and I'll just leave it at that. One
15 was in Fargo and one was here and there was a sidewalk
16 sale and I was looking at this big bulky turtleneck
17 sweater. It was white and the clerk came up to me, an
18 older man, and asked me if I liked that sweater and I said
19 yes, and his next remark was it will be too warm with you
20 to take it to Texas. And I suggested that if I bought it
21 I'd take it wherever I wanted, in a much more strong
22 manner. And I talked to the manager of the store about
23 it. So, if I experienced that, I imagine what these
24 people experience much more commonly and much more

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1 severely.

2 One other issue I want to talk about.
3 I mentioned it earlier today, the scattered site housing
4 program and the difficulty we had over those individual
5 homes. One of the meetings I was at just one. I went to
6 many -- all -- I don't know if you're familiar with the
7 shape and configuration of Moorhead city council chambers.
8 The entire hall was full, probably a couple hundred people
9 and I read this prepared statement and I had a hand out
10 for the press about why I thought we should do these
11 things. My speech was interrupted with boos. I was
12 called names. I was swore at and we received phone calls
13 at home. I didn't here them, my kids did, about their
14 father. There's that kind of ungenerous spirit that I
15 talked about how the people should be better, but there
16 have -- they're not generous. Every one of these things
17 is a fight and the alternative school was mentioned. It's
18 a dumping ground for all kinds of kids and all kinds of
19 programs and problems and they were trying to move it from
20 the Armory where it was safer there. It was all those
21 tanks and everything and they were going to move it to
22 another school building. The local community got up and
23 made noise and they stopped the move. I don't know where
24 it's going to end up or where it did end up. So that was

1 just this winter or spring. These things continue.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And professor, how about
3 the students of color that were -- that are in your
4 classes or whether they be participants in this program or
5 not?

6 MR. DE BORD: In college?

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Yes. How are they
8 received or perceived or treated by the Moorhead community
9 in general or how do they report any ways?

10 MR. DE BORD: I think generally they'll speak
11 very highly of the University of Moorhead State and how
12 they're treated there. I think I've heard as others
13 talked about today, two types of experiences in the
14 community. Sometimes they experience no racial slurs or
15 whatever and other times they're made very uncomfortable
16 and they are treated poorly. There are two different
17 stories, one of our faculty members in our department who
18 is a black and white couple, they lived in Moorhead for
19 ten years, worked in our department and they felt they
20 were treated as well here as anywhere in the country, but,
21 you know, how are, you know, two people in their mid 50s
22 threatening to anybody and they knew where they lived,
23 where they went? So people experience different things in
24 different places.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you very much.

2 Our next presenters are Pam Renville -
3 and Red Dawn Renville.

4 Why don't you please give us your full
5 name and address for our record.

6 PAMELA RENVILLE

7 My name is Pamela Renville,
8 R-e-n-v-i-l-l-e. The address is General Delivery Agency
9 Village, South Dakota, 57260, no phone, and this is my
10 daughter, Red Dawn. Her name is spelled R-e-d capital
11 D-a-w-n, Renville, same address.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Go ahead.

13 MS. RENVILLE: I'm a member of the Sissitan
14 Wabatine Sioux Tribe located 90 miles from here and I used
15 to live up here for three years and the last time I was
16 here was in March of '97 and my daughter attended 5th, 6th,
17 and 7th grade here. 5th, 6th and the elementary and 7th
18 she was at Moorhead Junior High. And when she was
19 attending Moorhead Junior High here, her 7th year she got
20 in a conflict with a non Indian girl and she kept
21 harassing her, saying harassing things to her, calling
22 her names towards my daughter and what happened was in
23 March 3rd, 1997. They got into a fight and my daughter,
24 the school about 10:30 that morning Moorhead Police

1 uniformed police officer came to my apartment saying could
2 you come and get your daughter, she's been suspended and
3 at the time my little one here was only one year old and
4 it was a blizzard that day and my car was blown up. No, I
5 couldn't get out, so I told them we have Indian
6 coordinator, Donna Lunge (phonetic) and I'll have her
7 bring my daughter home to me and I said okay, that's all
8 right with me, just notify the school and that you're
9 telling Donna to come and get her. So I called donna and
10 she said all right, I'll go get her and I got the phone --
11 the phones were all tied up that morning because of school
12 cancellations and stuff. And I did get a hold of the
13 school secretary and I said this is Pam. I told her my
14 daughter is suspended and donna Lunge will be coming to
15 the school to pick up my daughter and bring her home. So,
16 could you release her to her. And she said yeah. She just
17 walked in the door. So I said okay. So, I sat there and
18 waited and waited and about quarter of 12, 11:45, another
19 police officer came and he was not in uniform. He was
20 regular clothed, came to my house and told me that they
21 put her under arrest and threw her in jail. And at the
22 time she was only 12 years old. And what they did was
23 they handcuffed her in the principal's office with her
24 hands behind her back with no jacket, took her out to the

1 police, cold, two cops holding each arm, took her out to
2 the police car and took her to jail without notifying
3 myself. And, you know, I feel, you know, when he came I
4 asked him I said, well, can I go get her? He said no, I
5 couldn't go even see her. I couldn't go down there to get
6 her out of jail. And I said why? And he said because she
7 has to be seen before a judge before she even gets out of
8 jail. And so I said well, would that be today because we
9 both looked at our watches and it was at noon. He says I
10 don't think I'll get the paperwork done. It might be
11 tomorrow. So, she had to spend the night in jail and the
12 next day i called the clerk for court, asked them if they
13 got the paperwork and they said no, not yet. Finally
14 they called me at 10:00 that morning, the clerk of court
15 called me and said could you come down here, we're going
16 to have court at 10:30, and gave me a half hour to get
17 down there. I rushed around, got ready, I got down
18 there. I was only three hours late. The judge was not in
19 the courtroom at the time and she was already sitting at
20 the table with a police woman officer that took her over
21 and the states attorney at the time said he wanted to keep
22 her in jail because she would be a threat to this girl.
23 And I explained to the judge that the girl has been
24 harassing her. There would be no further contact with

1 her whatsoever if she let her come home with me, which she
2 did, under house arrest. And what they filed on her was
3 two counts of simple assault and two disorderly conduct
4 charges and she didn't go to court until that August of
5 that year of '97. She got to go to court in August and
6 she was put on six months good behavior and we had at the
7 time, at the end of April of '97 moved back to South
8 Dakota because what they did, the police, the school, what
9 they did to my daughter at the time I felt was unfair,
10 unfair to me as a parent without telling me that they were
11 going to draw my daughter in jail and unfair to my
12 daughter being placed, 12 years old, in jail, handcuffed
13 out of school, humiliated and thrown in jail overnight and
14 without even letting me take her out. And that's the
15 reason why I'm here. I had filed this once before with
16 human rights and I think it's in Minneapolis or St. Paul
17 and they looked it over and the schools attorney who is in
18 St. Paul, they wrote up their findings and wrote up their
19 answer to me and all mine and rebuttals and whatever and
20 they yet still did not believe what the school and the
21 police here in Moorhead did to my daughter. They took the
22 school's side of the story and all the school and the
23 principal down to the Native American coordinator. They
24 all told lies on that sheet of paper, but they believed

1 those lies instead of me and my daughter.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Let me ask you, if I
3 may, really to both of you before that incident happened
4 had you talked with any of the school officials, whether
5 principals or assistant principals; anybody about the
6 problems that you were experiencing with the other girl?

7 MS. RENVILLE: Yes because they did get in a
8 conflict before that happened once before, suspended them
9 both at that time for three days apiece, which I thought
10 that was fair because this girl was picking on her, but
11 then when the second time happened in March, they
12 suspended her for the remaining of that school year that
13 time.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Are either one of you
15 aware of whether or not the school district had any
16 program for mediating the dispute between you for
17 bringing the two girls together to talk about what their
18 issues were?

19 MS. RENVILLE: I did when they first, the
20 first time they suspended my daughter with the conflict
21 with this non Indian girl, soon after that they suspended
22 my daughter one day for having a ten cent sucker. The
23 principal suspended her and that's when I got upset and
24 went into the principal and Donna Lunge was sitting there

1 and I don't know if she's school counselor, she's an
2 elderly Indian woman sitting there and I said at that time
3 the principal suggested they take my daughter and put her
4 in this alternative school called MCAP and put her there
5 and I said why should I? This is where she wants to go to
6 school. She has a right to go to school where she wants
7 to go, and she wants to go here at Moorhead Public Junior
8 High and that was the alternative was to get her out of
9 school, put her somewhere else.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you both very much.
11 We appreciate it.

12 All right. The next presenters will be
13 Darlene Renville Bitbow and Carolyn Renville.

14 MS. RENVILLE: Good afternoon. We're very
15 honored to be here. I asked --

16 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Could you give your name
17 and address for our record?

18 DARLENE RENVILLE

19 My name is Darlene Renville Bitbow, I'm
20 Sissitan Wabatine Sioux Lake Travers Reservation. My
21 address is Box 84 Pevers, South Dakota, 57257, 605 area
22 code, 932-3628. When I first came in the door I asked
23 this gentleman, I said, does the South Dakota, is South
24 Dakota a part of the United States, you know? And he told

1 me I think you should say this to them. We have a
2 population of Sioux people, Dakota, Lakota, Nokota people
3 who reside in South Dakota on seven reservations. We are
4 one of the larger tribes. There are also Sioux people
5 living in North Dakota, Canada, Montana, we all used to
6 live in Minnesota before they threw us out of there in
7 1862. But, the reason why we're here, whether you look
8 at statistics, whether it's housing, you know, funding,
9 prison statistics, Sioux people, you know, comprise a
10 great number in those statistics. We don't have enough
11 time today, you know, to go through issues and talk about
12 issues, but I think that the Human Rights Commission, you
13 know, should come to South Dakota and come to the
14 reservation. Don't sit and talk with tribal leaders, you
15 know, they're like the men with the suits on, you know.
16 They deal with the men with the suits on, you know, and
17 when you need to interact with people, elderly, such as my
18 aunts, grassroots people, poor people, people who live in
19 poverty, we're going into year 2000, we still have people
20 living in poverty, don't have enough food to eat, et
21 cetera, and I think those are human rights violations.
22 You live in a country, you know, the land of milk and
23 honey. You Americans came here to this country to escape
24 religious prosecution, the right to quality of life. So

1 to say that doesn't exist, you know, on the reservation,
2 you know, I heard this man talk about scattered site
3 housing. Well, we live in scattered site housing, you
4 know. What rights do we have as Native Americans, giving
5 up all this land, you know millions of acres of land.
6 What do we have to show for it? Nothing, nothing. Not a
7 quality of life, education resources, health care. And we
8 used to say health care is not a money issue, it's a
9 treaty issue. We have a little hospital in Sissitan
10 that was built in 1936. They keep adding trailer in the
11 back of the hospital. We're going to run out of space, you
12 know, no new hospitals. The highest diabetic rate as
13 compared with the southwest, highest cancer rate, South
14 Dakota, eastern probably south eastern, but I think all of
15 that is part of the right of human beings. I would say
16 Native American people, Sioux people, a right to have and
17 enjoy what everybody else does. We live in a country of
18 have and have nots and we're the have nots here. I think
19 my aunt wanted to say something.

20 You know, we in the 1800's--

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Maybe we should give her
22 a chance.

23 MS. RENVILLE-BITBOW: She wants to tell you
24 about boarding school.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We want to hear.

2 CAROLYN RENVILLE

3 Carolyn Renville and I'm from the
4 Sissitan Wabatine Sioux Tribe, box 614 Sissitan. This is
5 way back, you can imagine way back in the 40's, 30's, late
6 30's I was in boarding school and it was hard, but you
7 can't tell no one you're under strict supervision. All we
8 were there was to learn something and with the winter time
9 you could get up at 6:00 o'clock in the morning and we
10 have to march every morning, whether it was cold or warm
11 or whatever, we have to go military style, and if anybody
12 know what the Lofton School is, we have to march back up
13 there, march around military style and go back around the
14 tennis courts and do those military -- I don't know what
15 their training was for, but that's what we had to do.
16 March every morning and one time I had a sickness and it
17 was cold and I don't know what that was, but a lump came
18 on my neck and so they sent me to the hospital and this
19 nurse, I'll see her no matter, I never forget her face,
20 she cut my neck with just a knife and with no antiseptic
21 or nothing and I felt better, it drained it all out, but
22 someone is telling me maybe those are those glands you
23 supposed to keep. I don't know. But that's the way we
24 were just cut, just cut open.

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1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We appreciate you telling
2 us.

3 MS. RENVILLE: And I wasn't the only one.
4 There was another lady that went through the same
5 procedure and they cut her and hit her nerve on the chin
6 right here and to this day her mouth is crooked on one
7 side; a nerve. So, that was one thing, the horrors of
8 boarding school days.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We appreciate that. It
10 might not be much consolation, but I would tell you that
11 it's our information that there has just, Peter, correct
12 me if I'm wrong, just been appointed to the United States
13 Civil Rights Commission the group to whom we report, there
14 has just been appointed from South Dakota a Native
15 American person and I don't recall her name.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: The person who ran for
17 lieutenant governor of South Dakota.

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: So, she will now be on
19 the United States Civil Rights Commission and she won't be
20 able to do everything by herself, but it's a small step
21 hopefully forward and we do very much appreciate your
22 coming.

23 MS. RENVILLE-BITBOW: Could I add something?

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: One thing and we have

1 our next presenters.

2 MS. RENVILLE-BITBOW: I think I advocate for
3 everybody else except my own son, but I want you to think
4 about something. We talk about education presumably all
5 the bias and discrimination that exists within the
6 educational system, whether that's whether or not you
7 indicate multi cultural studies in the curriculum, I'm an
8 instructor in the community college, whether you school or
9 not. To, I guess to us it doesn't matter, you either
10 going to ignore true history, learn about another culture
11 or what have you? I have a son that's 18 years old and I
12 wanted him to come in here and talk to you. He's 18 years
13 old, didn't graduate out of 8th grade. Now we live in a
14 country, education is important. We live in a world age
15 of technology. I have a son, I want to know why if you
16 having the education system, I don't care if it's people
17 at the top or the lower levels. I want an answer. He
18 went to a tribal school. A group of his own peers and
19 that happened, HHC communication that we do from day to
20 day, week to week, month to month. That didn't matter to
21 someone, whether it's principal, staff, superintendent,
22 the state board of education in South Dakota, Indian
23 education, what have you, nobody cares. I have a son 18
24 years old, didn't graduate out of 8th grade and I want to

1 have answers, you know.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

3 Our next presenter is Vicente Amoles.

4 Would you say and spell your name?

5 VICENTE AMOLES

6 V-i-c-e-n-t-e A-m-o-l-e-s.

7 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And your address?

8 MR. AMOLES: 1700 Third Avenue South, No. 133
9 which will be Greenwood Trailer Court.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay.

11 MR. AMOLES: I'm a full time welder to which
12 I know welder, we work about ten, twelve hour shifts. I'm
13 an ex-felon. Of course I had a felony, I paid my time and
14 I pay my dues and I'm done paying. But, I'm done. Now, I
15 dedicate my time to my wife, my daughter and to the
16 community and to my church. Because I think that's where
17 I enjoy it, my church and my family. I'm a mechanic as
18 well. Weekends I'm a musician weekends and I do D.J. So,
19 I do it free, they can't afford it, I love to do it free.
20 I'm well-known in the community for a musician. I would
21 say seven days ago or a week ago Tuesday or Wednesday, as
22 I came home from work, my wife, my brother and
23 sister-in-law and the kids were outside doing the lawn,
24 cleaning the lawn, cutting and mowing. Of course I had

1 to do the weeding. So I did that. As we were getting
2 done I said well I think I'm going to fix my boat because
3 I love my boat, getting ready to go fishing. So I jump in
4 the boat trying to sauter my wires and everything and as I
5 look back on that side, I saw a whole bunch of vehicles
6 coming in and when I turned around the other way, I saw a
7 whole bunch of DEA sheriff department, I don't know who
8 else it was with their guns out and ready to knock the
9 door down.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was there with my kids in
11 the park. We saw that.

12 MR. AMOLES: --Ready to knock the door down.
13 They never approached me until later on. I liked turned
14 around, I go hey, you don't have to knock the door down.
15 Go on in. You take your dogs, you take whatever you guys
16 want to? Suppose you guys came here for a search warrant
17 or raid my house, go on in, go on in. I pulled the keys
18 out of my pocket and I go here, that's my pan trailer, I
19 have all my equipment inside, search it. That's my pick
20 up and that's my wife's Blazer and this is my boat, search
21 it. That's what you guys came for, go ahead I have
22 nothing to hide. Because I'm all done now. I have a wife
23 and a daughter now I think that's -- if you don't think
24 about them, I don't know what's on you people's minds. As

1 Chuck Anderson and Steven Kennedy approached me, they
2 said they had evidence against me that we were dealing
3 cocaine and i was dealing cocaine out of my house. I say
4 what? What are you talking about, cocaine? I go, hey you
5 guys last time you guys busted my doors was the last time
6 I even deal with drugs. No more. I don't do drugs. I
7 don't smoke and I even hardly drink because that's not my
8 style of life because I don't want to teach my daughter
9 that because anything I do or my wife does, you know, well
10 if you have kids that the ages of 3 they'll do exactly
11 what you're doing. Because I have one and she's back
12 there and I tell my wife, you're the example to her
13 because she's a female. And these cops came to me as I
14 told my probation officer, I'll publicize this. I carry
15 the search warrant and the papers with me as, you know, as
16 I give them to Hector. He has them right now and say
17 asking for -- hey, because I don't have time, I work ten
18 hours and then come home and then serve my community and
19 fix cars and check my own vehicles to get off work just to
20 go look for a lawyer or look for somebody that I've been
21 accused of drugs? No, I'm done. I'm done. You know, and
22 this happened, I would say a week ago now. And now my
23 wife every night she goes, did you lock the truck, did you
24 lock the Blazer? I go, wait, hold on. Well, you better

1 go lock it. I didn't want nobody to plant something in
2 our vehicles. Now I have to live with that every night.
3 She never used to tell me that. Now my daughter comes
4 meanwhile my wife plays with my daughter, she goes, daddy,
5 I'm going to call the police in awhile. She never used to
6 say that. Now she says that. I don't think it's fair
7 to her or to my wife. I did the crime, I've paid for it.
8 They haven't. I don't know, they have to pay for it. As
9 everybody was outside, kids, they saw guns. I didn't
10 think it was necessary because nobody was doing nothing.
11 Nobody was drinking. We were outside working, doing our
12 lawn and for them just to come on in and they came with --
13 as though I told those, offer, show me the evidence, bring
14 them to me, give me whoever was trying to set me up
15 because to me as I've said right now, somebody is setting
16 me up. Show me, don't tell me. I want to see it and hear
17 it because if I see it, I'll believe it. If I hear it,
18 it's gossip. That's all it is, and this town gossip, it's
19 a big word because that's all you hear and they want me to
20 cooperate, cooperate with what? You want me to cooperate?
21 Endanger my wife and my daughter for something I haven't
22 even done, yet I haven't done nothing, why should you
23 cooperate, oh, no, don't worry about it. We won't mention
24 your name. Hey, I'm well known here. I don't cooperate.

1 I haven't done nothing. There's no need for me to do
2 nothing with you guys and when they want me to bring in, I
3 called my supervisor from work and I told him, look, Paul,
4 this guys are raiding my house. I need for you to come
5 here because you know English better than I do and you
6 understand a lot better, he was there in ten to fifteen
7 minutes, that's my spiritual leader because I told him I
8 was going to call my spiritual leader because any time I
9 need help with anything, he's there to listen to me.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you so very much.
11 We do appreciate that.

12 Anything else? We will declare the
13 formal meeting of the Advisory Committee to be in recess
14 until 9:25 a.m. back here in this room.

15 Again to reiterate, we appreciate all
16 of the presentations that were made today. As you can
17 tell, we will have a verbatim transcript thanks to our
18 reporter. We look forward to meeting with everybody
19 tomorrow.

20 (The meeting was recessed at 6:30 p.m.)

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MINNESOTA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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IN THE MATTER OF:

THE FACT FINDING MEETING ON
RACE RELATIONS IN THE CITY
OF MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

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600 30TH AVENUE SOUTH

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MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

MAY 26, 1999

9:30 p.m.

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IN THE MATTER OF:

THE FACT FINDING MEETING ON
CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE CITY
OF MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken in the
above-entitled cause, taken before ALAN WEINBLATT,
Chairman of the Minnesota Advisory Committee of the United
States Commission on Civil Rights, taken on the 26th day
of May, A.D., 1999 at the Best Western Red River Inn and
Conference Center, 600 30th Avenue South, Dakota Room,
Moorhead, Minnesota at the hour of 9:30 a.m.

1 APPEARANCES:

2 CHAIRMAN: ALAN WEINBLATT

3 COMMITTEE MEMBERS: JOHN MORROW
4 CAROL WIRTSCHAFTER
5 LAVERNE ORWOLL
6 T. JEFF BANGSBERG
7 GERALDINE KOZLOWSKI
8 LESTER COLLINS

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1 (The meeting was convened at 9:30 a.m.)

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: This session of the
3 Minnesota Advisory Committee to the United States Civil
4 Rights Commission will come to order.

5 This is the second day of our fact
6 finding meeting on the subject of civil rights in
7 Moorhead, Minnesota and in Northern Red River Valley.

8 For the benefit of the members of the
9 audience and the members of the Committee as well, we have
10 a very, very tight schedule. Our goal is to have as many
11 presenters as is humanly possible to represent the
12 information in a cogent manner to allow us some time for
13 questioning to make sure that our reporter is able to take
14 down all of the information, I will keep repeating my
15 request to each presenter to give us your name, your
16 address and if you are representing an agency or
17 organization, please so indicate.

18 Because of that time constraints, I'm
19 going to ask and repeat again this morning that each
20 presenter will have about five or six minutes to make an
21 initial statement that will leave a couple of minutes for
22 the members of the committee to ask questions. And then I
23 think I'm going to have to wield a little heavier gavel
24 today than I did yesterday, but interrupt me if you think

1 that my interruptions are interruptive of your train of
2 thought.

3 I think with that beginning, let me
4 just once more indicate what our purpose is and that is as
5 the notice indicated, we are fact finding. We are
6 finding out what the facts are based upon the information
7 that's brought to us by members of the committee. We
8 will then prepare a draft report. We will consider the
9 draft report and then issue it for public comment.

10 With that general background, let me
11 call forward first Grant H. Weiland, the Chief of Police
12 of the City of Moorhead and Wayne Arnold, the Deputy Chief
13 of Police. Gentlemen, please. And I believe you have
14 someone else with you whose name I do not have.

15 MS. TARLSON: Nancy Tarlson. I work for the
16 Moorhead Police Department.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: First of all, Chief, and
18 members of the Department, we greatly appreciate you
19 taking the time to appear before us and give us your input
20 on the subject of our fact finding. Go ahead.

21 GRANT H. WEILAND

22 CHIEF OF POLICE, MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

23 Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman
24 and members of the Committee. We'd like to thank you for

1 the opportunity to address your Committee this morning.

2 As you indicated and with me is Deputy
3 Chief Wayne Arnold and Nancy Tarlson from the Police
4 Department who is our community policing coordinator. The
5 Moorhead Police Department is committed to the fair and
6 equitable treatment and delivery of police service to all
7 citizens in our community. Our mission statement is to
8 maintain peace and order through the provision of police
9 services that are of the highest quality and responsive to
10 the needs of the members of our community. We will
11 contribute to the safety and security of the community by
12 apprehending those who commit criminal acts by developing
13 partnerships to prevent, reduce, and eliminate
14 neighborhood problems and by providing police services
15 that are fair, unbiased, judicious and respectful of the
16 dignity of all individuals.

17 Although the police department value
18 statement lists the protection of human life as our main
19 priority. Of equal importance are value statements that
20 address fairness and diversity. We strive to resolve
21 conflict through impartial enforcement of law. Everyone
22 shall be treated equitably and compassionately. We
23 appreciate one another's differences and recognize that
24 our unique skills, knowledge, and abilities and background

1 bring strength and caring to our community.

2 The Moorhead Police Department has been
3 involved in and made significant strides in our move to
4 community oriented policing over the past several years.
5 Community policing is about building partnerships,
6 partnerships with all members of our community. We have
7 built many, and we will continue to do so in the future.

8 And with that I would like to have
9 Deputy Chief Arnold address our policy and methods for
10 handling citizen complaints.

11 WAYNE ARNOLD

12 DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF, MOORHEAD

13 Good morning. I'd just like to touch
14 quickly on documents we're providing you. First of all,
15 it's our resolution of misconduct complaint allegations
16 policy. We've reviewed that policy numerous times and
17 just recently on March of this year, but one section I'd
18 like to call your attention to is where we state all
19 complaints of employee misconduct will be documented and
20 reviewed by the Moorhead Police Department. And all our
21 employees and supervisors understand that any
22 correspondents or phone calls or any kind of complaints we
23 receive from anybody is to be documented and we look at
24 it. This would even include an issue that might be a

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1 procedural or legal issue that is explained to the person
2 and it's resolved on that level.

3 As part of this whole issue, we also in
4 our policies throughout all our policies, we deal with
5 treating people fairly and equitably, but in particular we
6 have one policy on conduct unbecoming an officer in
7 principal. Three pretty much shows where the Department
8 stands on the issue of fairness and prejudice. The policy
9 states, "Peace officer shall perform their duties and
10 apply the law primarily and without prejudice or
11 discrimination". And then it goes on with rationale and
12 rules and we take all that very seriously and we convey
13 that through our value statement and through our policy to
14 our officers. But beyond that, the key thing that is
15 important to the police department is as the Chief
16 mentioned, in our mission statement is that we really are
17 trying to build partnerships with the whole community;
18 with every citizen of Moorhead and this is our community
19 oriented policing philosophy which the department has
20 adopted and we're taking steps to go in that direction to
21 take some time to change the law enforcement and to change
22 the substance of law enforcement. We made a lot of
23 strides and it's very important to us that all citizens of
24 Moorhead obtain equal protection, are treated fairly and

1 with respect. And a big part of that is Nancy Tarlson who
2 is our coordinator for Weed and Seed and crime free multi
3 housing. I'd like for her to say a few words about those
4 programs.

5 NANCY TARLSON

6 MOORHEAD POLICE DEPARTMENT

7 -As Deputy Chief Arnold said, I do
8 coordinate the Weed and Seed Program. It's a federal and
9 state program which occurs in one of our low income
10 neighborhoods. The Greenwood mobile home park
11 neighborhood, that neighborhood was chosen because it had
12 a higher than average crime rate. It had neighborhood
13 deterioration and it had other significant problems and
14 it's a one year intense focus in that neighborhood where
15 we are focusing on four different things to make a
16 community policing law enforcement neighborhood
17 restoration and intervention prevention. As part of that
18 program we have been working with the residents in that
19 community to try and make a better neighborhood for them
20 to live. And we have done such things and create a
21 neighborhood club with about 12 very active members in it.
22 We have lowered the crime rate in that community from 65
23 percent since we started working there. That would be all
24 calls for service, not just crime calls for service. We

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1 are creating a park in the neighborhood where there was no
2 park and we have a very successful after school program
3 going on there which has an average of 15 to 20 kids that
4 participate in it and that happens three times a week. We
5 also have mentoring going on in that neighborhood and we
6 have a daily food distribution program going on there once
7 a week. Very proud of that effort and it's like I said, a
8 one year intense focus and the state and the federal
9 government has extended us and we're in our third year
10 now.

11 The other thing that Deputy Chief
12 Arnold mentioned was crime free multi housing program.
13 It's a volunteer program where we're trying to establish a
14 partnership with landlords in our community. And the
15 reason that we're doing that is because we realize
16 landlords in our community have the ability to affect many
17 people's lives. What that program would consist of is
18 three different parts. The first part is an eight hour
19 training session where they come to the police department
20 and learn about preventing crime in their building. The
21 second part is as somebody from the police department will
22 actually go out to their buildings and look for seven
23 different safety features on the building to make sure
24 they're safe places for the tenants to live. And the

1 third part of that program is offering a crime watch
2 meeting to the people that live in their building and once
3 they do all three of those things, they're fully certified
4 in the program. The part that you may hear about today
5 sometime today the part of the crime free multi housing
6 program that there's been a lot of discussion about -- in
7 our community -- is contained within the training portion
8 of the crime free multi housing program in which we ask
9 our landlords to do criminal background checks on all the
10 prospective tenants. I provide those criminal background
11 checks to the landlord free of charge after they've taken
12 the program. They learn in the crime free multi housing
13 program how to read those background checks and in
14 addition to that, if I have a new landlord that comes on
15 board and want to do criminal background checks before
16 he's given his first background check. We sit down and I
17 describe to him how to read those background checks. I
18 have a packet of information that also shows the key that
19 I give the landlord to reading those background checks and
20 last year I performed over 3400 background checks for
21 landlords in our community. We really feel that that has
22 helped a lot of different buildings in our community
23 remain crime free.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. If I may,

1 Chief and members of the Department, ask a couple of
2 questions on a little bit different topic and the two are
3 related. Our observation has been that policing work in
4 many communities is made easier and more community
5 responsive if the faces that are seen by the citizenry are
6 not all white male faces and that that's one of the
7 factors that is present of exclusively or even primarily
8 white male faces that generate fear of police in a number
9 of communities. And so what I would like to have you
10 address is to tell us about the diversity situation in the
11 Moorhead Police Department; and secondly, what specific
12 information you have observations, skuttlebug and actions
13 taken to address the subject of fear of police in
14 Moorhead?

15 CHIEF WEILAND: I'll put the mike between
16 Wayne and I, I'm sure we can both address this to a
17 certain extent.

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Sure.

19 CHIEF WEILAND: I think that's definitely an
20 issue in law enforcement. It's an issue for our community
21 and I think like you indicated for law enforcement in
22 general and we realize that in our police department and
23 we are -- and have strived and made an effort to increase
24 the diversity of the officers in our department. I've

1 been an officer with the Moorhead Police Department for 24
2 years. I've been the chief for the past year and a half.
3 Since that time when I took over as chief we had one
4 female officer. We now have three. We've hired one
5 officer with a Native American descent since I took over.
6 We have difficulty, like many police departments do,
7 recruiting of female and minority officers is very
8 competitive in Minnesota and of course we have issues that
9 many communities do and competitive pay and that type of
10 thing when you're competing for officers that you would
11 like to have in your department.

12 I'll let Wayne discuss some of the
13 things that we've done as far as recruitment goes and so
14 we realize that this is an issue for our department and we
15 feel we're making some headway and we can plan to continue
16 to do so in the future.

17 MR. ARNOLD: First of all, I'd agree with your
18 statement and I don't think we've done very well in
19 recruitment actually. We've made efforts, for example law
20 enforcement opportunities, career fairs and different
21 career fairs. I've contacted Chicano Latino Affairs
22 Council and we send them out job notices. I think my
23 feeling is, and I don't know if this is the place to bring
24 it up, the Minnesota licensing system hampers our

1 recruitment efforts. I would really like to see a
2 different system. In other words, the people that are
3 eligible to be licensed are there for us will be picked
4 out when the fact when I started my college degree was
5 good enough to get me started. Otherwise, I probably
6 would have never been in law enforcement. And I think that
7 if we had the opportunity to recruit people on that basis,
8 we'd be much more successful. And I think the Minnesota
9 Chiefs and we support that also, would like to see the
10 whole Minnesota system changed.

11 MR. WEILAND: We've look at that for a number
12 of years and discussed it and we've considered that a
13 problem pretty much in mind. Under the licensing
14 requirements a person has to decide they're interested in
15 a career in law enforcement when they're 9 or 10 years old
16 and so when you decided at a later time in life, it's so
17 difficult that it detracts many people from applying for
18 positions and so we feel and as Deputy Chief Arnold
19 indicated, we agree with a move by the Minnesota Chiefs
20 Association to change that and to have the application
21 process more open and available to more people.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: You might, if there's a
23 proposal, you might send a copy of that proposal to our
24 staff for our consideration as part of our report.

1 MR. MORROW: Just a quick question. You
2 mentioned that -- Nancy, you mentioned that you were
3 constructing a park at Greenwood mobile home. I presume
4 that's a minority neighborhood. I realize that local and
5 state and federal funding is maybe a little tight, but
6 what is the funding for that park in relation to other
7 city parks?

8 MS. TALSON: That park was funded partially
9 through the Weed and Seed Program which is state and
10 federal funding. We also put in community development
11 block grant funds that were allocated to the city were put
12 towards that package also. Our regular parks department
13 budget was put towards that park and I'm not sure as far
14 as are you asking cost wise if that's a more expensive
15 proposition than the other parks or is that what you're
16 asking me?

17 MR. MORROW: The inquiry was just to find out
18 if there was a disparity there on the part of the funding.

19 MS. TARTSON: We haven't created a new park in
20 Moorhead for a long period of time, so I'm not sure what
21 the cost as far as operating, construction and operating
22 the other parks in this city to be honest. I was shocked
23 at how expensive it is to actually create a park.

24 MR. MORROW: They are expensive?

1 MS. TARLSON: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Jeff?

3 MR. BANGSBERG: I have a question on the
4 recruitment process. Can you be a little more specific as
5 to what is hampering your desire or efforts to bring more
6 minorities into the police department? Can you be a
7 little more specific as to what is the bottom line and
8 what is the problem because I'm a little ignorant in this
9 area?

10 MR. ARNOLD: Basically because Minnesota is a
11 licensing law and what you have to do is go through a
12 minimum of two years law enforcement college training and
13 then I think it's a ten week skills training and then
14 you're eligible to take a licensing test and you have to
15 pass that and you're eligible to be licensed, and that's
16 the pool we have to draw from. For example, we just did a
17 test and we had 50 applicants. There's a Minnesota State
18 Patrol is hiring a lot of state troopers and the pool is
19 very limited. For example, when I started there were I
20 think 500 applicants for the positions and we would like
21 the ability to first of all, you know, more diverse
22 population; people of different backgrounds and just law
23 enforcement training we feel is important and also in the
24 interim I think I believe that our officers can make

1 partnerships and have good relations with the community.

2 Does that answer --

3 MR. WEILAND: We have at the job fairs, we send
4 officers to recruit. In the last two years when they've
5 had the job fairs and at the Minnesota Police Convention
6 Center for Females and People of Color and we follow
7 those up; we try and generate interest at the job fairs
8 and then we follow that up when we have positions open and
9 send out letters to the people that we encourage to sign
10 our list. And so we are actively trying to accomplish
11 something in that area.

12 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I have a question. Yesterday
13 we were told that in the Moorhead area that the people of
14 color represent approximately 6.1 percent. We were also
15 told that within the public school system that of the
16 6,000 students, 14.9 percent are minority students. I was
17 wondering if the crime rate or the amount, the percentages
18 of arrests that you make in the community or for juveniles
19 if that reflects the population or is it higher?

20 MR. ARNOLD: I think that's part of what this
21 report is going to tell us. In talking to Dr. Minarik, he
22 got some statistics from us that he is making into the
23 report and in talking to him, that is one of the interests
24 we had in finding that out exactly.

1 MS. KOZLOWSKI: A follow up question. I'm
2 sure this county or some county has a juvenile center. I
3 would like to know if what the percentage of minority
4 students who are in that center or sentenced to that
5 center?

6 MR. WEILAND: Probably wouldn't be the
7 appropriate people to ask that question. There's a
8 regional juvenile -- you're referring to the detention
9 holding center?

10 MS. KOZLOWSKI: Yes.

11 MR. WEILAND: There's a regional juvenile
12 detention center located in Moorhead and we would not have
13 the information that you're requesting at this time and we
14 certainly could find out and provide that information. We
15 can request that from the regional juvenile detention
16 center.

17 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I would appreciate it.

18 MR. WEILAND: And we don't track our
19 statistics about juveniles based on race or ethnic
20 background at this time.

21 MR. COLLINS: Just on a broader base kind of
22 related to the same question, I'm wondering if you could
23 provide us with the; one, arrest by race, not necessarily
24 juveniles, but just overall? The other question is that

1 Minnesota has a or established a gang strike task force
2 and I'm wondering in the report that I read -- I can't
3 recall whether I believe that Moorhead probably
4 participates, I'm not sure, but--

5 MR. WEILAND: We participate. We have
6 limited participation in that gang task force, strike task
7 force. The county sheriff's office has people that are
8 assigned to that task force. They were provided funding
9 by the state to participate. We were not and so we have a
10 local gang task force and we have an officer assigned to
11 that and he does assist the principal gang strike task
12 force, but on a limited basis.

13 MR. COLLINS: How would you define the
14 magnitude of the gang problem or concern here?

15 MR. WEILAND: I think if you'd asked me that
16 question three or four years ago, I would have said that
17 there is panic in the community over the issue. It pretty
18 much started -- that issue became significant in Moorhead
19 three or four or five years ago and we were experiencing
20 signs of gangs becoming a strong force in Moorhead and we
21 were actually really getting involved in community
22 oriented policing at that point, and at this point I think
23 the community feels that gangs are not anywhere near the
24 problem that they were several years ago in Moorhead.

1 Our position is, is that there's still
2 gang activity in this area. That it's limited compared to
3 what it was several years ago and we attribute that to the
4 partnerships that we've built in the community
5 neighborhood getting involved. It's not only things that
6 we've done as a police department, but things that people
7 living in the neighborhood and Moorhead have become
8 involved in. And healthy community initiative, getting
9 kids involved in positive activities, and we think the
10 whole package in Moorhead is contributed to the fact that
11 the community does not feel there are significant gang
12 problems anymore and we concur with that in the police
13 department. They still exist, but they're not the
14 proportion that they were several years ago.

15 MR. COLLINS: Can I just a little follow up in
16 terms of the composition of these things to the extent
17 that they do exist; what does that look like?

18 MR. WEILAND: For those of us that have
19 been involved with that issue in Moorhead, we know that
20 the gang composition involves kids of all races and ethnic
21 backgrounds. Frankly, I think if you talked to some
22 people in the community, they would probably tell you that
23 the gangs consist of kids that are of hispanic and latino
24 background. That's not true and gangs that have been

1 active in this community generally are made up of kids of
2 all backgrounds, Native American, Caucasian, Hispanic,
3 African American. It isn't an issue of at least from our
4 perspective the gang make up is made up of kids from all
5 backgrounds.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I'd like to ask you a
7 question to the follow up about the criminal background
8 check. What's the consequence? You run a criminal
9 background check on me and you find that I have 11
10 felonies and 6 misdemeanors convictions and you give that
11 information to the landlord. Then what--

12 MS. TALSON: First of all, we ask the landlord
13 to get a release from the --

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Let me reduce that to two
15 felonies, otherwise I wouldn't be there.

16 MS. TALSON: We have the landlord get a
17 release from the prospective tenant to allow us to release
18 any information that we do have, first of all, and what we
19 do then is simply provide the information, the landlord
20 themselves have to put together their own criteria as to
21 what is an acceptable criminal background before somebody
22 can move into their building. And we ask that they apply
23 that criteria to every single person that comes through the
24 door. I have one of those sample criteria for one of our

1 landlord in town, so it gives you a little bit of an idea.
2 The ultimate consequence is that if you have a landlord
3 who has very strict criteria, will not accept anybody with
4 a violent felony on their record, that person will not get
5 an apartment in that building and they may not get an
6 apartment in many buildings in Moorhead and it makes it
7 very difficult for them to find housing in Moorhead.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Does Moorhead have a fair
9 housing ordinance, if you know, that's non discrimination
10 in housing? Maybe somebody else on the panel, unless you
11 know.

12 MR. WEILAND: I believe they do, yes.

13 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And so as a consequence
14 of that, is there any incidence on your part that a
15 landlord subscribes to that fair housing policy as a
16 condition to receiving the information from you?

17 MS. TALSON: We do not. We leave it up to the
18 landlord to comply with that fair housing issue, but
19 during our eight hour training seminars, we go through
20 that extensively about what is acceptable and what is not
21 acceptable; what would be considered discriminatory.
22 But, if a tenant has an issue with a landlord with regard
23 to fair housing, they have to bring that up themselves.

24 MS. ORWOLL: I'm wondering whether you have

1 policemen on the beat walking, not just riding in the
2 neighborhood?

3 MR. WEILAND: No, we don't have walking. All
4 we do on occasion, but generally what we've expanded is
5 our bike patrol. We found that we accomplish the same
6 thing as a foot patrol officer does as far as making
7 contact with citizens and people finding officers more
8 accessible by being on bikes than they are in a car, much
9 more. And so it gives the officer the ability to cover a
10 lot larger area on a bicycle than on foot, but you get the
11 same advantages of a foot patrol officer and we have for a
12 department our size, we have a fairly extensive bike
13 patrol. We have fifteen officers trained. We have an
14 officer trained to train officers in bike, which is a
15 fairly complicated process to certify, although you would
16 think all you have to do is get on a bike and pedal. You
17 find there's a lot more involved than that. But we do use
18 that. We have fifteen officers that are trained and we
19 use it extensively and it's been a very positive thing for
20 us in the past five, six years.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: By the way, what is the
22 size of the department, first of all, patrol officers or
23 whatever and then the size of the whole department?

24 MR. WEILAND: We are authorized 50 sworn

1 officers, including ourselves. Currently we have 48
2 positions. We had been at 48 sworn positions and we were
3 just authorized a federal grant for a full time grade
4 officer which is a gang resistance officer similar to
5 the DARE program.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Jeff?

7 MR. BANGSBERG: In regard to your community
8 policing efforts, do you have kind of other outreach
9 programs other than Weed and seed where you may be able to
10 recruit some neighborhood community members to be liaisons
11 to the police force or to assist in kind of, I know now my
12 new homes is New Hope Mines there's a lot of activity that
13 where police community trying to outreach to the community
14 by having liaisons in neighborhoods, neighborhood
15 liaisons. I'm wondering how that is working for the
16 minority community and do you have liaisons other than the
17 Weed and Seed Programs?

18 MR. WEILAND: We don't specifically have
19 liaisons. We've recently initiated a police volunteer
20 program and that was an offshoot of we started the
21 citizens police academy a number of years ago which has
22 been very successful for us and we have drawn from people
23 throughout our community to be involved in the citizens
24 police academy and from that we developed a police

1 volunteer program and it does involve and we have many
2 members that are hispanic and latino and it's -- we've
3 really just gotten started, but it's a very positive
4 thing for us. And I think our block clubs are pretty much
5 doing what she brought up there. Nancy could maybe address
6 that, but we have a lot of involvement with our block
7 clubs and our block club leaders.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Related to that question,
9 as you answer it, have you ever considered doing something
10 like a ride along or a bike along for maybe some members
11 of the minority community or youth generally?

12 MR. WEILAND: Well, what we try and accomplish
13 that through our citizens police academy and one of the
14 issues that we're going to address with this new position
15 that we have for a grade officer is more involvement with
16 the police officer for kids that are at risk for becoming
17 involved in gangs. We've also had a what we've called the
18 Moorhead police summer youth program for possibly, I
19 believe it's been in the last 20 years and we've tried to
20 involve as many kids in the community as we possibly can
21 to interact with officers and do activities that we
22 provide during the summer months.

23 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Ms. Tarlson, thank you
24 very much, we do appreciate your time and testimony.

1 Our next presenters will be Rick
2 Henderson, the Chair of the Moorhead Human Rights
3 Commission and Joe Perissey, of the Public Defender Officer.

4 Mr. Henderson, I'm going to call on you
5 first and ask you to give us a little bit of background on
6 yourself and the Moorhead Human Rights Commission and then
7 tell us about the status, if you would, of human rights in
8 Moorhead and Red River Valley.

9 MR. HENDERSON: I'll do my best.

10 RICHARD HENDERSON

11 CHAIRMAN, MOORHEAD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

12 The Moorhead Human Rights Commission
13 was formed in 1990. It was formed pursuant to a city
14 ordinance and I've got a copy of the ordinance which I'll
15 file with the Commission or give to you before I leave.
16 I'll just kind of summarize briefly though I think the
17 parts that are applicable to what we are doing here today.

18 The ordinance prohibits discrimination
19 on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national
20 origin, sex, marital status, statute regarding public
21 assistance, disability, age, and familiar status. There
22 was quite a debate at the city commission about whether or
23 not sexual orientation should be included in the
24 Commission. Ultimately the city council decided not to

1 include that category. The purpose of the Commission--

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Discrimination in what?

3 MR. HENDERSON: The purpose of the Commission
4 is to secure equal opportunity in education, employment,
5 housing, public accommodation and public services and to
6 provide people with a full opportunity to participate in
7 community affairs. That's the language of the ordinance.
8 I didn't mean to avoid your question, but I thought that
9 might answer your question.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Is there a fair housing
11 ordinance?

12 MR. HENDERSON: Not a fair housing, not a city
13 ordinance, nothing other than the human rights ordinance.
14 The human rights ordinance does on its face apply to
15 housing. The duties of the Moorhead Human Rights
16 Commission are to meet monthly. We're supposed to try to
17 be involved in educating the public about human rights
18 issues, trying to enlist the cooperation of agencies,
19 organizations and individuals working to promote human
20 rights. We have an annual recognition or award ceremony
21 where we try to award human rights awards to people who
22 are active in human rights in the City of Moorhead. And
23 we're also supposed to advise the city council regarding
24 human rights issues.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: What is your budget?

2 MR. HENDERSON: \$4,000 a year. Members of the
3 Human Rights Commission serve without compensation. The
4 budget is primarily spent on members attending conferences
5 and we have tried to do some public education. I don't
6 think that we've ever spent our entire budget. The Human
7 Rights --

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Are you a volunteer as
9 well?

10 MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

12 MR. HENDERSON: The Human Rights Commission
13 has 11 members and the ordinance requires that four
14 members come from one of each of the four wards of the
15 city and that four members be members of recognized
16 minority groups. At least three different minority
17 groups. So, for example, we could have two of one
18 minority group, disabled and that could be based on
19 disability, age, religion, race. I don't think that we
20 would necessarily feel that we had fulfilled our quota if
21 we appointed four women, for example. The members are
22 myself, I've been a member since 1996. I became the
23 Chairperson of the commission in September of 1998. I
24 think appointed because I am a member of the Baha'i faith

1 and that's regarded as Israel. Garciel who is a Hispanic
2 member. Mary Davis, Christian, Rose Seccus a Hispanic,
3 Bradnor Hogan, a disabled member, John SKinningkel, Joyce
4 Stinnett who is Native American and Drew Conte who is
5 black. Sister Sharon Aldendorf and Roger Burcher.
6 There's one vacancy on the Commission. We have invited
7 Nancy Mungy to fill that position, but I have not received
8 any official word that she's accepted the position. In
9 addition to the 11 members, Larry Nicholson, a member of
10 the city council, serves as an ex officio member and Larry
11 is a very active member.

12 Another document I'd like to give you
13 is a copy of our annual report. The annual report for
14 1998 summarizes some of our activities in 1998 and I'm not
15 going to go through all of them, but I will hit a few
16 highlights just to give you an idea of what we do.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Henderson, would you
18 start off in this part of your presentation by telling us
19 what you as Chair of the Moorhead Human Rights Commission
20 view as the number one and number two human rights issue
21 facing the community now?

22 MR. HENDERSON: I think my own personal
23 opinion, I think education is probably my biggest concern.
24 I know that housing is a concern also. There's issues

1 about housing though that relate to taxes and encouraging
2 developers to build houses and things that I just really -
3 don't understand adequately and I don't really feel that
4 the Human Right Commission has much that we can do about
5 that. There's not much that we can do directly about
6 education either because we really is are nothing but an
7 offer, a suggestion to school board. We can do that.
8 But my own personal feeling is that education is the
9 biggest problem, human rights problem in Moorhead.

10 MR. BANGSBERG: Be specific about it.

11 MR. HENDERSON: Sure. Because we're talking
12 about our next generation and I'm speaking more
13 anecdotally. The Human Rights Commission does not have
14 the ability to really collect a lot of statistics on this,
15 but both of my children went all the way through from
16 kindergarten to graduating from high school in Moorhead
17 and my perception of this is that there really is quite a
18 divide in achievement. I wouldn't say divide in
19 opportunity, but there's a real difference of achievement
20 between white students and students of Hispanic and Native
21 American background in Moorhead. And this is something
22 that a couple of people have brought concerns to the Human
23 Rights Commission. I've spoken to Dr. Anderson from the
24 school board a couple of times about these issues. Issues

1 of concern that have been specifically raised are children
2 of Hispanic background being kind of diverted into
3 alternative programs and children of Hispanic background
4 being automatically being diverted into English as a
5 second language program, even though some of these
6 children have been born and raised in the United States by
7 parents who have lived all or most of their lives in the
8 United States. So, English really is not their second
9 language, it's their first language. But there's a
10 perception there that there's some difference of
11 treatment. There's also a perception that Hispanic
12 students are less likely to graduate, less likely to be
13 involved in extra -- fully involved in extracurricular
14 activities and less likely to achieve higher grades and
15 things of that nature. And I guess your question was what
16 do I see is my biggest concern and that's my biggest
17 concern because I really think that, you know, when
18 children are young, it's our best opportunity to try to
19 address differences along racial or gender or disability
20 lines and if we fail to do that when they're young, if we
21 fail to do that by the time they graduate high school, I
22 think we may have lost our best and maybe our only
23 opportunity to really affect lasting change in the
24 community. So, now that's something I feel strongly about

1 and I want to be clear that my purpose here isn't to
2 criticize the schools or the school board. I really don't
3 know enough about what they're doing to be able to say
4 that they're doing anything wrong, but I think that if I
5 was the czar of Moorhead, I could come in and do anything
6 I would really want to devote a lot of effort and
7 resources to that issue. I think that would be my number
8 one issue.

9 I'll just summarize something of the
10 things that we've done and I don't want to take all of
11 Joe's time and I want to leave some other time for
12 questions. We did have our human rights awards. This is
13 -- we were supposed to start doing this in 1991, but this
14 is our third annual award ceremony. So, this is the third
15 year in a row that we've done this and we gave the award
16 this year I think to eight people. We've tried -- one of
17 the things that I should also tell you about the
18 Commission is that we don't have any power to impose
19 penalty. We don't have any power to require people to
20 answer questions or anything like that. We're purely an
21 advisory and consultative cooperative body. So, we have
22 shared concerns with other people, like for example, when
23 I talked to the school president of the school district,
24 but, you know, we really can't go much further than that.

1 So, we did provide some information to the public schools
2 this year and suggest that they might be able to use
3 them for Martin Luther King celebration in the schools
4 this year. You know, different things that are different.
5 This was kind of a curriculum packet and we suggested that
6 they might want to distribute this to different teachers
7 so that the teachers could have observances in their
8 schools or that the schools may want to have some kind of
9 observance.

10 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Do you know what happened
11 to the packet?

12 MR. HENDERSON: As far as I know, there were
13 no school observances. There may have been some
14 individual teachers who had Martin Luther King Day
15 observances in their classrooms, but I don't have any
16 statistics on that.

17 We also cooperated with community
18 education in performance by the Mixed Blood Theater
19 Company of Minnesota in a presentation about Dr. King's
20 life. One of the things that the Human Rights Commission
21 does is we try to have a hate crime response program and
22 so if we've learned about any hate crimes in Moorhead, we
23 have members of the Commission who will contact the
24 victim, try to offer any assistance that we can and also

1 try to publicize it and express the sense, something
2 that's consistent with our values as a community in
3 Moorhead.

4 There was one incident in January of
5 1998. A female student at Moorhead State was assaulted
6 and she said that her assailant did make some racial slurs
7 and racial comments. She was I think from India and she
8 had a very dark complexion. We did contact her. She told
9 us that she did not feel that there were any services that
10 we could provide for her and we also wrote letters to the
11 local newspaper, The Forum, and to the two campus
12 newspapers in Moorhead. We did support Moorhead State
13 University annual unity conference. We support the
14 cultural -- our cultural events that was held by the
15 Cultural Diversity Project. And individual members have
16 supported activities of the People Poverty Project in the
17 Romneky park neighborhood. We've also tried to support the
18 Northwest Minnesota Legal Services in their efforts to
19 improve access to -- equal access to housing in Moorhead,
20 but there's really not a lot that we can officially do.
21 But, we try as a forum, publicize and support what they
22 can do and that's as far as we've gone with that.

23 I also should mention that two members
24 of the Human Rights Commission did attend the annual

1 conference of the League of Minnesota Human Rights
2 Commission in St. Cloud this year. One of the things that
3 the Human Rights Commission is trying to do is to provide
4 a forum for people who have complaints to come and air
5 their complaints. I think that the city council
6 envisioned that maybe we would be an alternative to
7 someone either starting a lawsuit or filing a claim, a
8 human rights claim. We get very, very few of those. I
9 think partly it is because some people don't know that we
10 exist, but more important, there's really not much that we
11 can do. We can ask if someone comes in with a complaint
12 about housing or education. We can ask that someone, you
13 know, come and respond, but we can't require them to
14 respond and so we really haven't been able to accomplish a
15 lot of improvements in that way. We have had, I think we
16 had three people who came to the Commission to air
17 complaints. One was a homeless individual who felt that
18 he was evicted from a homeless shelter unfairly. One was
19 a student at North Dakota State University who felt he was
20 treated unfairly by the Moorhead Police because of his
21 race. One was a disabled individual who felt he was
22 treated unfairly by the Moorhead Police because of his
23 race, and we had contacted the Moorhead police Department
24 about those last two incidents and the police department

1 did make an effort to contact both of those individuals.
2 We do not know how those grievances were resolved and the
3 individuals never came back to us.

4 The last thing I'd like to say is that
5 let me say two more things. First, one of our mandates is
6 public education and that's something that we're trying to
7 do more of this year. We wanted to try and we're still
8 hoping to do something before October to have some kind of
9 an observance at Moorhead High School to commemorate the
10 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human
11 Rights. We also have talked and we're still talking about
12 trying to do some type of a hate crime awareness program
13 or presentation at the lower school levels maybe at the
14 junior high and at the high school and we haven't had a
15 Human Rights Commission meeting since the incident in
16 Littleton, but I think that that gives even greater
17 impetus to that effort and think that's something that
18 we're going to try to do.

19 The other thing I'd like to say is that
20 part of the mandate in the ordinance is to advise the city
21 council about human rights issues and that's something
22 that we really have not had an opportunity to do. And I
23 think that it's something that I would like to see the
24 city council gives us greater opportunity to participate

1 in. There have been two legal cases against the city in
2 the past that were resolved in the last year. One was a
3 disabled case, an ADA case by a disabled individual who
4 was suing the city because of access to it was mainly curb
5 cuts and public facilities that we had no opportunity at
6 all to advise the city council about that and I feel that
7 that might be something that would be useful. The other
8 -- there was a sexual harassment claim brought against the
9 city. An employee of the city. Again, we did not have an
10 opportunity to advise the city council about that and I
11 think it might be useful if we could advise the city
12 council, particularly -- I don't know that we need -- we
13 have a whole lot to offer as far as, you know, resolving
14 the details of the legal case, but my feeling is that once
15 these cases are resolved, there's a great opportunity for
16 education. It's kind of like you cultivated the soil and
17 now is a good time to plant. So, I think this would be
18 something that we could advise the city council and that
19 would be one suggestion or more observation that I would
20 make here.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Henderson, thank you
22 very much. It's only through the service of good people
23 like you and the members of your commission that we can
24 hold back, make any progress at all. So we thank you.

1 Mr. Perissey.

2 JOEL PERISSEY

3 PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

4 Good morning members of the Committee.
5 Thank you for taking the time to hear from me. I wasn't
6 on the agenda originally and Peter gave me a call on Monday
7 and I knew this was coming up and fortunately found time
8 to get over here this morning.

9 My name is Joel Perissey, I'm with the
10 PUblic Defender's office in Moorhead which is a satellite
11 office of the 7th District Public Defender. Our office of
12 the 7th district goes from down by St. Cloud all the way
13 up here to Moorhead, much like the judicial district is
14 fashioned.

15 I've been an attorney here in Moorhead
16 since 1981. I was in private practice until 1995 when I
17 became full time with the public defender's office. But I
18 handled public defender cases prior to that on a part time
19 basis all during those years. And it's been principally
20 here in Clay County that I've worked. Although we also
21 handle cases out in Outer Tail County, Becker County and
22 sometimes farther away. My family has grown up here. I
23 came right out of law school. I'm not native to this
24 area, I'm from Iron Range, but all three of our children

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1 have been educated here. My two girls are going to
2 college, one at Moorhead State, one at Concordia and I've
3 got a little second grader. I've also been involved with
4 various organizations here in the community that I think
5 are pertinent to the task at hand here today; one of which
6 is the cultural diversity resources organization that you
7 I believe heard from it's director yesterday, Yoke-Sim
8 Gunartane. So, I'm not going to go into that in a lot of
9 detail, but I just point that out because for the last
10 three years or so that the work of that organization has
11 been of interest to me. I accepted a request to serve on
12 that board principally because I do a lot of work in
13 juvenile law. I saw a need for some efforts to try to
14 break down some of the cultural barriers that I see in
15 this community, which are not unique to other communities
16 across the country; but, every now and then seems to be of
17 greater focus just because that's where you're at.

18 Coming over here today I listened on
19 the radio. We have some talk show programs that go on in
20 the morning on at least two different stations that I'm
21 aware of because I had a feeling that the work of this
22 committee and the testimony from yesterday might be of
23 interest and sure enough, it was brought up. And it made
24 me reflect a little about how careful you need to be on

1 the choice of words. It seems as though an article from
2 today's paper has been quoted in part, but taken out of
3 context I thought and I remember reading in an article
4 today about one of the professors that testified before
5 you yesterday mentioned that he probably was going to hear
6 about this and this idea of a culture of silence. I just
7 wanted to preface my remarks that I have with feeling that
8 I do believe that there are some very genuine efforts
9 going on in this community to try to deal with these
10 issues and I'm not going to repeat all the things that are
11 being done by groups like the cultural diversity resources
12 and the Moorhead Community Healthy Initiatives. But those
13 are very real efforts and it's just not sugar coating in
14 my opinion. These groups are composed of people, some of
15 minority culture, some of anglo that are here in this
16 community and want to make it a vibrant community. And I
17 think they all ought to be commended. Unfortunately, I'm
18 afraid that there are some folks in this community who
19 have a very intolerant attitude towards person of color.
20 A few years ago, and Peter told me that I could share just
21 some anecdotal things. I haven't kept statistics, okay,
22 so I'm not here to give you a bunch of statistics, but I
23 can give you some examples of things that are of concern
24 to me; and I would hope to others. I represented a young

1 man who is from Mexico City and was up here attending
2 North Dakota State University in years past. He had come
3 up as a foreign exchange student in high school and stayed
4 with a family in Fargo and wanted to continue his
5 education up here. He had no prior criminal record except
6 for a previous DWI. He wasn't a recipient of public
7 assistance. Nevertheless, I felt that it was important to
8 try to find out how our jury panel felt about issues
9 relating to race and in questioning people I ran into the
10 same kind of problem as I do in many of my cases that the
11 professor that spoke to you yesterday talked about is a
12 lot of people just don't want to talk about it and if they
13 don't, it's hard to read their mind. But in this case, I
14 talked to one individual who volunteered in what I'd have
15 to characterize as a stunningly matter of fact manner that
16 she could not be fair in her opinion to my client because
17 in her previous occupation as a social worker in a
18 different county in eastern, northeastern Minnesota she
19 had worked with Native American clients and didn't have
20 positive experiences. Now, how that translated to
21 difficulty being fair to a Mexican citizen who is
22 attending school in our country, I was just flabbergasted.
23 And then to turn and look at my client and to see what
24 kind of reaction, you know, he gets from something like

1 that. In the same trial, another panel member indicated
2 that he could not be fair to my client. This was a
3 Moorhead fireman who, in explaining why he would have
4 difficulty, said that a lot of the calls that he goes on
5 involve domestics and assault type instances that
6 frequently involve hispanic people. So now maybe he
7 didn't want to serve on the jury, but to be able to even
8 say that in public amongst your fellow citizens is just
9 kind of mind boggling and it's kind of scary. The thing
10 that was even scarier for me was just wondering how many
11 others on the panel really felt that way but just didn't
12 have the guts to say it.

13 I've talked to other attorneys that
14 have experienced similar situations. We had a very nasty
15 murder here in Moorhead a few years ago. I had
16 represented one of the defendants and then the other
17 fellow had been on the run and when he was apprehended, an
18 attorney down from Fergus Falls came up and tried that
19 case. I wasn't present during that selection procession,
20 but I heard a similar recount by the prospective jury
21 member about feelings about racial tensions and feelings
22 towards minorities in general. And when people start
23 using terms like they, this, and they that and start
24 collectively putting everyone in the same category when

1 they describe certain behaviors that they're not happy
2 with, that's scary. And I want to avoid doing that when I
3 talk about some of these other concerns I have because
4 when I talk in a moment about some of the experiences my
5 clients have had with law enforcement, for example, I
6 don't want to give the impression that I'm putting that
7 I'm putting all the police in the same category and I'm
8 not and yet some of these instances I'll leave you to draw
9 your own conclusions on when I talk about them. In
10 addition to experiences in just voir dire, I had some
11 other concerns. One is the procedure that is allowed
12 under the rules of criminal procedure for police officers
13 in situations where a person could be arrested for
14 commission of a misdemeanor. Now, without getting into
15 too much technicality here, the idea is that if an officer
16 observes a person commit a misdemeanor in his presence,
17 they can arrest. But, the rule really talks about a
18 mandatory issuance of citation. I mean, the rule is being
19 ignored in my opinion in many cases and I can't
20 categorically state that it's being done on the basis of
21 race only, but I can't help but wonder that race
22 oftentimes comes into play. What I mean by this is that
23 the officer under the rule states that the officer shall,
24 not may, but shall issue a citation to a person who is

1 subject to lawful arrest for misdemeanor unless it's
2 reasonably appears to the officer that the arrest is
3 necessary to prevent bodily harm or that it is necessary
4 to prevent further criminal activity or that there's a
5 substantial, a substantial likelihood that the person will
6 not appear on a citation. All right, last week, this is
7 last week, I go over to the jail to visit with lock ups
8 before they have to see the judge and in custody is a
9 young black man from Minneapolis and I look at the ticket
10 and the report and his driving record and he's in there on
11 a driving after revocation. That's the charge he's
12 arrested on. Now, he has nothing on his sheet that
13 indicates any prior failure to appear. He has nothing in
14 the report that indicates any aggressive or assaultive
15 type behavior towards the officers. He looked like a
16 gentleman, was taken into custody and hauled in and
17 knowing the case, no indication under that rule that he
18 should not have been issued a citation. And in the
19 problem I have with that now, maybe the officer decided
20 that there's a substantial likelihood that he's not going
21 to appear because he's from Minneapolis, but come on,
22 where do you draw the line there? If he's from Fergus
23 Falls, do you let him go or if he's from Hawley, a little
24 closer, do you let him go? As public defender, we're then

1 at the task of trying to go in front of a judge who is now
2 going to review that issue of conditions of release and
3 we're always working on the defense from the decisions
4 that's been made by an officer that arrest was necessary
5 and now the judge is being asked to overrule that. That
6 shouldn't take place in those kinds of situations. That
7 person should be given a ticket to come to court like
8 anyone else, unless there's some reason for it.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Perissey, do you have
10 either anecdotally or is there a possible way to determine
11 from data whether the likelihood of arrest versus citation
12 is at all related to race or national origin?

13 MR. PERISSEY; I don't. I mean I just -- I'm
14 not going to sit here and say that there's never been an
15 anglo whose come into court from outside of town and had
16 to be, you know, brought in on lock up. I'm not going to
17 say that hasn't happened, but generally, generally my
18 impression is that there's other reasons that either the
19 person was aggressive or that they have on their sheet
20 that they are suspended for failure to pay fines or
21 warrants have gone out for persons for failure to show in
22 the past; that type of thing. And I think generally
23 officers probably operate on that basis, but in this
24 particular case there was nothing there and that's not

1 the only one I've ever seen. And this isn't the only city
2 where something like that takes place because I've gone to
3 training seminars where defense attorneys have got up and
4 said, hey; look, you've got to fight, you got to argue
5 this thing and it's being done in Minnesota and it's being
6 done in St. Paul. But, it's indicative of a problem I
7 believe.

8 Another example or pretext stops.

9 Pretext stops are now decisions in Minnesota court of
10 appeals and supreme courts have basically upheld these
11 kind of stops where they don't have any -- some kind of
12 violation is committed and the officers is given a reason
13 to pull over, even if you can suggest that they were just
14 suggesting that as a pretext to try to get some further
15 investigation of criminal activity. It's probably going
16 to be upheld and so the officers are legally working
17 within the bounds of the law in making such stops. I'm
18 talking about stopping someone because their windows might
19 be tinted too dark and stopping someone because they have
20 something hanging from their rearview mirror which
21 technically there's a statute that says you can't do that.
22 But, you can go over to the Moorhead High School or you
23 can go over to the court house right now and do a survey
24 and you're going to find dozens of cars that have such

1 objects hanging from them. IN 18 years of practice, I
2 have never had an anglo coming into my office saying
3 they got stopped because they had something hanging from
4 their mirror, but I've had a case last year and I've had
5 numerous other cases. I had a case last year of a Native
6 American who was driving on Highway 10 from Moorhead
7 towards Detroit Lakes and the police were doing a check
8 here around Labor Day weekend and making stops. It was a
9 heavy DWI patrol. We knew that, they even publicized they
10 were going to do that. But this stop was made because
11 there was something hanging from the mirror and it just
12 happened that the car had Wyatt Earp license plates on it
13 and you can't tell me that didn't have something to do
14 with the decision. There was no other driving conviction
15 that was observed, no swaying, no going too fast, no
16 weaving within the lane, nothing. And what do I tell that
17 client that comes in and says to me, I think there's only
18 one reason I got stopped here because of my license
19 plates, not because of something hanging from the mirror.
20 It's a dream catcher hanging from his mirror for crying
21 out loud.

22 . Okay, in conclusion I guess I'd like to
23 tell you one other thing that's kind of personal to me. I
24 represented a hispanic client and several years ago he and

1 his family were headed out from Moorhead just leaving town
2 on Interstate 94 going down to a Viking Stand. They've
3 lived in this community longer than I have. Homeowners,
4 both of them work, good people. They get stopped for
5 speeding. He's not only asked to produce his license,
6 he's asked to produce proof of insurance. He's asked to
7 produce proof of registration. He's questioned about his
8 address and how long he'd lived there. Now, on first
9 glance you might say, well officer is being very thorough
10 and maybe that's all it was. I don't know, but I got
11 stopped on my way up to visit my folks up in Lake
12 Vermillion this weekend, very embarrassing. My eight year
13 old son is in the car with me and I was going a little too
14 fast and the officer was a true gentleman. I mean a very
15 nice and I tried to be nice to him, obviously, but I was
16 asked for my license. I was asked if I had any prior
17 records. I told him I had a speeding ticket back in the
18 80s and I'm sure he was confirming it back in his squad
19 car, but I stayed there for quite awhile. He didn't ask
20 me for proof of insurance, he didn't ask me for
21 registration, he didn't ask me for how long I had been
22 living at that address on the license. MY only thought
23 was when I was asked to come and talk here, I was thinking
24 about that incident. What if I had been a person of

1 color? What kind of questions would I have been asked?

2 So, that's all I have.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you very much. I
4 have allowed you to go past our time and I'm glad I did,
5 but now at some point we're going to have a price to pay
6 for that. Let's help me out a little bit. Questions are
7 appropriate now and I don't mean to cut anybody's
8 questions, questions are appropriate. If you think of the
9 questions you want to ask, by the way, before that just
10 thank you very, very much both of you for your
11 presentations.

12 MR. BANGSBERG: I have one quick one.

13 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Yes.

14 MR. BANGSBERG; You said Human Rights
15 Commission is advisory to the city council. Your
16 perception in the years that you've served on that that
17 Human Rights Commission, do you feel that you are being
18 heard or your recommendations that you make to either the
19 city council or to the Moorhead Public School District,
20 your interaction, do you feel that you're being heard with
21 sincerity or do you feel that they would rather not listen
22 or have you come and talk to them?

23 MR. HENDERSON: I think the school district
24 has responded very sincerely. I think the response from

1 the school district has been sincere. I think that I'm
2 realistic enough to know that if I go talk to someone, I'm
3 going to be one factor among many factors that they're
4 going to consider, but I think they've considered us and
5 I think the city council has also considered what we have
6 to say. The school board does not look at us as a
7 resource and I wouldn't expect them to because we're
8 different bodies, I would like to try to establish a more
9 of a relationship with the city council where we would be
10 regarded as a resource.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: To follow up on that, do
12 you receive any resources from the city other than the
13 \$4,000 you mentioned? That is, do you have any staff
14 which you call on?

15 MR. HENDERSON: There's a person who is in
16 full time staff person in the city economic development
17 office who is assigned as a liaison to work with the Human
18 Rights Commission. I don't know how many hours of her
19 month re devoted to Human Rights Commission activity and
20 we also we're able to use an intern that the city had this
21 year and he would say she probably spent about a 4th of
22 her time on Human Rights Commission activities. One of
23 the things we did this year was there's a replacement of a
24 number of administrators in the school district and so we

1 contacted a lot of community groups and gave information
2 and names to the school district about people that might
3 be useful as resources in the process of replacing those
4 administrators.

5 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: Were they used?

6 MR. HENDERSON: Yes, some of them were
7 contacted and that process is ongoing. I expect more will
8 be contacted.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Last question, Geraldine?

10 MS. KOZLOWSKI: I just had one question. In
11 your role as public defender, have you found or has it
12 been your perception that people of color who have gone
13 before the judge and white people have gotten different
14 sentences or have people of color gotten -- received
15 longer or more stiffer sentences?

16 MR. PERISSEY: Well, there was quite a study
17 that was done on the Racial Bias Task Force Committee and
18 a report was done and I testified on that and I think that
19 you know, there's so many factors that come into play. I
20 think statistics will show you that I mean just looking at
21 who is going into the prisons and not just in Minnesota,
22 but in other states across the nation and see that there's
23 a disproportionate number of people of color. Some of
24 that is socioeconomic in my opinion, I mean it just seems

1 to me that it all starts from the ground floor and goes
2 up. If you get charged with an offense and you don't have
3 sufficient monies to make bail, you oftentimes end up in
4 custody while your case is going on, which makes it more
5 difficult to defend your case, which makes it a
6 disadvantage as to what kind of position or offer you
7 might get. I'm sure that most prosecutors will tell you
8 that the kind of offers that they make on cases have
9 nothing to do with race, but you know, there's so many
10 variables that come into play, it's hard to, you know,
11 weed that out. I think that some people who are
12 economically disadvantaged have less options, less things
13 going for them, less -- it makes our job harder in trying
14 to make an argument why something other than prison should
15 be used. Doesn't mean you don't try, but now the
16 sentencing guidelines were designed to ferret that out and
17 to prevent that from happening, but you know the
18 guidelines are capable of manipulation. We all know that
19 it's been twenty years working with them, okay.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We do appreciate it very
21 much, both of you. Thank you.

22 Our next panel will be Sister Altendorf
23 of the Diocese of Moorhead and John Holden, Pastor of
24 Trinity Lutheran Church.

1 Sister, if we could call on you first
2 and if you would repeat your -- would you prefer to go
3 first Reverend Holden? Would you please give us your full
4 name and your affiliation?

5 JOHN HOLDEN

6 TRINITY LUTHERN CHURCH

7 John Holden from Trinity Lutheran
8 Church in Moorhead, Minnesota.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Are you a resident of
10 Moorhead?

11 MR. HOLDEN: Resident of Moorhead, but also we
12 represent the Moorhead Ministerial of Clergy and Lay
13 Professionals.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you for your
15 appearances.

16 MR. HOLDEN: And welcome to Moorhead. Thanks
17 for taking the trip up I 94 to visit us. It's nice to have
18 you here. I lived here for two and a half years, but went
19 to college here and have parents that have lived here for
20 nine years as well. So I know this area well. Before
21 coming here, I was a parish pastor on the east side of St.
22 Paul. As some of you might know, multi ethnic
23 neighborhood, blue collar neighborhood without any blue
24 collar jobs anymore and then this December of '96 went to

1 the inner city of Moorhead to Trinity Lutheran. Becky and
2 I have four kids from high school down to a pre schooler.
3 Race relations. Others have talked here yesterday and
4 today about the silence in this community. And if we peel
5 back that silence, we often hit a nerve. There's no doubt
6 about that. I just had moved here and was talking with
7 some of the parents, not as a paster, but as another
8 parent about upcoming summer activities for our children
9 and one place to go in the summer, a great place to go is
10 Romneky Park pool. Community pool. Well life guarded,
11 very nice and one mom said very clearly, I would never
12 take my kids there. It's just too dangerous. And this
13 mom wasn't talking about unprepared lifeguards. It was
14 definitely far of the neighborhood, fear of latinos, Native
15 Americans. And then two Sundays this spring at our church
16 we had an adult forum that we entitled what comes to mind
17 when you hear Romneky Park and instead of usual handful of
18 people, we got 40 to 50 people show up twice in a row at
19 our congregation at this little forum and all we did was
20 to go around the room and ask the question, what does come
21 to mind when you hear Romneky Park. And the number one
22 answer among the white folks was fear. I won't let my
23 daughter in high school drive down 20th Street by Romneky
24 Park when she's by herself. What if her car broke down?

1 I used to take my kids there, but not anymore. And we all
2 went and fear -- other things came up, but the number one
3 was fear. And then some latino folks that were there,
4 their number one answer was fear.

5 I'm scared to walk down the street in
6 that neighborhood because I might get stopped by the
7 police. She was talking about fighting, the description.
8 So, we have to deal with that. There are a number of
9 congregations in Moorhead and within each congregation
10 there are wonderful people who are deeply concerned about
11 race relations. But, we have to admit that there's not a
12 lot happening community wide in the religious community
13 and we have our work cut out for us, there's no doubt
14 about that. And I'm going to let Sister Sharon talk about
15 some of those things. I do want to leave you with my
16 hope; however, after your visit here and await your report
17 and we will get some more information in the coming weeks
18 as well, is that we hope this is a first step in breaking
19 the silence and the denial that happens in this community
20 and that we can move to work to dismantle racism in
21 Moorhead in the Red River Valley.

22 . CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Sister Sharon?

23

24

1 SISTER SHARON ALTENDORF

2 DIOCESE OF MOORHEAD

3 I'm Sister Sharon Altendorf. I was
4 born in the Red River Valley, this area, a little bit
5 north from here and then I spent about 14 years working as
6 a missionary in Peru and South America. And so when I
7 came back in 1993, I came with the idea it was a sabbatical
8 and returning and I was asked by the sisters in my
9 community to look around here first. They believed that
10 there was some work to be done. And so I've been here
11 working in the ministry that's good, the Guadalupe Project
12 for the last five years. Prior to my working in this,
13 there were three other latino people who worked in this
14 project, so it wasn't new with my beginning it. This is a
15 coordinated ministry of the three catholic parishes of
16 moorhead and Dillworth. We provide a welcoming outreach
17 leadership for pastoral, service, community buildings, and
18 integration activities to the latino population. That's
19 approximately 750 households during the school year. I'm
20 not talking about migrants so that's about 3,700 people
21 perhaps and during the agricultural months at least
22 another 500. I know yesterday I heard what the social
23 service report that maybe we'd be down to 240 individuals,
24 but that's the number that apply for welfare. That's a

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1 different count from those who actually do come and live
2 here. My work entails everything that has to do with
3 pastoral ministry from visiting with families in their
4 homes in the hospitals, prisons, ministry, jail ministry,
5 resource person for the communities since I work with the
6 largest group of latino people in the area. So much
7 advocacy work and many of the people who have already
8 spoken or who had yet speak are people with whom that I
9 work and I've been very involved in the community with
10 that, the very positive things that have happened and I
11 think I'm pleased for this experience here because
12 you're helping us to listen to each other and to hear how
13 far we've come and how much yet we have to do. About
14 three years ago as an ecumenical process with the cultural
15 diversity project at that time, we began what was called
16 the youth house or casa de la huventud (phonetic) and that
17 was to work with latino youth and from that I became
18 involved with some of the trouble that was mentioned in
19 the Moorhead school system. I don't think I'll repeat
20 that since many people have spoken about that. I'm not
21 really from the diocese of Moorhead. The diocese is
22 Crookston and my ministry Guadalupe Project is Moorhead
23 and the metropolitan area. They do not bother if I cross
24 the boarders into Fargo or West Fargo. That's fine.

1 There are many things that we could use as background for
2 this. The greater metropolitan Fargo/Moorhead,
3 Moorhead/Fargo area is has become, I'd say worse in their
4 image and acceptance of hispanics or latinos. This
5 process, as you heard, they're coming to this area, began
6 over 80 years ago, but today if they are seen the
7 perception and the word used still say they are the
8 migrants or the people on welfare, the youth gangs they're
9 into drugs. When I said something about the media, that's
10 a typical concern for me and that's why I brought these
11 two albums. These are this year's clippings of what I
12 would say from Fargo Forum and area newspaper really the
13 media I can't quite catch all the time because I don't
14 have my tape recorder on the t.v. stations, but I do have
15 some of that stuff, too, if that would be of any help in
16 the future, too, but I have individuals to keep track of
17 it. It was a way of letting off steam when I first came
18 back here and realized the difference of culture again
19 from living in another culture and coming back to see your
20 own, you begin with another investigation and I was so
21 angry that I had to find some way to let it go and I've
22 written a good number of letters to the editor and
23 continue to do that and have been involved in at least
24 capturing some of these incidents. As churches we do

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1 studies for the long range planning attitude of our area
2 and we've come to recognize the need of this way. When
3 St. Francis Church was built two years ago, they built an
4 additional office for staff for latino work. We have
5 ongoing educational courses on diversity for our
6 leadership and membership and social justice and social
7 concerns committees. So we are working on it. We do have
8 bilingual liturgies. We do have a mass in spanish every
9 Sunday at St. Francis Church for the local area. My
10 concerns also go on a day to day basis as I see, for
11 example, the inability of latinos to get a job. Recently
12 a local t.v. reporter had a story on the large number of
13 available jobs and no one to fill them. That same day our
14 church received a flyer from job services in Fargo
15 pleading for jobs for those who lost their jobs at Federal
16 Beef. Also, that same day I spoke with two latino
17 families representing six workers who for over two weeks
18 had put in applications at every place they saw now hiring
19 signs and had not received one call back. And they
20 questioned why. They said racism. The area of education
21 and won't say that, again, you've heard quite a number of
22 people, but in the alternative program, 80 percent are
23 minorities that's just unacceptable. In my work with the
24 penal system, I'm also -- I also find the percentages of

1 latinos with plea bargaining and incarcerated
2 disproportionate. I asked a group recently since I do
3 prayer religion with the latinos every two weeks, I wish
4 I could do it more often, but I can't stretch. I've tried
5 to get a pastor. An evangelical pastor said he was
6 interested in it to take the other week, but we haven't
7 got that schedule yet. But what these people translated
8 I'm saying what they said to tell you that the laws of
9 sentencing are okay if they are practiced equally. They
10 need someone who understand their language and customs to
11 defend them. They said that the defense lawyers advise
12 them that they cannot get a fair trial here, even if they
13 are innocent, they need to accept a plea bargain or run
14 the risk of maximum sentence. And they also said judges,
15 police, prosecuting and defending attorneys are all part
16 of the same system; will not challenge each other to
17 defend them.

18 The concerns about housing is
19 important, too. And you've heard that a bit too the CDBG
20 funds and I think that maybe I'll leave that for the
21 people of PEP to continue to advise you about that.

22 On July 4th, 1998 Romneky Park,
23 Moorhead, Minnesota was put on CNN talking about the riot
24 here. Internal investigations were conducted to see how

1 the police acted. Nothing happened. It seems like it was
2 okay, but my point of view and others who live in that
3 area questions that. Why was there a need to send two
4 hundred police? Again, fear.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Wait a minute, two
6 hundred?

7 SISTER ALTENDORF: Police were sent.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I thought we heard the
9 department has only 50.

10 SISTER ALTENDORF: It wasn't just the Moorhead
11 police, they got everybody from all the surrounding areas
12 to come. There were two hundred. Fear is that emotion
13 that's there. I'm also on the Project Tomorrow Group
14 that you mentioned that visioning group that you heard
15 about and i'm on the Human Capital Committee and it said
16 one of the big goals that hey wanted to put forward was
17 that the people hear feel secure. I said what's that all
18 about? We don't have anything in this plan that says that
19 people have adequate food, clothes and shelter, but we
20 want them to feel secure? Maybe the explosion that
21 occurred that evening could have been the celebration of
22 our freedom instead of a civil war type experience. I
23 have many other experiential stories and I'll be glad to
24 share them with you if you're interested in anything

1 further. But, maybe I'll stop here.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I just have one short
3 question and then one comment. The books that you have
4 brought with you, these are newspaper clippings of what?

5 SISTER ALTENDORF: Mostly I'd say concerns for
6 people who are living in poverty, welfare, a whole lot
7 that has to do with race concerns.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: If we might just take a
9 look at it maybe at our break.

10 SISTER ALTENDORF; Sure.

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: The comment I want to
12 make this is probably more on my behalf, but on behalf of
13 the committee is just keep it up. It's only when good
14 people keep silent that racism discrimination finds
15 fertile ground.

16 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: Could you tell us a little
17 bit more about the Romneky Park riot. We haven't heard
18 anything about that.

19 SISTER ALTENDORF: I thought that's just --

20 MS. WIRTSCHAFTER: When did that happen and
21 what was the incident that occasioned the riot?

22 SISTER ALTENDORF: It was July 4th last year it
23 happened. It happened about 11:30 in the evening. I
24 should look and I can find it right here in the paper

1 again, too, to see what it says about it, but evidently
2 from the police report that there was some domestic
3 dispute. The police were initially called in for that and
4 then people responded against the police and so they
5 called for reenforcements. There was quite a lot of -- I
6 don't know, they just said there was damage to some police
7 cars. There was a bicycle thrown through a window of an
8 apartment building, but the place was completely surrounded
9 by police and slowly closed in until they got a few people
10 and some of those were arrested at this point.

11 MR. HOLDEN: This happened after Moorhead
12 State University's annual celebration, the 4th of July and
13 that evening, which is right in that same neighborhood.

14 SISTER ALTENDORF: They were in a celebrative
15 mood at that point, you could say, and then also perhaps
16 because of constant hostility and build up there's my
17 theory now of what was going on that it just exploded.

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Morrow?

19 MR. MORROW: The public defender earlier
20 touched on the matter of white privilege are there, I know
21 our fact finding mention, but my questions don't often
22 mirror those questions. Are there examples of white
23 privilege that are disturbing to the minority community in
24 Moorhead?

1 MS. ALTENDORF: Many, many. Where do you want
2 to start? I think people have been telling you these
3 kinds of things, yes. One thing that I just even picked
4 up, I thought there was -- this is an interview that was
5 done with youth in the area and think we are talking about
6 race, the bottom line here, they asked students have
7 difficult areas, do you think your generation is less
8 racist than your parents. It's interesting to me that
9 from Fergus Falls they thought that it has changed and
10 Kindred was difficult, but Fargo and Moorhead is an almost
11 the same thing, a young girl and a young boy. I think
12 it's just the same because I still see white people
13 steer away from minorities when they're walking or the
14 other one I think it's the same because some families
15 still teach it. If someone has a wired hair, do they get
16 dirty looks? Now, the people here have to be extremely
17 creative to live. I'm thinking of the example of one
18 woman who told me that she was walking through the grocery
19 store with her two sons, the younger one said, mommy, why
20 is it that everybody is looking at us? And she said,
21 because we have such beautiful hair.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Jeff, go ahead?

23 MR. WEINBLATT: Very quickly. This perception
24 of not being able to -- the dominant white community, not

1 to go to the Moorhead Public School how long has that been
2 going on and is that not the pool that was just renovated
3 as well is that on 20th Street.

4 MR. HOLDEN: Right behind Moorhead State.

5 MR. BANGSBERG: Can you tell me a little bit
6 more about that?

7 MR. HOLDEN: I think it has something to do
8 with the Mistucky Romneky Program and that's the adult
9 forum what comes to mind when you hear Romneky Park, with
10 Romneky Park, through media, through personal stories,
11 through whatever. There is a fear that goes through
12 people's mind and heard when they hear Romneky park and so
13 it's anything associated with that, whether it's housing,
14 whether it's as a church community, we've tried to do some
15 summer camp experiences at Romneky with the folks that
16 live there and also with the white folks that don't.
17 We've tried to do some things at the same time. You'll
18 hear things like it's the most densely populated place in
19 Moorhead and the next breath is it's got the highest crime
20 rate. Well, to me that makes sense, doesn't it? Where
21 there's more people the crime rate is going to be higher.
22 So, I've yet to figure out and find out whether that
23 percentage is true or not comparing apples to apples at the
24 same time. The community police effort is and block clubs

1 is to call the police whenever you hear anything, whenever
2 anything is the matter and so while then this same
3 community that is being asked to call the police more and
4 so then at the same time they get branded as the most
5 police calls. And so you can see how the catch 22.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Is this a park literally
7 a park?

8 MR. HOLDEN: There's a wonderful park, a
9 neighborhood center and --

10 MR. BANGSBERG: It's the only major outdoor
11 pool too, right?

12 MR. HOLDEN: Yes.

13 MR. BANGSBERG: And what surprises me you
14 cannot go swimming in the winter and there are no lakes
15 around in this community.

16 MR. HOLDEN: There's wading pools around
17 Moorhead, but not a pool, not one that you can dive in.
18 Yes, that's the only public pool and I used to go there
19 when I was a little kid and now I've been told stories
20 that families will not allow their children to frequent
21 this pool because of the minorities. That's one I heard
22 the first year I was here.

23 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: It's all year.

24 MR. HOLDEN: Yes, it's also a neighborhood.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you both very, very
2 much.

3 MR. HOLDEN: We have some letters from
4 congregations and we are sending some more, too.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We will take a five
6 minute stretch break and then our next two participants
7 will be Melinda Hansen of Legal Service Northwest
8 Minnesota and Duke Schem, the Director of People Escaping
9 Poverty.

10 (A brief recess was taken.)

11 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: If you would please give
12 your name and address and affiliation for our record?

13 MR. SCHEM: My name is Duke Schem and I live
14 1517 Fourth Avenue South in Moorhead.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And you have with you?

16 MR. SCHEM: Lisa Diagos.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Ms. Diagos, your address?

18 MS. DIAGOS: 515 1/2 30th Avenue here in
19 Moorhead and -- 515 1/2 30th Avenue South Apartment 19 in
20 Moorhead. I'm with People Against Poverty Project.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Unless the two of you
22 have decided otherwise, I would ask if Ms. Hansen would go
23 first.

24 MS. HANSEN: Actually we discussed it, so I

1 tend to be long winded, so I'm going to let Duke go first.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Mr. Schem, go ahead. I
3 do have a hand out.

4 Thank you. Perhaps you can give us a
5 five minute initial presentation or maybe a little bit
6 more because there's two of you and then leave some time
7 for questions.

8 DUKE SCHEM

9 Okay. My name is Duke Schem and I'm
10 originally from Miner, North Dakota and moved here in
11 1977, so I've been a resident of the community for over 22
12 years. I've been director of People Escaping Poverty
13 Project since 1991. I volunteered from 1987 to 1990 and
14 it has existed since 1986 and we are a non profit
15 organization that provides leadership development and
16 community organizing for people with low incomes and we've
17 been active in the Romneky neighborhood since 1993. We
18 have also been monitoring the city's CDBG community
19 development block grand fund activities since 1995. And
20 much of our testimony is going to center today on CDBG as
21 well as Lisa Diagos is going to speak about her experience
22 working for the park district.

23 CDBG, known as Community Development

24 Block Grant fund, it's a yearly entitlement and I did take

1 some attachments from this annual performance report that
2 you have in front of you that go into more detail and
3 basically I wanted to illustrate or we wanted to
4 illustrate the past three years with the funding that they
5 received, close to half a million dollars in entitlements.
6 They don't send all their money and they carry over money
7 to the next year and they also earn money on the money
8 that they have. So, they have at their disposal over \$1.5
9 -- from \$1.3 to \$1.6 million per year to spend for
10 community development block grant activities. We've been
11 very concerned over the years because with the lack of
12 public accountability for these funds. We feel and we
13 also know that how to structure these funds to have public
14 input, meaningful public input from the people. These
15 funds are supposed to serve and what we find when we look
16 through the annual performance report is that many times
17 community people of color are illustrated in reporting yet
18 if you resource actually together those communities, we've
19 heard talk from the mayor and from Bruce Anderson and from
20 other people about block clubs. And we have this image
21 that's been displayed to you as a Commission that these
22 neighborhoods have block clubs and they're calling the
23 police and doing crime reduction activities when, in
24 fact, those neighborhoods are really not involved in the

1 block club activity. We think that from personal
2 experience trying to start block clubs before the city was
3 actually trying to start block clubs. They were very
4 difficult to maintain in neighborhoods who had people
5 coming in and out. And another things that the CDBG funds
6 go to a variety of activities and what we wanted to say in
7 here is that the majority of it actually goes to single
8 family owner occupied rehab projects, which means that him
9 who own their home can get zero percent loans on fixing up
10 their homes. In the past, near 1996 there were 22 loans
11 made. They were all made to white non hispanic and there
12 was \$370 thousand allocated for that program that year.
13 In '97 there were 23 loans made and 22 were to white non
14 hispanic families and one loan to a hispanic family and
15 during that year there was \$328 thousand allocated for
16 that program. In 1998 there were 21 loans issued under
17 the program. They're all issued to white non hispanic
18 families. And that was \$3906 thousand was allocated for
19 that program that year. That's the majority program for
20 CDBG funds going to mainly benefit white households. Now,
21 the other, within the report that's a lot of talk about
22 Greenwood Park, Romneky Park programs in these
23 neighborhoods, but when you look at the actual dollars
24 going to this neighborhood, they're much smaller than

1 what's going for the rehab. Also, the cultural diversity,
2 Minority Healthy Initiative have been mentioned a lot.
3 They actually receive \$10 - \$15 thousand yearly from the
4 CDBG, yet in the report they're highlighted as the biggest
5 success. So what our premise is that these programs that
6 actually don't get a lot of funding or a lot of attention
7 are used to bolster their reporting to show how much work
8 they're doing when actuality they're not putting the
9 resources into those community and I would like Lisa to
10 maybe talk about her experience of actually working in the
11 programs that are very successful, but very unfunded.
12 I'll let her share a little experience of hers working in
13 that neighborhood.

14 LISA DIAGOS

15 PEOPLE ESCAPING POVERTY PROJECT

16 In 1994 I was hired to work as a youth
17 coordinator in the Romneky Park area. And that park I was
18 in charge of coordinating summer recreational programs for
19 children from ages 3 to 12 years old and at some point I
20 worked with the older teenagers and with the families as
21 well. What I did there was pretty much try to from a
22 neighborhood that had already been stereotyped as a
23 dangerous park, a place where nobody should go and just a
24 place where you -- it's not a very welcoming place. From

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1 that time, from 1994 until the time I left in 1997, that
2 park was brought up to being a very nice visited park. It
3 was very visible. There was a lot of activities being
4 done. There was a lot more community organizations coming
5 in and putting everything -- everybody was working to try
6 to take away that stereotype that that neighborhood was
7 very bad.

8 In the middle of my working years with
9 the city, I worked with Greenwood Trailer park and this
10 was way before the Weed and Seed Project had come in.
11 There, too, it was a neighborhood that no attention was
12 being given to, there was no activities being done,
13 children were running in the streets, there was no
14 activities being done in that area. And from working with
15 those two parks from being like I mentioned, every time
16 and everywhere, everyone I'd be asked from that
17 neighborhood all they want is just the same privileges as
18 any other city park that exists here in Moorhead. They
19 want the same privileges. They want the same activities.
20 They want the attention, they don't want to always be the
21 bad neighborhood. I mean they're kids just like any
22 other kids in any other area park. All they want is the
23 same privileges and by working there at the beginning it
24 was nice. You know, there was a lot of money to help with

1 trying to get these kids into the same activities as every
2 other kid, but as the years went on, money was held back.
3 There was not much money to do any activities; from having
4 free and open to the public activities it became starting
5 to charge the same families. Well, you have to bring in
6 at least \$.50 or bring in a dollar for the neighborhood
7 park there, the municipal pool.

8 Most of the families exist in that
9 neighborhood is made up of five or six children. That's
10 just general from my opinion. There's not one family
11 there that can probably give out \$3 worth just for that
12 one afternoon activity and they, if we have another
13 activity going to the pool on that same week, it's another
14 \$3. When all these area parks, they've got more access to
15 money, they've got I mean they're able to -- and these
16 children are left out because of that same because of the
17 money is an issue. And towards the end I became very
18 discouraged and disappointed at the way the city would
19 handle their monies and just by the way I had to do my job
20 at the end because this is a city where recycling is very
21 important at one time, one of the staff people told me why
22 don't you pick up the paper cups from the group, rinse
23 them out, put them back on the table and they can be
24 reused. When there's money available for that. I tried

1 to coordinate a basketball tournament and because of
2 recycling, because of reusing they said, well, there's a
3 whole bunch of bowling trophies up on the shelf. Why
4 don't you use those for a basketball tournament, which
5 was, in my opinion, these families are always used to
6 hand me down items. They're already used to the, you
7 know, whatever is left. Why continue? I mean, from the
8 city why continue bringing -- using that attitude? From
9 that time on, I felt like i was just being used as a token
10 to make the city look like well, we've hired a hispanic
11 person, you know, let's throw her in and deal with the
12 people and as much as I could handle, as much as I could
13 deal with. But, the pressure from both the neighborhood
14 and the families and the city there was only so much I
15 could put up with, that's why I'm here today to speak on
16 my concerns.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. I think we'll
18 hold the questions until after Ms. Hansen has made a
19 presentation. Thank you.

20 MICHELLE HANSEN
21 LEGAL SERVICES, NORTHWEST MINNESOTA

22 Good morning, ladies and gentlemen of
23 the Committee, on behalf of Legal Services and myself, I'd
24 like to thank you for the opportunity to testify here

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1 today. Before i came to the hearings yesterday, it was my
2 intention to come here in my capacity as a lawyer and
3 prove to you that everything I want to tell you is true
4 with my reams of documentation, my files, that of media
5 reports, statements made by city officials, then I came
6 here yesterday and no offense to Peter, statistical
7 information perhaps as not the most persuasive and just
8 some anecdotal evidence. So, I went home after the
9 hearing, after making dinner for my family and I sat down
10 to write about a hypothetical client who I called John the
11 renter was a construction of all the complaints that I've
12 received from people about the programs and policies in
13 place in the City of Moorhead that have the effect of
14 discriminating in the housing field. But, then that grew
15 to nine or ten typewritten pages and then I came today and
16 I've heard testimony that just gives me more and more to
17 say. So, I'm tossing it all out of the window and I'm not
18 going to speak to you from a prepared statement. I'm
19 going to speak to you from my heart. I was raised north
20 of here in a farming community whose race relations
21 honestly made Moorhead enlightened. Statements like it was
22 common to hear an old car drive by, it's a spik mobile.
23 Statements like hey, maybe if you mess with one bean,
24 you're taking on the whole burrito. And I grew up with

1 that ingrained in my head. I'm a woman who has an ivy
2 league education and a collection of Stetson hats in my
3 closet and believe me it creates some very mixed feelings
4 because I don't exclude myself from the group of people
5 that I'm here today to complaint about. I'm part of that
6 group because the written record won't show anybody I'm
7 white, female, young professional and I was raised around
8 here. And so I'm familiar with the problems. You've
9 heard in Duke and Lisa's testimony about the inability to
10 make city officials listen and I think you'd be
11 hard-pressed to find one in government or in an agency who
12 would say that I've ever been incivil or less than
13 diplomatic in my dealings with them. But, I don't have
14 enough time today to be diplomatic, so I tend to be quite
15 frank and my dealings with officials here have been
16 equivalent to beating my head against a brick wall. When
17 the "riot" because it started as an incident, then it was
18 a riot and then I think it went to melee in the media.
19 We went in and the immediate reaction of the city
20 officials was that they were going to send in the
21 inspectors, rental housing inspectors to do another
22 massive inspection for code violations and my thoughts
23 were what for? Because the inspectors would tell you if
24 you asked them that they'd been in most of those buildings

1 in the past year. They had buildings in North Moorhead
2 that they thought were far worse than anything that's in
3 Romneky Park and they didn't see why they were being sent
4 back in, but they were going back in and the city was
5 going to use community development block grant money to
6 fund the inspection position and so it's that federal
7 money that's being used to selectively enforce building
8 codes in the Romneky Park neighborhood. We went to the
9 city officials, a group of representatives like myself.
10 We went to speak to them and raised the issue that perhaps
11 this proposed activity to show the public that we were not
12 going to let the ne'er do wells take over that
13 neighborhood. Ne'er do wells came up in the media a lot
14 and this was the first step in a carrot and stick approach
15 to compel landlords to participate in the city's voluntary
16 crime free multi housing program; quote from the media
17 emblazoned into my head and we proposed to them that
18 perhaps this was not only inadvisable, but a potential
19 civil rights issue and suddenly it wasn't a reaction, it
20 was a regularly scheduled inspection that former fire
21 chief said that in another one of our meetings and
22 eventually I got an annual performance review for CDBG
23 funds that one of my colleagues read and told me that they
24 had additional expenditure of funds for inspectors due to

1 increased inspections in Romneky Park. Inconsistent
2 information. And the lack of citizen input into the
3 entire process, Mr. Henderson addressed you this morning,
4 his Human Rights Commission -- well, our Human Rights
5 Commission adopted a resolution in February about this
6 Shade Tree Redevelopment proposal and again I'm required to
7 be brief, they urged the city council to develop
8 information about the availability of two versus three
9 bedroom apartments in the community; three bedrooms and
10 larger, a consistent need in this community is housing for
11 larger families. This proposal intends to demolish two
12 buildings, most of the units there are three bedrooms and
13 larger; larger families living there and convert them all
14 into two bedroom units. And the city's, you know, pledged
15 \$240 some thousand in community development block grant
16 monies for this proposal. And it will be a tax credit
17 financed building as well from the state aspect of it.
18 So, the council was urged to develop information about the
19 market demand which is something that they're supposed to
20 follow under the consolidated plan for use of those funds
21 anyway, both in terms of quality and quantity of units and
22 to delay any action. That information really wasn't
23 developed other than to say that the anecdotal evidence
24 that the staff had gathered was that there's lower vacancy

1 rate for three bedrooms and larger units and there was even
2 no way to get around that, and more two bedrooms were
3 standing vacant. But that resolution of the Human Rights
4 Commission was technically submitted before the opening of
5 the public comment period under the federal regulations
6 and that resolution was not submitted to HUD along with
7 the city's application for an amendment to it's plan. And
8 I just find that significant. I referred back to it in my
9 comments, which were included, but the resolution itself
10 was not included in the submission to HUD.

11 So, I have five central points
12 essentially that I promised myself I would make here today
13 and you can consider me fair game for questions. On
14 Romneky Park riots, the Moorhead Human Rights Commission,
15 because I attended those meetings, anything relating to
16 housing, community development block grants, I'd be happy
17 to share my stories with you, but what I wanted to say is
18 yesterday Mayor Lanning came before you and he said that
19 the City of Moorhead in this community in general is
20 generally embracing diversity and a relatively low
21 incidence of hate crimes and overt discrimination and I
22 sat and I said oh, that's misleading because we don't
23 know, you know, because maybe people just aren't reporting
24 it, you know, and then I thought to myself, maybe it's

1 really telling because my experience practicing law in the
 2 housing arena here is that the most insidious housing
 3 discrimination is a systemic problem and the denial that
 4 everyone is talking about in this community carries over
 5 in that I'm dealing with programs that have facially
 6 neutral in not commendable goals. We want to make sure we
 7 have higher quality housing. We want to reduce crime in
 8 our community. Right, we want to give disadvantaged youth
 9 better programs, okay. But, they're operating in a
 10 fashion that's actually hurting. In many situations the
 11 people that they're supposed to help and no one wants to
 12 address that. That the operation of the systems is a
 13 problem. Okay, and somewhat I see here is that housing
 14 discrimination is a systemic problem and there's no way to
 15 understand it without looking at all of the complaints
 16 that you've received here, starting with the belief by
 17 minority people that criminal laws are more selectively
 18 enforced against them. The whole issue of pretext stops
 19 that Joel Perissey brought up with you today. Because
 20 what happens, you've also heard about criminal background
 21 checks and Jerry Weinblatt, you talked about convictions
 22 for felonies and that's not what we're dealing with in the
 23 City of Moorhead when we're dealing with criminal
 24 background checks. The records that are released about

1 you are every time your name has been mentioned to the
2 police department. Someone's accused of something,
3 whether or not you ever knew about it, whether or not it's
4 ever been investigated, charged, arrested doesn't matter,
5 every time your name is been mentioned, your landlord
6 finds out about it -- potential landlord finds out about
7 it. And it really isn't any due process for you to come
8 in and clear your good name. And so if we have minority
9 people being subjected to more selective enforcement of
10 the laws or pretext stops, then presumably their records
11 are going to be longer, okay, harder for them to find
12 housing in the community. And I think it's significant to
13 note that these programs I'm addressing apply only to
14 renters. Renters disproportionately are very low income
15 and low income families and according to the city's
16 demographic information, it's consolidated plan, minority
17 members are disproportionately represented in very low
18 income groups. So, if renters are very low income and
19 very low income are disproportionately minorities, rules
20 that affect only minorities doesn't seem to me takes too
21 great a leap to see that there might be a disparate impact
22 of minority members of our community.

23 And what is perhaps most disturbing to
24 me is the consistent lack of accountability and I hate to

1 say I don't mean to degrade or defame, I mean those are the
2 two words, catch words, but the complete failure to take
3 any responsibility.

4 I heard it here today, it's up to the
5 landlords to develop the screening criteria. It's up to
6 the landlords to comply with the fair housing laws, and you
7 know, we give them this information and we train them on
8 how to use it, but after we do that, it's up to them on
9 what they're going to do. And so here and elsewhere in
10 Minnesota, because I'm coordinated with other legal
11 services offices in Minnesota, the growing concern is that
12 these kinds of rules we also have. Three strike letters
13 to evict people. I've had horror stories of tenants.
14 I've had landlords call me because claiming that they've
15 received phone calls from police department employees to
16 just to, you know, raise their concerns that they might be
17 renting to so and so and so and so who is affiliated with
18 so and so and the landlord is calling me to tell me in a
19 sense of outrage, huge problem. And I guess those are the
20 main points that I wanted to raise here today. I wanted
21 to kind of drive home the issue that all of these things
22 are working together in a way that facially none of these
23 programs were supposed to produce.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Thank all

1 three of you.

2 I just have one question to start with
3 Ms. Hansen. We were told that there's no fair housing
4 ordinance in Moorhead, but only the general human rights
5 ordinance. In your experience, does that have any
6 criminal enforcement portion of it and b; is it enforced
7 at all?

8 MS. HANSEN: The only ordinance that I'm aware
9 of is the ordinance that created the Commission itself and
10 the other laws that are going to apply in housing
11 discrimination process are the federal and state laws and
12 they're not criminal laws, they're civil remedies. People
13 can pursue complaint procedures through the State
14 Department of Human Rights or the federal Department of
15 Housing and Urban Development. It's an incredibly
16 lengthy process and many people just don't follow through
17 on it.

18 What -- several other points that I
19 wanted to raise is that we had -- our organization did
20 receive a grant from the State Department of Human Rights
21 to do a project very near and dear to my heart called
22 Focus on Fairness and we're implementing it in the two
23 counties in northwest Minnesota that we serve. In the
24 program and maybe i'll just read to you from our little

1 brochure introducing the program, "Aim to increase public
2 awareness to recognize, prevent and eliminate housing
3 discrimination by coordinating community seminars or to --
4 and designed for landlords, tenants, community service
5 providers, organizations, government representatives and
6 attorneys" and I know yesterday there was testimony from
7 Yoke-Sim of the Cultural Diversity Project that there was
8 a need for more education of landlords on housing
9 discrimination issues and that their organization had not
10 been invited to participate in this and I can only tell
11 you that that's not accurate information.

12 In late April I sent a letter of
13 invitation to a general mailing list and they were at the
14 top of it, inviting people to attend organizational
15 meetings to plan these kinds of seminars here in the City
16 of Moorhead and it didn't go to Yok-Sim directly, but it
17 went to another employee who provides housing services.
18 She responded that she would be there and she's chosen to
19 be on a committee that is going to coordinate forum for
20 service providers, not the general committee on education
21 forums open to the landlords. And I wanted to point that
22 out to you. I think it's significant misinformation. And
23 another significant factor, Abner Arauza was here
24 yesterday and he spoke to you about his show, his radio

1 show that's on weekly and I was at a Human Rights
2 Commission meeting in April. I believe I have the minutes
3 in my binder behind me because I have, like I said, reams
4 of paper and he was there because if memory serves, the
5 station was -- the stations were being taken over by a new
6 corporate entity of some sort who was threatening to take
7 the show off the air because they wanted shows that would
8 appeal to a larger audience and he was there seeking the
9 Commission's support. He had distributed petitions on
10 campus in support of his program to show that and he had
11 information that showed that minority population was
12 bigger than they suspected, but also that it wasn't just
13 the minority population that was interested in listening
14 to his show and I didn't hear that brought out in his
15 testimony yesterday. And I do think it's a very
16 significant fact.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. One more
18 thing, and then I will throw it to the members of the
19 Committee. Ms. Diagos, you are a former city employee.
20 You are involved with the community at the grassiest root
21 level and how long have you lived in Moorhead?

22 MS. DIAGOS: I first moved to Moorhead in 1992
23 and i've been a resident. Since then I began working in
24 sugar beet and from there I was offered a job in the

1 City of Moorhead and from there my involvement through my
2 struggles I turned to People Escaping Poverty since 1994
3 and since then I've been very active.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT; How are you perceived or
5 what is the impression you have of how the community of
6 Moorhead views you individually; young hispanic woman,
7 when you walk down the street?

8 MS. DIAGOS: It's a numb feeling. It's like
9 if I'm non existent. It's not very welcoming. Once you
10 get recognized in the community there is, you do climb the
11 ladder, but there's different people in the community to
12 try to bring you down and there's much more pressures
13 because you're not seen -- once you advance in this
14 community, you're no longer welcomed in the community you
15 came rom. So, you're like in between. You don't belong
16 here, you don't belong there. Where do you belong? Where
17 do you fit in? Where are you welcome? Where are you not?
18 So, it's a constant struggle trying to prove tot he
19 community that you're worthy, that you're not one of those
20 people that are just out there to make trouble. That
21 you're not one of those statistics that is, I'm just going
22 to become a greater number of you're just trying to do
23 what you have to do to survive and that's the constant
24 feeling here; that you're just take it day by day and it's

1 a struggle everyday to have to prove yourself constantly
2 that you're able to do something, but to be able to get
3 the trust is a bigger factor.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Members of the Committee?

5 MS. ORWOLL: Can I go right back on what she
6 said there about not welcome in the community you came
7 from? You don't fit there and you don't fit -- tell us a
8 little more about that.

9 MS. DIAGOS: When I first came into the
10 community, I came as a low income person, not educated,
11 not involved, not non existent. Once I became educated,
12 once I became involved, people in the neighborhood that I
13 came from did not see me in the same way. It' may be they
14 may be some people that looked up to me, b̄ut there's the
15 same people they don't know whether to trust you or not
16 because they've already been hurt by the system. They've
17 already been betrayed and they've already been hit and
18 what can they expect from somebody like me that's already
19 become educated, that's already -- knows the ways of how
20 it works around here. What can they expect o somebody
21 like me? It's the feeling that well should we trust that
22 person? Should we not trust that person. And then on th
23 other side of it, here's a community where I'm trying to
24 constantly to try to fit in top try to fit myself into

1 where there's in representation and still that feeling
2 should we trust that person what can we expect from a
3 person. So, it's a constant struggle trying to fit in in
4 both areas.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Jeff?

6 MR. BANGSBERG: Yes. Melinda, i was trying to
7 track some of the things that you were indicating you were
8 kind of inferring with the landlord and one thing that I
9 was trying to draw a conclusion of and I couldn't quite
10 understand it is, were you insinuating or saying that
11 there's something going on under the table with landlords
12 and the police department in the area of discrimination or
13 where were you going with some of the remarks? You
14 indicated about landlords and the inspections and things
15 of that sort. Can you tell me what the bottom line of
16 some of that stuff was?

17 MS. HANSEN: I guess I'm not sure off the top
18 of my head, which because I wasn't speaking from
19 my prepared statement.

20 MR. BANGSBERG: Some of the remarks I was
21 trying to interpret and to write down had to do with some
22 of the issues of dealing with landlords and how landlords
23 also this issue about converting some of the houses, three
24 bedroom to two bedrooms and I was hearing that the

1 inspections that were going on may not be necessary, but
2 it was one way to get CDBG money in there to start doing
3 some renovations or something?

4 MS. HANSEN: That portion of the story it kind
5 of needs to be looked at in sequential events. You heard
6 a little bit about the July 4th, 1998 incident. I did
7 site the trial of two of the people who created the
8 disturbance with the police department and listened to the
9 testimony there, but basically what you had was a
10 situation, we had a crowd of people after the fireworks
11 and the police department I think were four officers that
12 chased these two men into the crowd and some allegations
13 of police brutality and the people were standing around
14 watching and this was written up as a riot and, you know,
15 I've had conversations with different people in the city
16 government said, now it seemed to them like most people
17 were just kind of standing around watching and the week
18 following that article came out in the newspapers that the
19 City was vowing to crack down on code violations in the
20 Romneky Park neighborhood, vowing not to give that
21 neighborhood up to the ne'er do wells, okay, and viewing
22 the, what I call a code sweep of an area that's
23 traditionally viewed as a minority neighborhood as the
24 first step in a process to compel landlords not already

1 participating in the crime free housing program to jump on
2 board and carrot and stick approach to compel landlords to
3 participate in the city's volunteer crime free multi
4 housing program. Okay, and the inspectors as a general
5 matter, the rental inspection program when it operated in
6 low income neighborhoods like Romneky Park, it funded with
7 these community development block grant dollars, okay, so
8 when they went in there and did this code sweep, they did
9 it using federal funds. Shortly thereafter, when we met
10 with city officials to discuss this situation, we
11 suggested to them that, you know, we should have a cooling
12 off period during which time they should give notices to
13 the tenants whose apartments are going to be inspected in
14 multiple languages calling on the resources in their
15 cultural diversity project because tenants do have a right
16 to privacy in Minnesota as well as homeowners do and then
17 the next thing I knew now we're initially this was
18 admittedly a response, a reaction to the riot, then the
19 fire chief at the time was at another meeting saying no,
20 these are just our regularly scheduled inspections because
21 it's part -- all rentals have to be registered with the
22 City of Moorhead in order for them to be legally rented
23 out to the public and so the city has the right to inspect
24 and they do so and I think the average two or three years

1 -- it take two or three years to get around to all of them
2 and so we were told that these were already scheduled and
3 normal and then just a few weeks ago we requested the
4 annual performance reviews sent to HUD about the use of
5 the CDBG monies and my colleague read the report and told
6 me that it said that they had increased expenditures in
7 Romneky due to increased inspection in that year.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I want to also give you
9 the opportunity, in fact, you indicated you had also
10 prepared remarks if you would be willing to give those to
11 Peter, we would very much like to read those and put those
12 into the record.

13 MS. HANSEN: Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Secondly, just before you
15 leave, I do want to get a little information about what we
16 heard this morning regarding the kind of information that
17 a landlord can get from the police department and then the
18 information that Ms. Hansen has that it's far broader than
19 just any felony convictions. So, would you please make
20 that inquiry, Peter?

21 Please accept our appreciation and
22 thanks for your presentations and thank you again.

23 Jill Danielson and Johnny Alisa
24 Rodriguez is here and did you have a third person?

1 First of all, let me thank you all for
2 coming and again, just before each of you who are going to
3 speak, if you would give your full name and address for
4 our record.

5 Ms. Danielson, I'm going to call on you
6 first and ask if you would explain a little bit about the
7 organization and tell us who you have with you today.

8 JILL DANIELSON

9 Okay. Our organization is Mojeda Sonida
10 (phonetic) and it began ten years ago. This is our tenth
11 anniversary this summer and it's a non profit, it's a
12 combination. We have a board of directors and staff
13 members here today. We have Paula Stransel who is the
14 housing advocate, Rachel Ebatai (phonetic), former board
15 member, Vicky Ortiz, current board member, Alisa Rodriguez
16 who is our housing and outreach person and I'm the
17 director and I do some of the education advocacy work with
18 the organization. And I think Alisa would like to stat.
19 She does have another appointment.

20 ALISA RODRIGUEZ

21 My name is Alisa Rodriguez, I'm with
22 Mojeda Sonida. I'm just going to tell you a personal
23 story that happened to me. If you're aware of this three
24 strike rule that the landlord and tenant had. I had a

1 problem with it.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Tell us a little bit
3 about it because I for one am not familiar with it.

4 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. It's a city ordinance
5 that Moorhead has passed if the police are called to your
6 apartment, the police sends a report to the landlord and
7 then the landlord sends you a letter to vacate or they
8 give you a warning of some sort. Okay, this happened last
9 year. I'm a survivor of domestic abuse and I called the
10 police one evening. I called them on my husband and only
11 to find that the next day and the property sent me a
12 notice to vacate and I felt I was being victimized twice
13 because here I'm calling for my protection and then they
14 go around and sent me this letter from -- the police
15 department sent the landlord a letter of the call and then
16 they sent me a letter that I need to vacate because they
17 were present. I felt victimized there twice and I feel
18 that something has to be done about that, especially women
19 and domestic violence don't have a choice. It's going to
20 be your life. So, you know, your life, calling the police.
21 And I feel that we need to do something about this
22 ordinance.. These letters are still being sent to the
23 tenant. I have heard that they weren't, but they are. I
24 have talked with several people and they still are sending

1 these letters. Another thing--

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Is this a requirement
3 that the landlord give a notice to vacate if you receive
4 three or more?

5 MS. DANIELSON: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: So, the landlord has no
7 choice about it.

8 MS. DANIELSON: They do in domestic violence,
9 it's again state law. Nancy Tarlson was speaking this
10 morning regarding the ordinance itself. The ordinance
11 that's being utilized to victimize the victims of
12 domestic violence.

13 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

14 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Another thing here I'm seeing
15 that the police department is my safety and then as they
16 go over there that evening, I was degraded. I felt like
17 it was my fault because the police officer, you know, how
18 could you let him in/ But they're not seeing the
19 perspective of the victim; how emotional she is, how the
20 changes she has to go through in the decision she has to
21 make. And then prior to that I felt such a bias with the
22 local police because prior to that three months ago I was
23 the manager of that complex and I called on a couple above
24 me because they had the same dispute and being a victim, I

1 felt she needed the help. So, I called the police and all
2 they go and do is talk to him and tell the couple to
3 kiss and make up. A very biased on my side now because
4 after that, you know, I thought they were going to do the
5 same thing before the mediator and stuff and solve my
6 problem and I see that they are being judgmental here
7 because I'm a minority, and the caucasian people, you
8 know, they didn't have a letter. They didn't receive a
9 letter because I was the manager there at that building
10 and they never got a letter from the landlord. So, my
11 perspective is changing when I see these things happening
12 and I hope something can be done here in the community
13 about that. The systemic part, you know, there's a lot of
14 bias and we need to do something about that.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: In both your capacities,
16 when you were the manager and then when you were the
17 victim, what was the gender of the police person who came
18 and interviewed you?

19 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Male.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: In both the same thing in
21 the other?

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, both males, two male
23 officers.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And I think we heard

1 today that there are no latino or Mexican American police
2 officers.

3 MS. RODRIGUEZ: No, there aren't, not that I'm
4 aware of.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Any specific questions,
6 otherwise, well thank you for your appearance and your
7 testimony. You're free to go to your other appointment.

8 VICKY ORTIZ

9 My name is Vicky Ortiz, 3318 19th
10 Street South, Moorhead, and I've been here seven years and
11 the seven years that I've been here seems to much
12 discrimination with my daughter and my son and especially
13 with the police, dealing with the police. Last year my
14 son got stopped and had to have a breathalyzer. He was
15 only 10 years old, 10 or 11 -- going on 11 years old.

16 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Stopped in what way?

17 MS. ORTIZ: Because they lit fireworks and we
18 didn't know it was against the law.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: He was not in a car?

20 MS. ORTIZ: No, he was walking and that was
21 around maybe 10:00 o'clock or 9:00 o'clock and the officer
22 got him and stopped him and asked him if he was drinking
23 and he says no, I don't drink. So she did a breathalyzer
24 on him without my being there, an adult or anything and

1 then took him home and the only thing she did was I went
2 looking for her because I thought it was wrong and she
3 just said that she could do that. And I don't know if
4 it's right or wrong because they don't cooperate and then
5 the -- during the winter I got my truck stolen, so I went
6 back into the police because they found it and I asked him
7 what are you guys going to do about my truck? Are you
8 guys going to do something? Are you guys going to take
9 fingerprints and she said ma'am, this is not cops. We
10 don't do that because they just laughed at me because I
11 wanted to do something about it. They don't listen to us,
12 you know. And I'm also, you know, tired of going to stops
13 and being stared at and followed all the time. My
14 daughter, my son, we can't go to a store and, you know,
15 just shop because they always following us, no matter. I
16 have two places that I'm always calling them and telling
17 they, why do you follow us?

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: What kind of places are
19 they, ma'am?

20 MS. ORTIZ: Sears, Sun mart, Herbergers, stuff
21 like that. They follow my daughter. About a month ago
22 they started the minute we went inside the store, until we
23 finished shipping and --

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: They being employees of

1 those stores?

2 MS. ORTIZ: Yes, the employees, yes, the
3 employees.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: In either one of the
5 experiences you had either with your ten year old or
6 your--

7 MS. ORTIZ: Seventeen year old.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay. Did you complain
9 to the police department about the treatment that you or
10 your child received?

11 MS. ORTIZ: I did about my son, yeah, about
12 what they did and they did nothing about it. I did in the
13 stores I have also gone -- I was asking can I see your
14 manager and they don't do nothing about it either. They
15 say they going to walk to them and that's it, but that's
16 it. And it just keeps happening and happening all the
17 time as we go somewhere.

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

19 MS. ORWOLL: Can I ask about the truck,
20 though, I wasn't clear were you in a regular police
21 department about your truck?

22 MS. ORTIZ: Yes. Here in Moorhead or --

23 MS. ORWOLL: They weren't going to try to find
24 out about your truck?

1 MS. ORTIZ: No, until now they haven't done
2 nothing about it. It's been already a year. They found
3 it in Fargo, but they weren't interested, you know.

4 MS. ORWOLL: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Again your name and
6 address.

7 RACHEL ARROYO

8 My name is Rachel Arroyo, I live 2
9 Fifth Street Northwest Apartment 102, Dillworth,
10 Minnesota. And my reason for being here is just to kind
11 of say, you know, that all this people say and have heard
12 up to now a lot of it is true. I myself have gone through
13 the stores. I've been followed. They either see me
14 standing there to pay something and they'll take the next
15 person rather than me and I've experienced a lot of
16 things. Five minutes wouldn't be enough time for me to be
17 able to tell you everything that's happened to me. But, I
18 had a pretty bad encounter last year about it was June, I
19 think, July 11th my grand daughter was abducted from her
20 trailer house. She was missing from 6:00 in the evening
21 until about 2:00 in the morning. Well, they had a lot of
22 police were here. It was the most extensive search for a
23 child that they quoted telling me this but for some reason
24 my granddaughter turned up safe. I don't know how she

1 went past the police at the park, if they had the trailer
2 park all surrounded and everything and they didn't
3 question how she had gotten there to my son's mobile home
4 or anything, but rather my son took the child into the
5 police department in Dillworth. They took the child out to
6 the back and they questioned her. They were questioned
7 her if her grandfather did drugs, if her dad hit her
8 mother, things like this. A lot of things. And they
9 couldn't let my son back there to be with her at all. She
10 wasn't taken for medical attention or anything right off
11 and it turned out, you know, that they said that
12 originally she was hiding, that she had been hiding behind
13 a shed or something for nearly 12 hours which was not
14 true. Up to now we don't know the child says that she was
15 abducted. She was taken and she won't say anything else
16 because she's scared nobody believes her. So, we've left
17 it at that. That's one of the incidents. And then I feel
18 that a lot of hispanics here do have problems in a lot of
19 ways, but a lot of them tend not to come up and speak
20 because of the reason of being retaliated against. Now a
21 lot of them have trouble with police or social services or
22 something and they feel that if they come up and say
23 something and they won't be helped or someday they might
24 be punished or some privilege just taken away from them.

1 And I'm glad you're here to listen to us for a lot of
2 things that have really gone on.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you.

4 PAULA STROM SELL

5 My name is Paula Strom-Sell,
6 S-t-r-o-m-S-e-l-l and I live in Fargo, but I lived in
7 Moorhead before and I went to MSU I have one Amerasian
8 child. I do housing enforcement. I've done HUD testing
9 for fair housing enforcement. I've done random testing in
10 the Fargo/Moorhead area two years ago and the results were
11 87 percent of the time Native Americans were denied
12 housing, 83 percent of the time Hispanics were denied
13 housing, 50 percent of the time blacks were denied
14 housing. I was trained by HUD officials and staff to do
15 those tests.

16 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Can you give us a base
17 line in terms of white caucasian persons denied housing
18 with the same tests?

19 MS. STROM SELL: Say that again?

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: You gave us the statistic
21 for Native Americans, for hispanics, for African
22 Americans. Was there a base line of caucasians who were
23 denied housing in the same tests?

24 MS. STROM SELL: My whites were always offered

1 housing, my white testers.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: One hundred percent of
3 the time?

4 MS. STROM SELL: A hundred percent. They were
5 different terms and conditions for rent. I'll give you an
6 example. I had a Native American tester who the lease
7 hold she had to keep her children quiet in the evening
8 and the rent was \$350 and a deposit of \$300. My white
9 tester was told no problem with the children. She was
10 actually offered like a resident manager position to help
11 her with the rent where it was not afforded to my Native
12 American tester. I had a hispanic tester who called the
13 first and foremost she was asked to repeat her name three
14 times and then spell it. The appointment was set up for
15 4:00 o'clock and the rental agent did not show for her.
16 My white tester showed up at about 45 minutes later and
17 the rental agent was there. The rental agent lived on
18 site, so there was no excuse not to have showed up for my
19 hispanic tester. The families with children seemed to be
20 really prevalent. Discrimination with families with
21 children in this area. And the discrimination is not
22 overt, it usually doesn't show up unless it's testing. I
23 found that families, single moms with children were
24 charged an extra deposit for their children like they do

1 with pets which is illegal. Children were steered to one
2 building if you have children.

3 I'm going to go on to advertisements.
4 I've been doing fair housing for five years here. I've
5 monitored advertisements for apartments. There's been a
6 case just settled with one of the newspapers in this
7 community based on my investigations, there are banks, the
8 bank advertisements on television do not accurately
9 reflect the population of this diverse population of this
10 community. They are basically all white human models.
11 Once in awhile I will see a bank advertisement using a non
12 white human model and that's a rare occasion. And I'm
13 going to go to what we have called the three strikes
14 ordinance. It's the letters that go out to the tenants
15 and the landlord and it's made a part of the police report
16 and systemically this is denying persons of color no
17 housing because as melinda specifically stated, the record
18 is going to show that the higher crime rate is in the
19 Romneky Park area, the Greenwood Park area and so of
20 course there's going -- the police report is going to
21 reflect that and when the person leaves that area and goes
22 to find another unit, of course they're going to have this
23 police report. And I have to disagree with Nancy Tarlson
24 in that I don't think they're adequately explained to the

1 landlord. They're just basically if the landlord sees a
2 report that's six pages long, there's going to say you're
3 trouble. I don't care if you're a complaining person. I
4 don't care what's going on here, you're out of here,
5 you're out of here, you're not going to get the unit. And
6 as far as Romneky Park goes, I was a part of that issue
7 and I did try to impress upon the city that it was
8 disparate impact. I believe that the letters, these
9 ordinances are also creating a disparaging fact and I've
10 spoken with the Mayor and city officials along with the
11 other organizations on this issue. It's a potential civil
12 rights violation and I'm hoping that Peter had taken some
13 data that I had compiled from all of the letters. I
14 actually handed those letters and made a data base and I
15 gave our report to him and he was going to do a map
16 plotter for that area. That's all.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Once you find what you
18 did, what, if anything, have you attempted to do with this
19 information in terms of the apparent discrimination in at
20 least rental housing?

21 MS. STROM SELL: Currently I've been
22 advocating for all ten cases which are sitting in legal
23 counsel in Denver, but they've been there for three years.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: With HUD counsel?

1 MS. STROM SELL: Yes, HUD's legal counsel. I
2 have had to write the briefs to keep those cases there. An
3 ordinary lay person could not get through this process, I
4 don't believe. It's extremely difficult. I have disabled
5 and aggrieved parties as they're called who could have
6 never gotten through all of this. We've had to provide
7 medial records, all sorts of detailed documentation. My
8 understanding with HUD in the regulations is that it's
9 only supposed to be appearance of the evidence and I have
10 felt that we have had to almost make a beyond a reasonable
11 doubt. Although I'm happy they're still sitting there,
12 we've had them bouncing back and forth and I'm 99 percent
13 sure we're going to get a reasonable cause finding but
14 it's a three year and that's not even getting into court.
15 Witnesses are -- people are frustrated. I've worked with
16 the human rights out of St. Paul with Vicky on a couple of
17 cases. She's informed me today that they are mandated now
18 to complete their investigation in one year, but that's,
19 you know, this is just starting, what about the cases that
20 have been sitting there for years we need a speedier
21 process. Not all people have housing advocates to who are
22 able to even write the briefs, you know, so that's what I
23 think. Thank you.

24 MS. DANIELSON: Well, I just want to mention a

1 couple of areas that I don't know if they were covered,
2 but I think they also contribute to the overall climate of
3 what it's like to live here and I'd say, first of all, I
4 think our biggest challenge is the lack of resources with
5 enforcement at the time and probably just kind of
6 mentioned that and that's really accurate. When we get
7 into a little bit of school things. There have been cases
8 filed and one by the Department of Human Rights, but
9 there's still no enforcement at the time. So, it's kind
10 of a moot point to even try to have people file at certain
11 times and Rachel brought up another excellent point; the
12 fear of retaliation and I worked with one family. They
13 did complain about a school district person to the school
14 and within 48 hours immigration was at their apartment.
15 The rental housing inspector was at their apartment and
16 the welfare fraud inspector was at their apartment. Now,
17 can we prove this? No. And that's the problem. We don't
18 know who made the call, but the timing is really
19 suspicious and we have lots of things like that where it's
20 very difficult to sort through and actually track down
21 what happened there. There are a couple of areas -- I
22 don't know if anybody mentioned the Fargo Forum which is
23 the local newspaper and that has been a huge contributor
24 to the climate of racism in this community. And I just --

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1 and I brought things that you can keep, but just to give
2 you a really quick visual and when they say no news is
3 good news, that's really true in this community. In lots
4 of ways this, all three pages, this was a front page
5 Sunday on a family where about 12 years ago the young boy
6 who was latino fell into the river under the ice and he
7 was saved and maybe you probably all saw it on Emergency
8 911 when that show used to be on, they did a follow up on
9 him and it turns out that he's had some legal problems
10 since but they also put in his mother's legal record, his
11 brother's legal record, his father's legal record, and
12 they live in Texas. So, this is a lovely piece of
13 contributing to the nasty climate in town. And this is the
14 coverage and not the whole page, this little back part
15 right inside when our organization last year won the award
16 for social justice for the entire State of Minnesota. So,
17 you know, here's the difference in coverage between good
18 and bad events in the community and it's very difficult to
19 change minds when this is the type of coverage that makes
20 the front page.

21 Another area is banking.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT; Excuse me just a moment.

23 Does Moorhead have no newspaper?

24 MS. STROM SELL: There's no newspaper. This

1 is it. This is it. There's a sales flyer called the
2 Midwest which doesn't do news coverage and there's an
3 alternative paper called high Point Reader which has
4 started doing some very minute things, almost in terms of
5 letters to the editor. It's more that type of coverage.
6 So, we're pretty captive. The Fargo Forum also owns the
7 radio station and one of the t.v. news channels and so
8 it's pretty much a monopoly.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Do you have any knowledge
10 as to whether the newspaper or the television station have
11 people of color either in their reporting staff or
12 editorial staff or management staff?

13 MS. STROM SELL: Roxanne Barry who was my
14 North Dakota -- is kind of -- oh, she's doing cultural
15 diversity issues and I don't know what her background is
16 and there's another, Venita Stocker, she's still with the
17 state. She had been with one of the stations in town, but
18 that was pretty much be it. No, there's absolutely zero
19 coverage in terms of what's happening positively in the
20 latino community or it's skewed. They will take a good
21 event -- there was a Quencineta that happened about five
22 years ago and they ended up of the family being on welfare
23 and gosh, how could they afford all this? And what the
24 deal was, the entire community pitches in to make an event

1 like that happen. But the family that put -- the point
2 that the Forum emphasized through the reporter, oh, gosh
3 these poor people, how can they possibly afford this? And
4 we're paying for it. It was that perception. So, even
5 positive events are not reported on positively in town.
6 Just one thing with what banking. I've had two different
7 -- these are real direct experiences and I was the
8 co-signer on one of my godson's accounts and he is latino.
9 He had gotten his first job, 16, went to deposit his
10 check. I had to be the signer since he's under 18. He
11 went to get his money out after he deposited his check and
12 the bank, which is Norwest, refused to give him his money
13 and he came back and he said they won't give me my money.
14 And I said it's your money, why won't they give you your
15 money? And we went back over and they thought that he
16 had, since my signature was on it, I had to co sign the
17 withdrawal slip and they told him basically that
18 they thought this was a stolen deposit and withdrawal slip
19 and that he had forged the signature and they didn't
20 bother to pull the signature card that was on file, they
21 simply sent him away without his own money. And another
22 instance we had a mural painter come up from the Twin
23 Cities and he worked, he did a wonderful mural of our
24 organization and I signed the paycheck, took him through

1 the bank to get the check cashed and they wanted to
2 fingerprint him. Now, I have never been fingerprinted
3 cashing a check in my life. He mentioned it at the bank.
4 They said, oh, no, it's our policy and they said if it's
5 your policy why don't you fingerprint me when I come
6 through? And they said, oh, it's our new policy. There
7 was no good answer, but they insisted on fingerprinting
8 him before they would cash the check and this to me is
9 very different treatment. We do a thumb print on the
10 check, I've never had to, maybe other people have. But,
11 I've never had to in this community. And the area that
12 I'm actually doing lots of research and work right now is
13 education advocacy and I feel that some pretty severe
14 problems happening in the school system. The school
15 district two years ago sanctioned by the Minnesota
16 Department of Human Rights and I do have a copy of the
17 consent decree for you. They were just recently in
18 December of this year and you can keep all the copies of
19 this, I just want to quote very briefly, in December,
20 1988, the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and
21 Learning sent a letter to the district informing it that
22 MCAP and it's outreach and detention center components
23 were out of compliance with the state racial composition
24 standard. So, they have technically been sanctioned

1 again. This time by the State Department of Education
2 which is the Department of Children, Families and
3 Learning. And there's a further quote from someone who is
4 at the State Department, it says, "We do look to make sure
5 that the number percentage of any special group is not
6 significantly higher in the alternative program than it
7 would be in the traditional school." Those -- it's
8 typically higher and that's okay and we're saying it's not
9 okay and I have sent this back to the Department of
10 Education and requesting that they speak to their
11 employees on this issue, okay, because it's not. And we
12 are running, depending on which figures we have been able
13 to get, that's been one of the biggest and mostly regarded
14 secrets it seems would be the number of students of color
15 in alternative programs. We have had quotes ranging, one
16 came from a school social worker that said 86 percent of
17 the students of color in Moorhead Public Schools are in
18 alternative programs. We had another figure that said
19 this was for indigenous students, 65 students grade 7
20 through 12 were in alternative programs.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I'm really concerned
22 about that and I think we all really need to take a look
23 at that.

24 MS. STROM SELL: That's a huge issue because a

1 lot of other kids are not graduating and this is direct --
2 this is one of the others to me anyway huge concerns,
3 there is direct policy involvement in the alternative
4 programs and I think this is in violation of several
5 facets of the Data Practices Act. Tenants in Learning are
6 not given, students are being questioned on school time,
7 on school property without parental notice and it can have
8 to do with school offenses or not and this is a quote from
9 the director of the alternative program. She said, "That
10 while police are called on occasion, it is typically to
11 document and provide a consequence for disorderly behavior
12 such as kicking a chair." Now, my question is, why can a
13 school not deal with a student kicking a chair and why are
14 the police called for chair kicking? Is this so that we
15 can get them handily into the juvenile justice system, get
16 them on probation and have all sorts of ways to control
17 students of color? I'm very concerned with that. I think
18 we have very blurred boundaries. Many, many times
19 probation agents will be called instead of the parent and
20 I think any time you're bypassing the parent, especially
21 in a situation with students of color, you're doing a
22 great disservice to the entire community to the students
23 and I think this is a reflection of why there may not be a
24 great deal of parental participation in the school

1 district because parents are not being invited, in my
2 opinion, to participate. Their actively being kept out.
3 So, I think that that's wrong and that needs to change.
4 We've had a couple of instances of children under the age
5 of 13 being handcuffed and taken off of school grounds for
6 non violent offenses. There was a situation where two
7 years ago and we're not able to document at this point
8 whether it' still occurring or not, student journals and
9 artwork were being photocopied by the alternative program
10 and being turned over directly to the police department
11 for their analysis for gang content. And this to me
12 starts really virgin in violation of First Amendment
13 rights. And there was another instance where a student
14 art project that was created at the junior high, this was
15 two years ago, was turned directly over to the police
16 department. This is a school sanctioned art project that
17 had hung in the hallway at the junior high. A teacher
18 walked through, boy, this must be kind of suspicious
19 content, turned it over to the police department with the
20 student's name on it and I have grave problems with that
21 and especially in some of the interpretations have
22 included the Vijetican Guadalupe (phonetic) is a gang
23 symbol, the Playbody Bunny is a gang symbol? Maybe it is,
24 maybe it isn't. I think we have to be extremely careful

1 Vijetican Guadalupe as a gang symbol and have concerned
2 that there is not perhaps enough understanding of how
3 things work. I'm concerned what is the quality of the
4 person's knowledge doing the interpretation of these
5 things. That very much concerns me. There's zero
6 tolerance, there's a zero tolerance policy in place and it
7 does seem to work one way. We had an incident this year
8 where a latino student at the high school was called a
9 spik and got a hold of me, told me about it. I called the
10 school back, got in touch with the teacher who had
11 witnessed the incident and was told on. He seemed to be
12 handling it okay, so I didn't intervene. Now, that same
13 student three months later called a girl a name and was
14 suspended for four days. Now, why is there a tolerance
15 only work in one -- zero tolerance only work in one
16 direction. We've had instances where families have been
17 told to find their own translators. Now, there is a law
18 that translators are to be provided. The district also
19 received a great deal in federal funding. The more kids
20 they can put in special education, the more their funding
21 goes up. So, I think the correlation between number of
22 students in color whose parents are quite frankly the less
23 likely to kick about kids being put in some form of
24 alternative program. I think that really needs to be

1 looked at. Parents are greatly intimidated. I've sat
2 through some of the conferences they'll have when six and
3 seven official school people, one parent, no translator.
4 I find that intimidating. I don't find that very user
5 friendly in terms of let's make this school district work.

6 English as a second language program,
7 we have what to me is so interesting is that the parents
8 stories are consistently the same and the district's
9 stories are consistently the same. The district said, and
10 I've talked to the superintendent. We don't put one
11 single student in ESL where the parents haven't signed for
12 this to happen. Parents say we don't speak spanish. I
13 had one family that had a spanish sounding surname and
14 they were registered day to day from Sisekan, South
15 Dakota. They spoke no spanish, but their kids were all in
16 the ESL program. We had a tough time getting the kids out
17 of ESL, even though they spoke no spanish. So, these are
18 just some of the kinds of instances that happen and I
19 brought up all kinds of flyers when the alternative program
20 was supposed to move into an all white neighborhood. The
21 flyer was put together by a group of parents basically
22 comparing the students and MCAP and it also now called the
23 Red River Alternative Learning Center. To the students in
24 Littleton, Colorado who are your kids at risk? Do we want

1 this kind of menace coming to our neighborhood? That's
2 what this community is like. This is wrong. And all
3 kinds of things like that we've got that page out of the
4 district ESL handbook and it says it's often easy to
5 confuse second language learners with students who possess
6 a learning disability. So, if you're teaching and you
7 can't tell the difference between a second language
8 learner and a student who needs an IEP and has a learning
9 disability, we've got a problem. We've got a huge problem
10 and I think we'd better start really looking very
11 seriously at this. And again, I go back to enforcement
12 tools. It has been extremely difficult both to have
13 parents go the whole distance for several reasons. First,
14 of retaliation, lack of resources with at the time now
15 parents will come and they'll call me. They'll stop by my
16 house, they'll come to work and they'll say this happened
17 and we'll find some sort of resource to which -- and we
18 are continuing that process. I'm finding every potential
19 resource possible. The length of time to make things
20 happen, if your kid is in trouble, now you don't care
21 what's going to happen two years from now, you know, he
22 got suspended today. My daughters in ESL. I want her
23 out. We don't have this huge time frame with kids. This
24 is life right smack now and that I think is one of the

1 biggest drawbacks to really helping people file things.
2 We are really trying to work with the bigger picture
3 changing it. Not the whole community, but it's really
4 personal when it's your child and it's right now and so
5 that pretty much would be most of it just two final
6 things; one of the biggest things that we get back from
7 the Wyadota community survey every year and the
8 consistently hiring qualified latino staff is one of the
9 top five issues that come up in terms of what's happening
10 in the schools and it's not to say that we don't have
11 latino staff. They're primarily at some of the alternative
12 programs and they seem to be serving a policing function
13 in some of the cases rather than any sort of teaching
14 function and I think that's a real -- that can be kind of
15 a dangerous thing because people can come gatekeepers and
16 really actually serve the district's agenda rather than
17 the agenda of the students. The curriculum committee and
18 we have very little inclusive curriculum material; the
19 committee that chooses is all white. The listing of the
20 curriculum committee and it's all white and it's not that
21 there are no qualified candidates to be hired. This is
22 Rosa Traviño and she was a board member in our
23 organization. She started as a migrant worker speaking no
24 English. She made it through Moorhead State with a 4.0

1 GPA in elementary education and could not get interviewed
2 by this district. So --

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: When was that?

4 MS. STROM SELL: This was May 9th, 1998 and she
5 tried to get interviewed throughout that summer and she
6 ended up back teaching in Texas. So, we lost a really -- I
7 don't know what more you could want. Wonderful person,
8 absolutely would have been terrific. So, and just all
9 kinds of other lovely things to give you guys. So --

10 MS. ORWOLL: Can we get data on that article
11 that you talked about that Fargo Forum, that being one.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: May 2nd, 1999.

13 MS. STROM SELL: I don't think that's the one.
14 This very first one, this is December 21st, 1997.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Any of those documents
16 that you're willing to share with us would be greatly
17 appreciated.

18 MS. ORWOLL: I have one other question. Is
19 there a curfew in this town?

20 MS. DANIELSON: Only if you're on probation.
21 I shouldn't say that. I believe if it's under 16 is it
22 11:00, 10:00 or 11:00. Do you guys know I think it's
23 10:00 and went into effect two years ago, probably two
24 years ago.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We've learned that the
2 policemen or police person who will be -- policeman for
3 all intents and purposes will not be the latino. We've
4 learned that it's highly unlikely that the teachers
5 involved will be latino. Tell me then about probation
6 officers and social workers, any greater likelihood?

7 MS. DNAIELSON: Zero latino except for
8 community service who works with the probation kids. His
9 name is Louis Ochoa and he would be the only latino
10 officer and there would be no latina probation. I think
11 the jailer is latino, one of, and i'd say zero social
12 worker. Alisa who is here has her degree in social work
13 and so does Lisa Dalgos who spoke before me. It's not
14 that we don't have qualified people in the community to
15 take these positions, they're not getting hired.

16 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And lastly, is your
17 organization consulted or looked to as a resource for
18 potential employees for the government agencies.

19 MS. DANIELSON: No, I'd say monthly we're
20 probably looked at as an annoyance to be quite frank.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Thank you
22 very much. We do very much appreciate your appearance and
23 testimony. Thank you.

24 Our next panel will be Harold

1 Ironshield and Theodora Mengi. Unless you have agreed
2 other wise between the two of you, I'm going to go to
3 Theodora to go first or either way. Harold, you're on.

4 HAROLD IRONSHIELD

5 How, I'm going to talk to you a bit.

6 (Speaking American Indian Language.)

7 I don't know if the court reporter was
8 able to translate that, but are there any questions? I
9 would like to welcome you to the original home land of my
10 people, the Dakota Nation that we're residents here of
11 Minnesota before 1862. For the record, my English name is
12 Harold Ironshield, and I'm a member of the upper Yangton
13 Dakota band of the Great Dakota Nation of North and South
14 Dakota and Minnesota. I reside on the Sistem Wapton
15 Reservation, Northeastern South Dakota. I work here in
16 Moorhead, Minnesota. I'm the Director of the Northern
17 Plains Media Consortium which is a media organization
18 primarily for native tribal newspapers and radio stations
19 that exist in northern plains region. My day involves
20 some of the incidents that have been spoken about here in
21 the City of Moorhead. What I've heard yesterday starting
22 with Mayor of Moorhead all the way to the officials that
23 you have invited to come and speak on behalf of the
24 organizations and businesses. It sounds as if we were

1 living here in heaven. But, shortly after that you have
2 heard testimony by those individuals who have encountered
3 conflicts, issues of racism, issues of misunderstanding.
4 I questioned the value of culture diversity in this area.
5 If the culture diversity was working for many of us, you
6 would not be here today listening to the concerns of those
7 that are considered oppressed. Or the name that is being
8 labeled that are considered the people of color. We are a
9 human beings as anyone. The color of our skin may be
10 different, but we are human beings just like all of you.
11 Today the native population in Minnesota is 49,000 plus,
12 according to the 1990 census, you heard testimony of one
13 of our children being involved with a conflict in the
14 Moorhead Public Schools. Our children as native people
15 are very sacred to us. Our traditions that we carry out
16 as tribal members of the tribes that we belong to insist
17 that we care for these children because that's our way of
18 life as tribal people. Many of our children that attend
19 the Moorhead Public Schools system in some ways have been
20 victimized because of who they are. You have heard
21 testimony that many of the conflicts that they face are
22 conflicts that are unnecessary. The situation that are
23 students our children are put into is also unnecessary. I
24 speak greatly on behalf of our children and I come as a

1 representative of migrant fathers and his grandfather who
2 have spoke out so diligently for the rest of our people to
3 exist as members of the tribal nations that live in this
4 nation.

5 I come here in that capacity. I come
6 here as a human rights advocate as well for indigenous
7 people whose voices are not heard. Here in Moorhead there
8 are over a thousand members of tribes that reside in this
9 area, Fargo/Moorhead area and many of those members of
10 tribes come here for employment reasons and many have come
11 here to seek what we call the American dream that does not
12 exist for many of them. Unfortunately, we have a few in
13 our community that are not as fortunate as others and
14 those are the ones that are victimized by society.
15 Yesterday you heard from one of our grandmothers, the
16 situation of boarding schools and the situation that they
17 have encountered in those boarding schools. And as we
18 look at the Moorhead boarding school system, we find the
19 same kind of situations that existed in the government
20 boarding schools that was built mainly to catch and
21 christianize what they called the heathens. From 1902 to
22 1933 the
23 U. S. Government had sent native children that attend
24 boarding school that did not understand why it's that they

1 were sent 500 miles or more to schools, did not understand
2 why they had to wear strange clothing and why it's that
3 they could not speak their tribal language that was given
4 to them by the creator. And because of this great
5 misunderstanding of the people that worked in the boarding
6 schools, punishment was dished out to many of those that
7 did not understand the purposes of being sent to boarding
8 schools. And part of that punishment was to primarily
9 teach a lesson to many of these individuals. I know
10 through experience i'm a victim of the board's school
11 syndrome that we speak so greatly about in today's society.
12 Many of the children as I state in 1902 through 1933 was
13 sent to a place called the Haiwa Insane Assylum for
14 American Indians located in the Canton, South Dakota, 18
15 miles southeast of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. That was
16 the punishment. They were documented as being insane.
17 One of the many atrocities that was committed against our
18 people by the U.S. government right here in the State of
19 Minnesota, we have one of the largest mass hangings in the
20 history of the United States the hanging of the 38 Dakota
21 warrior in Mancato, Minnesota. We have other atrocities.
22 On my cap I wear a red feather that's the representation
23 of relatives that I had that was murdered and massacred at
24 Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1890. These are the

1 memories that we carry in our minds as individuals. We
2 come to society and we have other memories of incidents
3 that we sometimes call racism, discrimination or whatever.
4 We have categorized racisms in different areas. Yesterday
5 I heard overt racism. I've heard subtle racism, but to me
6 racism is racism. You cannot change racism because it's
7 there. Were the ones that are the victims were the ones
8 that deal with the issue of racism in our everyday lives?
9 Society has put us in a position o where we become the
10 defense of who we are as we walk the streets of any city
11 in America. The color of our skin encourages us to be on
12 the defense. Cultural sensitivity needs to be enhanced.
13 Cultural identity is always there because we talk about
14 ourselves in many different ways to create the
15 understanding to all of America. So, that they know that
16 we exist and in today's society, Native American people,
17 tribal members of tribes throughout the nation is what is
18 considered the silent minority. Racism as we look at it
19 today has become a black and white issue. It's not become
20 a people of color issue. We need to change that image.
21 We need to change that. We need to change the image mainly
22 to involve people of color so that the productiveness of
23 battling racism is there. You do not understand me as an
24 individual. You don't understand the problems that I

1 encountered because you do not know me. That is what we
2 lack the understanding of individuals who have tried and
3 attempted to be productive in society. We say that we are
4 equal, we say that there's justice for all, that's not so.
5 We battle. We are the ones that have to prove ourselves
6 to be who we are and to work that week in society.
7 There's no justice and equality for all. The Constitution
8 is a lie to many of our people. That's what we've got to
9 understand. Otherwise, we wouldn't be sitting in front of
10 you giving testimony about the encounter that we have in
11 our lifestyle. The encounters that we deal with living
12 here in society. When that's all gone, when everybody is
13 satisfied, then we can say that there is justice and
14 equality for all, but until then, i didn't agree with it.
15 there's no fee for human rights commission. There's no
16 fee for civil right commissions to even exist if there was
17 equality and justice for all. And again I want to
18 thank you for your time for coming and listening. I'm
19 glad that you listened. I'm glad that you didn't cut me
20 off because of time orientation, but again I just wanted
21 to end by telling you that racism will always exist as
22 long as there are people of color in this nation. As we
23 learn how to deal with each other and as long as we
24 discontinue the denial that there is racism in society, I

1 think we can do it together. Our grandfather Chief
2 Sitting Bull who is one of my heros of this nation had
3 told our people, let us put our minds together and see
4 what life we can make for our children. That's why I
5 consider myself the human right advocate, the voice for
6 the people whose voices are not heard. I believe in that
7 statement very strongly that we need to look at the ideals
8 of doing something for our children that is prosperous so
9 that our generations yet to come can live in harmony with
10 everybody that's God's creation. Thank you.

11 THEODORA MENGI

12 My name is Theodora Mengi,
13 T-h-e-o-d-o-r-a M-e-n-g-i. I live at 300 South Street
14 North number 3 in Fargo, North Dakota. I work in
15 Minneapolis. I'm the new community organizer for the
16 People Escaping Poverty Project. Also I was born and
17 raised in the area. I'm actually a contemporary of Mr.
18 Bangsberg down there. I spend most of my time growing up
19 here, living here, have spent time in other areas briefly,
20 but still keep coming back here. In my youth
21 discrimination and racism was more blatant. The non
22 verbal, the expectations in school where they tell you,
23 oh, well, you can't do that, you know, when you work ahead
24 or you want to read something, you can't do that,

1 especially if you show up the other kids. I remember
2 being told to help other children and then, of course, the
3 other children of course disliked me because I was helping
4 them and they didn't want help from the dirty Indian who
5 lived across the tracks. We had made some improvements
6 over the years. There are many other things where there
7 have been no improvements, but there have been attempts to
8 change things. But things don't get changed. In this
9 area as low income Native American I have run into
10 opinions from people that range from that they think I'm
11 uneducated, based on what I look like or that I have bad
12 habits like I drink or I bar hop or they make slurs on my
13 virtue or they ask questions about parentage of my
14 children.

15 With our organization where we work, we
16 work with low income people. It doesn't matter race,
17 gender, whatever, nobody wants to come and be a voice for
18 the people that they want to represent or they want to
19 develop something they will come to talk to us, hear how
20 we got started. I worked there. I volunteered there
21 first I heard a lot, then when they started volunteering
22 over the last two or three years in welfare reform and
23 other areas, they were working and a job came up and I was
24 thankfully picked for it; went through the whole process

1 of everything. But I also implied because I believe in
2 what they are doing. They believe in each and every one
3 of us as capable and intelligent people who have a voice
4 and who deserve to be heard. They felt it doesn't matter,
5 you know, how much money you make, what color you are. If
6 you're disabled or not, they feel that you should be here.

7 - As Native American, I am a member of
8 the Mississippi Band of the White Ochippewa Tribe and
9 actually there are quite a few thousand of us, as he said,
10 in this area, but to mostly the population we're
11 invisible, they don't see us. Or they only see us when
12 it's convenient for them to pick somebody and say, oh,
13 did you see all those indians hanging out at the bar?
14 I'm sorry, but you might see one or two, but you also see
15 15 to 20 white guys hanging out at the bar outside, but
16 they notice our one person who is there. The Native
17 American Center, there's a native american center in
18 Fargo, they do outreach work and they do transitioning work
19 for people coming from the reservations into the city.
20 They have a good medicine office, they have a religious
21 office. They've been helpful to me over the years and i
22 still am I touch with them. They are concerned
23 about Native American being seen, being, you know, not
24 misinterpreted as to our culture. As he said, our

1 families are important to us But, our parenting skills do
2 not make us bad parents because they are different from
3 someone else's. The way you know if you raise your child
4 differently than we raise our child differently or someone
5 else might raise their child differently, that does not
6 mean because you're Native American that's bad. In living
7 in this area and plus listening to these people you've
8 heard testimony about the apartments, the employment, the
9 socialization of how people will treat you because you
10 call on the phone. As I said, you call on the phone, you
11 asked about the apartment, sure it's available to rent,
12 whatever. You show up, oh, I'm sorry, we just rented that
13 this afternoon. And I asked why are you showing it then?
14 Oh, well, I didn't want to, you know, cancel on you. It's
15 like excuse me, but if there's no apartment, why would it
16 matter if you cancelled, and yet a week later the
17 apartment is still listed in the paper. Same as with
18 jobs, you go apply and unless you know somebody there and
19 can get a job and work your way around it, you're told
20 that your job skills do not fit the job; the position.
21 I've done work as a referee, I have done work as a
22 restaurant work, housekeeping, all sorts o things for my
23 family and yet still with all the skills that I have
24 sometimes when I would go on job interviews, oh, we're

1 sorry, but your job skills don't fit. And yet they would
2 hire somebody else with less skills for the job to take
3 it.

4 In schools, my children -- I have our
5 sons all same father. One looks like me, three look like
6 their mother. They have run into difficulties at school.
7 where the one son who is like me, they're all two years
8 apart, he was being harassed at school by someone because
9 of being a Native looking, and my older son went over and
10 asked him, excuse me, but is there a problem here and the
11 kid looks at him and says, yeah, we're teaching this
12 Indian to keep his place. What's it to you? Whereupon my
13 older son who is very tall, very large, looked down at
14 this kid and says, he's my brother, do you have a problem
15 with that? And the child basically backed off and went
16 away, but it illustrates the thing where somebody else
17 questioned him. He said, well you don't look like him.
18 Well, he's my brother and one person thought, well, you
19 just mean in the biblical sense and he goes, no, he's my
20 brother. And they have discovered that they get treated
21 differently at stores when they go in together, one child
22 will get waited on, the other one gets followed around the
23 store because they wonder if he's going to like steel
24 something or they ask if he has money. There are times in

1 the schools where my son is being harassed and they will
2 call me because they both get hauled up there. But the
3 other student will be released back into the population.
4 I will be called, the other parent was not called in an
5 incident and we had to go through a whole process of
6 filing a complaint, making a formal process thing of this
7 because the other students had out of sight of the
8 teachers, smacked my son on the back of the head, stole
9 his hat out of his pocket and when my son went to go take
10 it back, accused my son of stealing it from him. We had
11 to take almost six to eight weeks before we got anywhere
12 on this. The vice principal kept trying to say well now
13 just keep your son out of school for a few days and I'm
14 like why should i keep my son out of school when he was
15 not the instigator of this incident. Well, it would be
16 safer for him. They finally got us together with the
17 parents and the other parents was like well, so what? In
18 the schools children of color do tend to get picked as the
19 instigator,
20 the culprit, the person causing the problem when my son's
21 he's kind of a joke about it in a sense where generally
22 man it's usually the other way around. They can't tell us
23 apart, but I guess they can't tell them apart because they
24 just pick us. He thinks that the way that his brother is

1 treated is not good. He knows that for school they're
2 supposed to be equal, they're supposed to be given the
3 same opportunities. My son, we tried to get him into a
4 program because he actually does get good grades, and
5 they kept putting us off for two years. Other kids were
6 being let into the program, teachers telling my son, oh,
7 there's no space. Finally my son got fed up and he
8 decided, okay, why even bother going to school? He
9 dropped out because he was not even encouraged by the
10 school system to do more.

11 My friends and family and fellow
12 residents in this area, we go to work, we go to school, we
13 go to church, we go out socially, but when we do those
14 things, everything we do is looked at differently.
15 Somebody goes out to a party, oh, no problem. Now, white
16 people they sit on the couch. I saw this just the other
17 day, three couches out on the lawn drinking beer, nobody
18 questioned it. Romneky Park area or another minority area
19 if that happened, police would be pulling up there excuse
20 me, what's going on and asking what do you think you're
21 doing? You know, you're enjoying time with your family
22 and friends and they would question that. The percentages
23 that they bring up for six percent of the population is
24 this, and fifth is this, and, you know, it's the well,

1 yes, our percentage might be yes, there are these many
2 people in crimes and stuff, if you stop and think about
3 that means that almost 90 percent of it is white, so why
4 are they only addressing the smaller percentage of the
5 problem. Why are they not going to the white neighborhood
6 and doing these things? Why are they not policing those
7 areas more so since those are 90 percent of the problem,
8 according to what their record says. People in Romneky
9 neighborhood, you know, they have a right to be where they
10 are, they have a right to live in Moorhead. They have a
11 right to have an apartment that they can feel safe in and
12 not where they are afraid to call the police because with
13 the three strikes I mean if you have a domestic dispute,
14 you call the police, well they send you a letter. If this
15 happens again, you're going to get sent a letter. On the
16 third letter they'll evict you. So, there's a fear going
17 on, well, geez, do I call the cops? I need an apartment,
18 need a place to live. If I get another letter, what are
19 we going to do? And if I remember correctly anybody
20 should have the right to call the police for their
21 defense. Isn't that what they're supposed to be there
22 for? How can they penalize people for doing what you're
23 telling them to do? You know, tell them you have a crime,
24 you suspect something, call the police, but these people

1 in the neighborhood where these notices are being sent
2 basically are being told, if you call the cops, we're
3 throwing you out of your apartment. That's discrimination
4 on a totally different sense you might say, but it's still
5 discrimination. It's still racism, whether you're poor,
6 whether you're colored, whether you have five children or
7 been married twice. I mean I've been married once all my
8 children have the same father and I still get people
9 going, well, how many kids have the same father or they
10 ask me where you married or they make assumptions based on
11 my color, they make assumptions based on the fact that I'm
12 Native American. I mean there's a line of division and
13 perception now between white people in this community and
14 the colored whether we're now brown, red, or asian, and
15 they make assumptions that we are drunkards that were, you
16 know, we party, we spend our money, we blow our money. So
17 when we go shopping, oh, sure, I've seen friends of mine
18 go and they spend hundreds of dollars on stuff and that's
19 okay. I go do it, people question me, you sure you should
20 spend all that money? That's what I saved it for, you
21 know. That's why I'm there is to shop, but you get
22 questioned. You know, I get questioned when I go in to
23 even just price things. Now, people are told, are you
24 sure that's in the price range you're looking for? Would

1 you be asked that question? I mean, the assumption is
2 that, you know, we are not the same, but we are. If you
3 close your eyes, would you be able to tell what color the
4 person next to you was? Would you be able to tell what
5 race they were? No. When you're on the phone, you can't
6 tell what they look like. You know their qualifications,
7 you know their age, you know they're female, you know
8 they're male. That's all it is, but when you see them
9 it's like your whole idea changes. You know, sometimes
10 when our children look at us and how we deal with things.
11 You know, my son thought this was really good. I'm coming
12 to this, he would have liked to come, but he also said in
13 a sense mom, would they listen to me? He's 18, he's
14 getting in trouble because in school they tend to have a
15 tracking system where once you get in trouble, well,
16 you're the first person they pick to get looked at,
17 whether they could have a videotape of the other person,
18 it doesn't matter. They will ask you. You're in the
19 area, let's find out.

20 As a person of color, he's stopped on
21 the streets because he looks a certain way. He is asked
22 questions in stores because he looks a certain way and I
23 know that I run into the same things. I mean like you
24 asked one gentleman if he was treated differently. Yes,

1 when you're treated differently, you'll be surprised,
2 people go by honking their horns, yelling vulgar epithets -
3 at you because they make assumptions about you.

4 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: In Moorhead?

5 MS. MENGI: In Moorhead. You know, you go to
6 Romneky Park or you drive in the area and people stare,
7 yelling, screaming stuff at you or they slip by and I
8 actually had eggs thrown at me once. Those hurt from
9 a 30 mile an hour car. And the thing is one incident is
10 just one incident too many, even just one because we're
11 supposed to be people, you're supposed to treat people as
12 people, you know, and in Moorhead they're making a
13 distinction. Well, these people are people, these people,
14 well, they're people, but, and they're adding a but.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: We appreciate very much
16 what you've said.

17 MR. IRONSHIELD: I have one thing that I'd
18 like to mention before we wrap up here. One of the
19 incidents that has been encountered by one of our tribal
20 community members here in apartment area which is located
21 in Moorhead here, just right near the interstate going
22 towards Minneapolis, Interstate 90 I believe that is, many
23 of our people are spiritually inclined, they're very
24 spiritual people and in our prayers we burn sage as part of

1 our purification ceremonies to cleanse ourselves for the
2 day and many of our people have been evicted because of
3 burning sage. To us it's a violation of religious
4 freedom -- that's stated in the U.S. Constitution --
5 because they are accused of smoking pot. Sage has a
6 similar smell to pot, but when you're spiritually inclined
7 and you believe in the way of life that God had given us,
8 you would live that life still and again, burning sage is
9 like burning incense in a church for purification
10 purposes. But, many of our people have been accused of
11 burning sage in their cars and police searches for drugs
12 for accusations of smoking pot has always been there.
13 That's what we encounter. So, the violation of our
14 spiritual rights is a definite violation. There's no
15 recognition whatsoever that those rights are violated.
16 And when you get evicted from an apartment for involving
17 yourself in a spiritual ceremony within your families and
18 get evicted for that, that's a clear violation. And this
19 is going on here in Moorhead.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you both.

21 Our next panel, Hector Martinez and
22 Rose Gonzalez.

23 Mr. Martinez, if you would please tell
24 us your address and if you are on behalf of any

1 organization, tell us that, too, otherwise, we thank you
2 for coming.

3 HECTOR MARTINEZ

4 My name is Hector Martinez and I'm the
5 Director of Centra Cudad here in Moorhead, Minnesota, an
6 organization that was established in 1994-1995 because of
7 issues that we're talking about here in the last couple of
8 days and that's the issues of human and civil rights and
9 how we as a community have looked outside of our own
10 resources to try to obtain that sense of humanity and
11 haven't found it. Have felt as outsiders here in
12 Moorhead when we've been here as some of the others have
13 testified, for over 75 to 80 years. So that the issue of
14 diversity is not a new issue for Moorhead. It's a
15 relatively old one.

16 I'm not going to repeat a lot of the
17 things that have been said in the last two days, but I do
18 want to hold individuals accountable for some of the
19 things they have said. I think that's important that we
20 as recipients of this humanity start to put faces on these
21 things so that we can start to deal with those. If we do
22 not hold these individuals accountable, we will always be
23 skirting the issue and we will always be talking about
24 things that could have been or might have been. And

1 that's what has historically has happened in the last five
2 hundred years in the United States and certainly in the
3 last 80 years here in Moorhead.

4 Yesterday we had the Mayor talk about
5 all the good things that are occurring here in Moorhead.
6 He talked about the establishment of a Human Rights
7 Commission. A Human Rights Commission, a humanity
8 commission that has no authority and no vision and
9 certainly no accountability as far as where do they go
10 with the information. The individuals that sit on the
11 Human Rights Commission are well intended people and their
12 heart is in the right place, but when all you can do is
13 document the information and have nowhere to go with it,
14 it becomes a senseless arm that all it does is just gives
15 that piece of look at all the good things that we're
16 doing. The City of Moorhead is also established the
17 Cultural Diversity Project and the Moorhead Healthy
18 Community Initiative. Those two organizations in their
19 own right have good and well intentioned, but they are
20 also part and the brainchild of the City of Moorhead and
21 the upper level administration. I would assume that this
22 is their answer to contributions into the community of
23 color and to address the needs in the community. But what
24 happens when you establish these two organizations?

1 There's no input from, legitimate input from people of
2 color as to what direction we need to take to find
3 solutions for what I'm calling this inhumanity, the
4 stripping away of humanness of who we are as people and who
5 we attribute to that as that the establishment of
6 neighborhood block clubs. We have heard that these
7 neighborhood block-clubs are not necessarily inside the
8 community of color, but outside surrounding. This, I
9 think, is a dichotomy that you would have a neighborhood
10 block club in a community of color for individuals to
11 basically turn in their neighbors when we're already
12 oppressed by the legal system and by law enforcement. And
13 so that I would just substantiate that there are no
14 neighborhood block clubs in communities of color for that
15 reason.

16 The Weed and Seed program that has been
17 established, I think that it's intended purpose was for
18 beautification of neighborhoods and for the building of
19 self esteem of individuals that reside in those
20 neighborhoods. What actually has turned into a utilizing
21 of monies to weed out individuals with criminal records or
22 individuals who have a propensity to commit crimes;
23 whether those crimes can be found to be proven to have
24 happened or not. So that the Weed and Seed Program

1 basically turns out to be a tool for ethnic cleansing in
2 these neighborhoods. We have seen a drop in the crime
3 rates in the Romneky Park area and in the Greenwood mobile
4 home park, but we have also seen a dramatic decline in the
5 people of color who reside in these communities. And
6 where are they going? Are they being disbursed around the
7 rest of Fargo/Moorhead? I don't think so. But, it
8 becomes a tool that is connected with other enforcement
9 agencies like the code enforcement and like the low income
10 housing, public housing where they have this
11 interconnection and intercommunication and to have
12 systemically provide information to each other, and this
13 in itself is a weeding process of people of color from
14 these neighborhoods and these communities.

15 I heard throughout the two days about
16 affirmative action and about how some of these individual
17 organizations and businesses are affirmative action and
18 how that has become an issue. Well, I'm here to tell you
19 that affirmative action has never worked for people of
20 color here in Moorhead or in any other place that I'm
21 aware of. Affirmative action has benefitted white
22 households by opening the doors for white women to meet
23 the needs of that were created by affirmative action.
24 Now, that piece has kind of manifested itself and you can

1 only hire so many women. We're starting to see
2 affirmative action then apply itself to people of color. -
3 But, it's time to do away with affirmative action. It's
4 time to have that rhetoric then put out that affirmative
5 action is not needed.

6 Some individuals from the Moorhead
7 School System talk about the low drop out rates of people
8 of color that were more than likely representative of the
9 population in Moorhead, but when you talk to some of the
10 grassroot organizations, then you can see the dramatic
11 difference in those same statistics. We're finding out
12 that there's a connection between upper level
13 administration in the school district and upper level
14 administration in the city and also some of those banking
15 systems and those were the individuals that make all the
16 decisions for everything that goes on here in
17 Fargo/Moorhead. I don't see how those individuals can
18 just paint such a pretty picture of the things that are
19 really going on here in Moorhead and that there's so much
20 work towards really building that diversity and how the
21 banking system and the banking officers working so hard at
22 contributing to communities of color and specifically
23 contributing to Central Cultural or the hispanic center as
24 he stated yesterday and whether they were contributing

1 voluntarily or monetarily. Well, I can tell you that no
2 one from my banking system in Moorhead or Fargo has
3 contributed to Central Cultural either voluntarily or
4 monetarily. I would welcome both. But, that's the
5 problem that we have is that these individuals have this
6 system so sewed up that they can sit here and blatantly
7 lie in front of people of color because we mean nothing to
8 nobody. We have, like I said, we have been stripped of our
9 humanity. We were talking about humanity issues and
10 this is what it's about. That's covert or that it's
11 overt doesn't matter. That it's real does.

12 There was an individual here that was
13 talking about the field labor and the decline in field
14 labor and how much they hire also from the American
15 community and how much they work with affirmative action
16 and those kinds of things, but what he didn't tell you was
17 that the migrant community has historically been exploited
18 because of their inability because of language barriers or
19 whatever the case may be to be able to put up a resistance
20 to that economic exploitation. And this is true that
21 through genetic engineering there's a decline in the use
22 of field labor, but there's also a shift in that
23 exploitation of trying to tap into that market of field
24 labor and get them to be retrained to be able to do work

1 in the field, whether it's driving tractors or doing
2 welding on equipment or those kinds of things because
3 they know that the migrant community is a community that
4 has historically has allowed itself to be exploited and so
5 that they're trying to -- they're going to continue that
6 pattern if we don't do something about that and stop that.

7 We had an individual that was talking
8 about the Moorhead Healthy Community Initiative and
9 sincerely believe that her heart is in the right place,
10 but there also was some untruthfulness of what she was
11 saying that it was an organization that got started in
12 the community. It was also a brainchild of the City of
13 Moorhead and; therefore, the City of Moorhead, even how
14 they contribute very minimally to that organization
15 through community development block grant monies, but they
16 do have a lot of control of what the organization does,
17 it's very interesting that the individual said that we've
18 got to stop talking the talk. We've got to start doing
19 the walk. Central Cultural has been doing after school
20 programming for latino community for two or three years
21 now and we have consistently tried to tap into the funding
22 that is granted to that organization from the state and to
23 this date we have not been able to receive any monies for
24 after school programming. However, when we collaborated

1 with another organization and we were not going to be
2 managing the money. It was amazing how relatively it was
3 simple for the other organizations to get the funding. I
4 think that we advise because it's a matter of decency and
5 a sense of humanity that we need to dwell on what that
6 means and not only dwell on that, we need to contemplate
7 it very seriously and we need to analyze what all of those
8 dynamics are, otherwise we're going to continue this
9 pattern of oppression for the next 500 years. I feel that
10 all of these stories that you have heard from individuals
11 there all are very real and they are about humanity and
12 they are about being a human being and being a whole human
13 being and whether we can put the finger on this -- whether
14 we can put our finger on what this means, help expedite
15 it. I think that this system has escalated it so well
16 that there really isn't much anybody can do when it comes
17 down to legal process. It's either acceptance of what is
18 there or completely trying to change it from the front
19 level which means changing every rule policy and law that
20 was ever created in the last five hundred years which is a
21 tremendous concept for me to think that that could ever
22 possibly happen. I just want to close with a little
23 excerpt here. I assume that this is from Alice in
24 Wonderland, but I think it speaks very well of how I feel

1 as an individual, as a human being living here in Moorhead
2 because this is what happens to me and to a lot of us that
3 live here when I talk about that we're being stripped of
4 our dignity and our humanity; "Whoa re you said the
5 caterpillar? I hardly know, sir, just a present Alice
6 replied rather silly. Alice, I know who I was when I got
7 up this morning, but I must have been changed several
8 times since then."

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you very much. Ms.
10 Gonzalez, thank you for coming.

11 JOSIE GONZALEZ ✓

12 My name is Josie Gonzalez, I live at
13 521 Birch Lane in Moorhead. I've been a citizen in
14 Moorhead for the past 18 years. I moved here in 1980.
15 My background I came to Minnesota as a migrant farm
16 worker. I want you to know up front that i'm really upset
17 about this whole process and I'm upset abut this even
18 having to take place because we should have been listened
19 to along time ago, but I thank you for the opportunity to
20 be here. I'm here representing MCARI. MCARI is Minnesota
21 Church Anti Racist Initiative and I belong to the
22 Northwest Team of Minnesota and I'm also here representing
23 myself as a community member. If you don't mind, I'd like
24 to talk about my relationship with the community and

1 things that I've seen as a community leader in this town
2 and then I'd also like to tell you about some individual
3 things that have happened to me. I want to tell you that
4 I'm very angry. I'm angry about a lot of things. I'm
5 angry about white people speaking for me when I don't ask
6 them to. I'm angry about they going to city hall for
7 representing me. I'm angry at white people applying for
8 grants and getting them grants off of my backs or my
9 people's backs and not letting us take part in decisions
10 of where or how that money is going to be spent. And that
11 happens. We are notorious in this City for getting a lot
12 of people of color in our effort coming, yes, they define
13 what our needs are and then we never get to see the money.
14 We never define what is going to happen to that money, but
15 we see a lot of white people in power. We have migrant
16 programs where the whole administration from the top to
17 the classroom teacher is predominantly white, but the
18 people that you see in the classroom is to serve latino
19 children, migrant children which are predominately Mexican
20 American children from Texas in the summer, but the whole
21 administration is white. It's not reflective of the
22 community that they are supposed to serve. And it's a
23 same thing in the school district and the medical
24 professions in the police department when sometimes white

1 people go on and they speak for us while I believe they
2 are well meaning. They are being gatekeepers. They are
3 gatekeeping information from us. They are not allowing us
4 to access information and they are not allowing us to
5 speak for ourselves and I personally do not need a white
6 person to speak for me at City Hall or any other place.
7 So, any white leaders that are here that speak for me,
8 when you speak for latino leaders, I'm latino, you cannot
9 exclude me, but you cannot speak for me. So, you cannot
10 speak for the whole community. And that's anybody that's
11 a white person and I know a lot of people who feel that
12 way. That white people who work in organizations and lead
13 latino organizations to not speak for all of the latinos
14 in this community and should not go and represent
15 themselves as such. That is clear racism.

16 The other thing that we have observed,
17 I have been here in Moorhead, like I said, for 18 years
18 and I, if I had been on one or two committees of -- been
19 on over 200 committees and I have come to realize that I'm
20 not on any more committees. I refuse to be on anybody's
21 committee because I have come to realize that when we're
22 on another committee, we are not validated. We are the
23 token spik on those committees, that's how I'm perceived,
24 and that's how I'm treated and that's how my ideas are

1 treated. So, if my rage and my anger is coming through,
2 that's because that is how I feel. And that's my reality,
3 that's what I live with. I have four children and I have
4 a four year old son who will soon be starting school and I
5 dread him going into the school district. I have dread.
6 I am contemplating sending him to a private school, which
7 I cannot afford, but I'm scared of the Moorhead School
8 District. My daughter has been out of school for two
9 years. She graduated last year, but I did not realize
10 that when I moved to this community, when she came home
11 from school I would have to teach her a lot of things, but
12 one of them was to teach her what a spik was. You know,
13 mommy, what is a spik, at five years old? That's
14 something white people don't have to do. When we go to
15 the grocery store, we get followed. I know when I'm
16 tailed. A month ago, you know, one of my good friends who
17 is a community leader and a professional, her groceries
18 were separated at the grocery store; this much in food
19 stamps, automatically, and that has happened to me several
20 times where I've left carts of groceries because they've
21 told me to pay with food stamps. I worked for Clay County
22 Social Services and did food stamps for, you know, for
23 eight and a half years and even while employed there.
24 They did that to me. To say that I'm outraged about

1 those things that's still happening, you know. How far
2 have we come, while white people want to borrow our
3 culture, our food, our themes, celebrations; they
4 celebrate the Cinco De Mayo, they have no respect because
5 they do not accept us so they do not respect us, but they
6 do want to exploit our culture, our music our food, our
7 dances, et cetera, to entertain themselves. This is an
8 exploitation of the latino culture. The Mexican American
9 culture that's resettled here, this is our community, too;
10 however, we don't appear to be looked at as citizens of
11 this community.

12 Several weeks ago we held an event with
13 the police department because we have started opening
14 dialogues with him and it has been a positive experience.
15 It has been coming for a long time and we were very happy
16 to see it finally come to not full bloom, but the bud is
17 there. And one of the things that one of the questions
18 that was asked was now everybody was investing in
19 Moorhead, and I realized for the past two years I had been
20 feeling like it was my turn to speak. I said, I'm here
21 and I'm ready to leave Moorhead because I'm tired of
22 having to mold myself to fit this environment. Now, if I
23 go to Texas at least I know that when I go in a grocery
24 store and I'm followed, it's not going to be because of my

1 skin color. I'm tired of having to mold myself to fit
2 this environment and it's a white person's environment;
3 I'm never going to fit. I'm tired. I need to go. They
4 told me that I was burned out and I may be burned out, but
5 the other thing is why should we have to consistently walk
6 in two cultures? Why should we consistently be, you know,
7 think white, think how you're going to -- perceive how
8 you're going to be perceived. Think about how is Alan
9 seeing me? How his eyes and then have to act that way and
10 then be in my own culture and be comfortable with myself
11 and how do you live with yourself and that's what we
12 define as internalized oppression. We stuff it in. If we
13 were to deal with things, we'd be in a mental hospital
14 forever. Even people of color everyday there's an event
15 that hopes to people of color that could oppress us, that
16 does oppress us and if we don't know how to deal with it,
17 we do act it out, which is now what is happening with our
18 kids in our school district. How many kids are
19 graduating? This system hasn't gotten the worse and for
20 me as an individual, as a parent, I just, I don't know
21 what I'm going to do, but I do foresee myself leaving this
22 town within five years. That's because Moorhead has
23 ceased to become home to me and I'm catching myself saying
24 that I want to go home, but why do I want to go

1 home? Because it's become an unwelcoming place and we
2 have not been able to make ourselves welcome here. Our
3 population of latinos why is it decreasing? In 1995 there
4 were almost a thousand migrant families, you know, migrant
5 families apply for public assistance, you know, they apply
6 for emergency assistance, and then that's how they're
7 perceived that every latino that comes to Moorhead is on
8 welfare. Now, if we have two hundred and I think that you
9 heard what the figures were going to be, that that's going
10 to be cut by half. How many migrants are going to be
11 coming this year? But it's definitely an unwelcoming
12 atmosphere when we come to Moorhead, you know, when new
13 people come to Moorhead as a community leader, you know, I
14 constantly get phone calls in the middle of the night, I
15 get phone calls. I was just raided, the police just
16 stopped me, the police called me a spik, the police did
17 this, you know. And going to get medical attention at the
18 hospital, I had a case last summer where a child was in a
19 daycare situation and the caretaker was white, but what
20 ended up happening was by the time the mother came home
21 from working, the police were there waiting for her. The
22 child had a birth spot which is red which is something
23 that happens with a lot of children of color. She had a
24 red birthmark on her back and they took the child away

1 from the parent. The parent ended up getting hysterical
2 trying to hold the child and the woman ended up being
3 pushed. The police got involved and it ended up almost in
4 an altercation and we had to get the state department to
5 come and intervene. But it's those kinds of things where
6 it ended up at the hospital. They checked her, it wasn't
7 a bruise, it was a birthmark. But when we spoke to the
8 doctor that attended the child he was going off duty and
9 said that if he had had some experience in California with
10 this, so he stayed after he got off and he identified that
11 it was a birthmark. But the people that were there, the
12 doctors on call had no clue that this was a birthmark and
13 that to me is having children taken away from you because
14 you don't understand another culture. You just assume
15 that it's a bruise. Now, but what this family went
16 through for those two or three days in having to like they
17 thought they were going to lose their children. They were
18 told don't speak in spanish, speak in english, as they
19 were talking back and forth, and by this time all of the
20 neighbors had come around and the daycare parents were
21 coming, so the living down of that shame and it's okay, we
22 made a mistake, we're sorry, and that's it. But, that's
23 all we get. That's what, oh, I'm sorry, you know, when
24 last week when you heard about another incident with the

1 Sheriff's Department where they pulled a man out of
2 Halfway Center, took him to jail, interrogated him for two
3 days and then on Monday when the attorney was able to get
4 to him, we're sorry, we weren't supposed to take you out
5 of Halfway House. There was a mistake, but during that
6 two days when they held him in jail, they were
7 interrogating him and wanting him to name others who were
8 mixed up in drugs. He said he was not in drugs, but they
9 kept him there for two days. They returned him back on
10 the Halfway house on Monday after they apologized, but
11 they kept him for two days. So, I'm sorry, just take care
12 of everything, you know, and as an individual, I'm sorry
13 doesn't cut it anymore. I'm sure that if we do something
14 to a white individual, we would have to go to jail. If we
15 did something -- if we hit a white individuals on the
16 street or anything like that happened, we would be put in
17 jail. There wouldn't be, oh, I'm sorry for us to just
18 take write a letter of apologies that does not happen to
19 us.

20 Now, I would like to tell you about
21 some individual accounts. I'll make this brief. My
22 husband works at the Fargo Forum and he works the run 9:00
23 to 5:00.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: What does he do?

1 MS. GONZALEZ: He's a pressman at the Fargo
2 Forum and several times has been followed because he works
3 on Fargo and he has to cross the bridge. We live in a
4 middle class predominantly white neighborhood and he was
5 followed from when it was 5:00 o'clock in the morning, he
6 was followed from when he crossed the bridge all the way
7 to our neighborhood and he told me why don't you ask -- I
8 knew some of the detectives, why am I being followed and
9 can I stop and ask. I called and they said, oh, it was
10 because the Blazer he was driving fit the description of
11 one that was reported stolen. And that's what the police
12 person said that was doing the following. And then as I
13 stated on the phone and talked further, the person told me
14 well, and the truth was he was just making sure he
15 belonged I that neighborhood. He was running the plate to
16 make sure he even belonged in that neighborhood. That
17 type of incident just incensed me that that has
18 continuously our plates are run to see if our cars belong
19 to us like that, you know.

20 My daughter was in school here. They
21 were going to take a trip to Canada and all six Asian
22 children and my daughter were told to bring the birth
23 certificate because they were going to need them to cross
24 Canada to make sure they could cross back and I was

1 incensed because this was made in the whole classroom, but
2 they were selected by name to bring their birth
3 certificates so they could cross back, you know. My child
4 didn't go, of course, but it's things like that that
5 continue to happen in this community. So, are we free of
6 racism, hell no. You know, and we need to address it. So
7 I thank you for your time.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I have one question for
9 you. This may seem out of left field, but it's very
10 important in light of what we have heard, both yesterday
11 and today. Have you ever considered and would you
12 consider or if you wouldn't, do you know other men or
13 women in the latino community that would consider police
14 work, being employed as a police officer?

15 MS. GONZALEZ: I think that that's something
16 that they need to do. You know, when you look at the pay
17 scales, I think that they've talked to people in Arizona
18 and then also the requirements that are needed in the
19 State of Minnesota to be a policeman here are a lot more
20 stringent to be able to get in the police department,
21 they're very, very stringent. I went to the citizen's
22 police academy, but the other thing is if they really want
23 to recruit a latino in the police department, they're
24 going to pay and the monies that they've offered the

1 latinos like from Arizona, which have comparable
2 requirements to join the police department, have been, you
3 know, very minimal and it's not enough of an incentive to
4 move to Minnesota which is, you know, 20 degrees below
5 zero and they're going to leave sunny Arizona. And so I
6 think that the Moorhead Police Department can be creative.
7 I think they can start working with kids in school and I
8 think that they can start working with kids in college and
9 officer incentives. I think that they need to be creative
10 about doing something about getting some people that look
11 like us out in the community.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. We do very
13 much appreciate both of your appearances.

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P U B L I C S E S S I O N

1
2 Would you first give us your name and
3 your address and if you represent an organization and do
4 the same as I did yesterday. The persons who are going to
5 be addressing us were those who had asked to appear
6 yesterday at the open session. There wasn't enough time
7 and so this is a carryover from that. I'm going to ask
8 you to confine your remarks to the items that you really
9 want us to know about. We have three or four minutes per
10 person. Please go ahead.

11 STEVE AMENYO

12 My name is Steve Amenyio and I'm a
13 refugee, refugee resettled four years ago, 1995, and I
14 have since living here some concern, some present concerns
15 because I have never thought that such a thing might
16 happen to me, even at the state. I would like to express
17 my profound gratitude to the Commission for giving me this
18 opportunity to voice out my grievances. I will begin
19 with by reminding you at the judgment of Nuremburg 1949
20 the Nazi ministers of justice said, oppose to be depended
21 by his attorney through the argument that we don't know
22 that the Nazi leadership has genocide, yes, genocide in
23 the agenda. Nobody knows what is going on, happening in
24 this area of the United States. But, I'm very surprised

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1 the argument that they were not aware that just was
2 planned and executed even they didn't know is because they
3 don't know. Nobody wants to know hat's going on here.
4 Nobody wants to know. And if for you to achieve -- for
5 them to achieve greater Germany those who knew it,
6 Nuremburg, become complacent through the evil within the
7 leadership. If you look, you want to overlook what's,
8 going on because of the color of the skin. Well, the
9 compromise you have evil led to the downfall of the Third
10 Reich. I think history is going to repeat itself over
11 here. The history is going to repeat itself in the sense
12 that everybody wants to close his eyes on what's going on.
13 But, I don't think in my opinion some secret orders of
14 some churches; catholic church is not included as far as I
15 can tell, are trying to give a new leaf to some kind of
16 slavery in this area. The judiciary and some other
17 bunches of state and I'm standing by my word because I was
18 about to send the whole file to the United Nations of
19 Human Rights Commission when I heard about the Commission,
20 this Commission over here and I was very happy. So please
21 take pains and look hard beyond the curtain and just train
22 your eyes to find out. You ought to do that for the sake
23 of this country. And to our situation, like Tulsa,
24 Oklahoma in the 20s and Rosewood, such as things are

1 occurring. It's very important, I don't articulate well
2 in english, but I'll try to make myself understood. I'm -
3 going to read to you a letter I recently sent to the Forum
4 paper. I addressed it first to the State Department in
5 Washington, well to State Department. I'm saying to the
6 Counselor of Immigration Population and Refugee Bureau
7 two years ago you've kindly intervened in the dispute I
8 was having with my sponsor had with IRS over the amount of
9 travel. Thanks to you, the issues have been resolved.
10 That prompted me to resume payment to the agency, which is
11 now completed. The same letter, the attached and signed
12 letter of acknowledgement I received letter, however, my
13 role didn't end for that on April 18, 1998 I have the
14 attachment for equal extended to the Senator Curan. I got
15 fired at my work for no conventional reason. I'm not
16 worried for all along I have been subjected to increased
17 -- this is the letter I write, I sent to the Forum paper.
18 I read you earnest interest. The article was Welfare
19 Fraud. In it man lost funding to proposed budget cuts by
20 your correspondent so and so. It arose my interest
21 because of the peculiar experience I have been having with
22 the unit of custom my dollar and was enforced out of home
23 now for the past three y ears and over \$6,000 have been
24 collected from me over the period through a fully court

1 order. Amazingly it seems as if there were concealing and
2 covering up the whole episode in an exhibition to deny
3 having collected so much money from me for a revenue fee;
4 not account of payment.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I'm going to interrupt
6 you for just a moment because what I'm trying to find is
7 the point that you want to make to the Commission
8 regarding the subject that we are here for. What I'm
9 hearing so far, and correct me if I'm wrong, is a dispute
10 that you are having with the Cass County Authority?

11 MR. AMUNYO: I work here in Moorhead. I work
12 in Moorhead here for three years and I got first when this
13 letter was sent to the Forum newspaper were--

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Am I right, this pertains
15 to the dispute with the Cass County Officials?

16 MR. AMUNYO: A dispute of Cass County, but
17 you see I'm just want to portray the kind of abuse we are
18 going through in that part of the United States.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: As far as discrimination
20 in Moorhead? That's what our subject is, is the status of
21 racial matters in Moorhead in 1999.

22 MR. AMUNYO: Yes. When this letter was
23 addressed to the Forum paper, I worked here in Moorhead
24 and I got fired a week after the letter was addressed to

1 the Forum paper.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: You wrote the letter to
3 the Forum paper?

4 MR. AMUNYO: Yes, and I got fired.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay.

6 MR. AMUNYO: In order to get funding, the
7 present justice, the fabricate delayed information in the
8 system. Most of the time we can cure and most vulnerable
9 members of the community are picked on to leave new fees
10 that are used to bank my account at Norwest Bank at
11 Moorhead here to siphon hundreds of dollars, so much so
12 that I became suspicious of the bank. So last Tuesday I
13 wanted to be done my loan, the loan I owe IRS too,
14 immigration services, I couldn't have been handed the cash
15 over to them. They intercept my mail. I confronted my
16 mail with Fargo postmaster who confirmed my mail
17 intercepted. I don't believe that made -- even I don't
18 know whether it's even rush and in the society, I don't
19 know. My wife got here United States legally last
20 October. Thanks to Senator Curan, the organization sent
21 her cash twice and twice the mail it has been intercepted
22 in the Prairie Woods Post Office. She has a vital medical
23 aid to the credit bureau for defaulting. I have been
24 living, working and paying taxes in North Dakota for the

1 past four years. I should have a right to the protection
2 of the law, at least a right to have a city bank account,
3 a mail box, education of my children. The Cass County
4 government should accurately release information that
5 might warrant these criminal activities and the use of
6 thugs in the name of the law and the State of North
7 Dakota. If this was not made to make me feel bad about in
8 which case they should rest assured it would take far more
9 than that to make me feel bad about this country. I know
10 too well the journey made to Fargo by this county for a
11 few nostalgic journeymen who will stop at nothing,
12 instituting hate mongering for money will hardly change my
13 mind. I'm sorry, I don't speak too good english.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: I do appreciate your
15 statement. It's the time factor that maybe we should
16 just let me see if I can understand what you're saying
17 because there's a language problem which we want to find
18 out how your statements are relevant to what our inquiry
19 is. Are you saying that your bank account was some monies
20 were taken by Norwest Bank.

21 MR. AMONYO: Norwest Bank. Norwest here I
22 reported to the police the first time this happened, he
23 presented a check and I have my money in this bank for two
24 years, nothing have happened to me.

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And do you know that this
2 is standard practice at Norwest Bank to take money from
3 people's account?

4 MR. AMUNYO: I don't know but I had a feeling
5 it's massive abuse of my civil rights.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay. I do appreciate
7 the statement. I don't want to cut anybody off, but we
8 are very limited in what we're looking at and it's the
9 subject of racism in the Moorhead area and we've got to
10 limit ourselves to not personal dispute between you and
11 the county or you and the bank.

12 MR. AMUNYO: Mr. Weinblatt, this very racist
13 undertone, what is going on? If you don't look hard to
14 find out the truth, well you--

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Help us.

16 MR. AMUNYO: I'm sorry, you might be condoning
17 or accomplice to which what do you want to do actually I
18 think you wanted to avert --

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Help us. What's the
20 connection?

21 MR. AMUNYO: The connection in this area I
22 believe they are reluctant hosts. They are imposing on
23 them a new community. They are imposing on them this new
24 community reluctant hosts. This is what I wanted to make

1 you see. Now in school I'm not personally happy with the
2 way our children are being brought up. We don't have a --
3 I don't think they are going to make it. This children in
4 college in this area are going to make it. I don't think
5 so. And I don't think that United States if we are
6 brought here, the new ethnic group is being transported in
7 the area probably because they wanted diversity, but I
8 think they should consult maybe they need homework if the
9 host find out whether they like it or not because I had a
10 feeling that they, when I say reluctant host, many things
11 are being covered, concealed and you've got to work hard
12 looking hard before you find out the reality. We wanted
13 to form our own community in the area so that we could
14 address self help. All these things they will not tell
15 you that they don't want you to have to assemble. YOU'll
16 find out yourself that no, they don't want you to come
17 together. They don't want you to come together and that's
18 the minorities, to assemble and help each other. For
19 example, in winter time, for example, you have below 30
20 degrees, you need to come together, but they are not
21 telling you that you should not come together, but --

22 MS. ORWOLL: Where did you come from?

23 MR. AMUNYO: I come from West Africa.

24 MS. ORWOLL: Just two years ago?

1 MR. AMUNYO: Four years ago.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: What brought you to
3 Moorhead? Why did you choose Moorhead?

4 MR. AMUNYO: That's the point. I'm not
5 choosing Moorhead. I was resettled here.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: By?

7 MR. AMUNYO: By Lutheran.

8 MS. ORWOLL: Lutheran Social Services.

9 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: They chose Moorhead for
10 you?

11 MR. AMUNYO: They chose Moorhead for me.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And did they tell you why
13 they were choosing Moorhead for you?

14 MR. AMUNYO: I've never been told.

15 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And are there any other
16 people that you know of from West Africa here in Moorhead?

17 MR. AMUNYO: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: About how many?

19 MR. AMUNYO: There are some people. I live --
20 some people not living, but are running away.

21 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Now I don't understand.
22 And the services that you get are there, is there any
23 benefit in the school district for the adults to learn
24 english?

1 MR. AMUNYO: I think so, yes.

2 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And what is your native
3 language?

4 MR. AMUNYO: I speak Entogo, but I also speak
5 French.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And the difficulties that
7 you have described to us with the bank and with Cass
8 County are there people at Lutheran social Services that
9 you can talk to to help resolve those problems.

10 MR. AMUNYO: Oh, this thing has been going on
11 for four years, but they know, they are aware.

12 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: They are aware?

13 MR. AMUNYO: Uh-huh.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And are there--

15 MR. AMUNYO: In Cass County, North Dakota have
16 no human rights department. They're no way to -- I write
17 to the attorney general of North Dakota, still no, nothing
18 has been done.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And when you brought
20 this to the attention of the people at Lutheran Social
21 Services, did they reply to you in any way?

22 MR. AMUNYO: Well, I believe Lutheran Social
23 Services, I don't know, they have done nothing about it.
24 They have done nothing about it, but what brought me

1 before the Commission is how someone telephone, mail,
2 all these things these basic rights be denied and tried to
3 confine me to North Dakota trying to cut me completely
4 out.

5 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Where do you live right
6 now?

7 MR. AMUNYO: I live in Fargo.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Let me try to think about
9 that. We might be able to help because we're limited in
10 what we can investigate. Where do you work -- you're not
11 working now.

12 MR. AMUNYO: Not yet.

13 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay. And you were
14 working for the Fargo Forum?

15 MR. AMUNYO: No, Moorhead here, I was working
16 for Heritage over at a few blocks away from here.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: So, you know what we
18 would like to do is to have you talk with our staff
19 person. It sounds like you have not been listened to.
20 Whether you've been heard or not, I don't know, but you've
21 not been listened to and what we're looking at is the
22 general subject of racial or minority issues rather than
23 the specifics. Now, you do raise on behalf of those
24 people from Africa and West Africa many telling issues that

1 we do hear, but as far as your specific situation, I'm
2 going to request that you talk with Peter who can give you
3 help on the specifics and we do appreciate your testimony
4 on the general.

5 MR. AMUNYO: Thanks.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Let me also add one more
7 thing. Again, I'm speaking only for myself. I believe
8 that you're right that when people of good will -- that
9 people do not have the right to say I didn't know.

10 MR. AMUNYO: Chairman, this Moorhead, I don't
11 see how they can disassociate even in Moorhead from Fargo
12 because it's the same city, the same city. If something
13 happens like racial things, it won't be limited to Fargo
14 or Moorhead and so please, if you want to address -- try
15 to also include those minorities over there on the other
16 side of the city.

17 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Again, you speak truth.
18 The only difficulty was about 120 years ago for reasons
19 known only to those in power at that time, they separated
20 the North Dakota from Minnesota.

21 Our next presenter will be Carey Lyon.
22 Ms. Lyon, would you please give us your name, if you
23 represent yourself or if you're on behalf of some
24 organization and your address for our record.

CAREY LYON

1
2 My name is Carey, C-a-r-e-y L-y-o-n,
3 and I live 3015 20th Street South Apartment 1009 in
4 Moorhead.

5 I represent Gentle King. I'm the
6 Director. I just became the director after our director
7 passed away the end of February. I'm bringing a new light,
8 I guess, in a minority issue here and that's a disability
9 issue. I'm going to be giving you some examples of what
10 has happened to our past director that has passed away was
11 also actually his personal care attendant. Gentle is a
12 non profit organization, grass roots organization and we
13 work with people with differing abilities and also low
14 income. We are a new organization in this community.
15 We've been around for about two or three years, so we are
16 just kind of getting started and getting our name out into
17 the community. One issue that Bruce worked on which has
18 probably one of his major accomplishments was suing the
19 City of Moorhead for curb cuts which was mentioned this
20 morning by Rick Henderson. This was a very long drawn out
21 process. It took five years, the city rebuffed him
22 everytime and it cost the city \$90,000 of lawyer fees
23 where that could have gone to curb cuts or other
24 accessible issues in this community.

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1 A couple of other incidents that
2 happened with him with law enforcement. Bruce had two
3 dogs and he liked to go out in the community and he was
4 very active in this community. He butted heads many
5 times with the city council. There was a well known
6 business man, Bruce was out walking his dog and this
7 business man drove, was driving around and he and this was
8 during the duration of Bruce's lawsuit with the curb cuts
9 in the City of Moorhead and Bruce is out walking his dogs
10 and the man came in a driveway and cut him off. Bruce
11 proceeded to go a different way, cut him off, threatens
12 his life. Bruce was very scared. He went to the police
13 department. Bruce believed this to be a hate crime and
14 they didn't think anything of it. They told the business
15 man, you know, and the business man sated that he did
16 this, you know, and they really didn't do anything about
17 it. Another incident with law enforcement was Bruce was
18 out walking his dogs, again fell out of his chair. A
19 couple of people stopped, helped him back into his chair.
20 He had cut his head, so it was kind of bleeding and they
21 must have called the ambulance or whatever. Bruce was
22 proceeding to come back home with the dogs and a policeman
23 came up, rant right in front of him, blocked him off,
24 would not let him go. He felt like a criminal. Knowing

1 all he wanted to do was get home, take his dogs home. He
2 knew the dogs were kind of possessive, they threatened to
3 take the dogs away because they wouldn't let them get
4 close to him. Bruce was fine. He had no problem if there
5 was not an ambulance person there that did not know Bruce,
6 I don't know what would have happened. He said I know
7 him, he's fine. Let him go home. I'll check him when he
8 gets to his house. You know, and now they let him go
9 after that, but that was another case.

10 Another issue. This is when I was
11 working with Moorhead State students with the social
12 workers and one of the employees did a housing survey and
13 one thing that they found out in the housing survey was
14 that there's no accessible family units in Moorhead; none.
15 Not one, and when I asked her, I said was there any people
16 -- I asked one of the students that did the survey, he
17 said was there any people that asked you know came to the
18 four housing or whatever and she said, well, the person of
19 fifteen years said only in the fifteen years that she has
20 been the director or whatever only two people came and he
21 said that was one too many people, you know, for public
22 housing.

23 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: This pertained to public
24 housing?

1 MS. LYON: Yes, I'm sorry, yes. I believe
2 that's basically it, but just different people with
3 disabilities. I guess I feel, you know, that's an issue
4 that needs to be addressed also. Besides I believe people
5 with disabilities are growing more and more and people
6 don't realize that, you know, in a matter of a second you
7 can become disabled just like that.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Does Moorhead have a
9 public transportation system?

10 MS. LYON: Actually we're working on that issue
11 right now, too. I will be going, after this I will be
12 going working more on that issue. I believe I'm not
13 actually the right person to be talking on this. I'm
14 learning they're affiliated with Fargo and I believe
15 there's a paratransit, but now what we're working on
16 is paratransit is no longer here going to be running on
17 Sundays because it's -- they're saying it costs \$49 an
18 hour and you know all of this different things. I believe
19 during the summer the bus route in Moorhead do not run
20 late at night and you can quote me if I'm wrong, there's
21 no night service. They probably would be better at
22 answering this than I would concerning the bus route.

23 MS. GONZALEZ: The paratransit she's talking
24 about is a complementary service to the regular routes.

1 So what they're doing, since they have to if they have
2 regular routes that runs on Sunday, they have to have the
3 paratransit. So, they're canceling regular Sunday routes
4 so they don't have to run paratransit on Sundays. So,
5 basically no one will get to ride the bus on Sundays. You
6 don't get to go to church, you don't get to go anywhere.
7 There's no night bus June, July or August in Moorhead
8 after the last bus at 6:15 because once the colleges are
9 out, they stop running the night bus because the only
10 night bus is the college bus. So, if you work in Moorhead
11 or you live in South Moorhead over here, you'd better be
12 home by 6:00 o'clock or you're hiking all the way from
13 downtown Fargo or wherever home.

14 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: And is there any kind of
15 a channel for input to the bus company? I don't know if
16 it's public or private bus company.

17 MS. GONZALEZ: It's kind of a combination
18 where the drivers work through Laidlaw and they're what's
19 supposed to be contracted to the city to drive the buses
20 and then the bus transit service is supposed to be run by
21 the city. So, it's kind of like a little--

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Is there an avenue,
23 channel for input?

24 MS. LYON: We go to public commission

1 meetings. We give testimony and we send information and
2 stuff, but that does not mean that they are listened to.

3 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Thank you. Any other
4 questions? Ms. Lyon, thank you very much.

5 Our next presenter is Mr. Carpenter.
6 Mr. Carpenter, thank you for coming.

7 MR. CARPENTER: Good afternoon.

8 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: If you give your full name
9 and address for our record.

10 JAMES CARPENTER

11 James Carpenter. I live presently right
12 now in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, 719 East Carbor Street. I
13 guess I don't know if it's a good idea that I'm the last
14 person speaking or I guess just the opportunity to speak
15 is probably going to be good enough here.

16 I've lived in the community now for
17 approximately twelve years and I was originally recruited
18 to be a student and a football player at Moorhead State
19 University. So that's how I wound up here.

20 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: From?

21 MR. CARPENTER: Yonkers, New York.

22 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Okay. I know a judge in
23 Yonkers.

24 MR. CARPENTER: Really?

1 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Go ahead.

2 MR. CARPENTER: I guess I'm here and somewhat
3 sad to say that I wish I had more opportunity to prepare
4 for this, but I didn't find out until late last night that
5 this was going on. I guess I'm here to say after being
6 here for twelve years that racism and prejudice does exist
7 at very high levels of government and within, as I said,
8 the City of Moorhead. I said being here for twelve years,
9 I'm not on the outside looking in any more. I believe I'm
10 on the inside and unfortunately, what I've seen is
11 disturbing.

12 I'd like to quickly tell you a story
13 about a friend I know. I guess I'll call him, we'll just
14 say his name is Tom. He came out here to go to school and
15 he's African American. He came to the City of Moorhead to
16 go to school and to play football at the age of 18. 18
17 years old moved across the country to come out here with
18 all the promise of being a football player and getting a
19 college education. After being here for two to three
20 years, he was somewhat, if you want to say he was aware
21 that there was truly racism in the City of Moorhead
22 because being a college student and a college football
23 player and living in a controlled environment such as
24 Moorhead State, you don't really get to see if you want to

1 say the real true side of the city. And he did not want
2 to believe that there was racism that existed in the City
3 of Moorhead because it wasn't obvious to him. As I said,
4 living in the campus at Moorhead State University. To make
5 a long story short, in the summer of '89, after being here
6 for a couple of years, he was arrested and charged with
7 two counts of burglary. Having a clean record up until
8 that point in time, he went to trial in front of a jury of
9 his peers, 12 65 year old Norwegian farmers and was found
10 guilty of these two counts of burglary, although he was
11 offered this plea bargain and all sorts of pleas to this,
12 he went to trial because he believed in his innocence.
13 Four years later in trying to get his life together and
14 trying to get back into school and trying to play football
15 in the summer of 1993, he was arrested and charged -- he
16 was arrested for sitting in class and charged with
17 trespassing at Moorhead State University, waiting for his
18 financial aid to be processed. And I guess it's very easy
19 to say that if every student was arrested for the same
20 circumstances for which he was arrested for, a third of
21 the student body would be sitting inside of the Clay
22 County jail. It's unheard of. He knew that he had been
23 wronged and in the summer of 1995 he filed a lawsuit
24 against the City of Moorhead, the State of Minnesota,

1 Moorhead State University, the Moorhead Police Department
2 and in his quest to try to seek justice inside of a
3 district court, he is still in the process of doing that
4 as we speak. He was put on trial for the charge of
5 trespassing, once again in the City of Moorhead with the
6 same 65 year old Norwegian farmers, but that jury found
7 him innocent of trespassing because he proved that he had
8 been given documentation to attend classes at Moorhead
9 State University. So, the jury found him innocent of
10 trespassing, but yet found him guilty of other charges
11 which was obstructing the legal process. Now obstructing
12 the legal process is the equivalent of resisting arrest or
13 at least not complying with the officer. The officers
14 admitted that this gentleman was not abusive, he did not
15 swing or fling his hands at anyone, but he was not willing
16 to go with the officers because he believed he was within
17 his right to be sitting in that classroom. Well, that jury
18 had the ability and should have found him innocent of
19 obstructing the legal process because if you're going to say
20 he was within his right to be sitting in that classroom,
21 they you have to say that he should not have been arrested
22 period. So, if he was innocent of trespassing, he should
23 have been found innocent of obstructing the legal process.

24 Well, the fact is he was found guilty of

1 obstructing the legal process and that obstructing the
2 legal process charge was used to send him to prison
3 because he was on probation from the summer of 1989,
4 remember the two counts of burglary I referred to? He was
5 sent to prison for 11 months and charged with his very
6 issue for which they sent him for was the very issue for
7 which he had filed those civil suits against the City of
8 Moorhead. [And if this doesn't appall you, I'm here to
9 tell you that the person I'm speaking of, my friend is
10 actually me. And you have to excuse me because I've gone
11 through so many different emotions on this from anger to
12 shock to I don't know. I've run the whole gamut of
13 emotions. But I'm here to tell you as I said that racism
14 does exist in the City of Moorhead and I didn't want to
15 believe it for the first couple of years that I was here
16 because, as I said, I was an athlete and as an athlete you
17 get treated differently, by the community, by even
18 officers. There were times when officers would drive by
19 me before I so called got caught up in trouble, officers
20 would ride by and they would see my Moorhead State
21 University uniform or jersey or whatever and they'd
22 obviously identify who I was and they'd go how's it going
23 James? Getting ready for the season? But the minute I
24 was charged with two counts of burglary, it was no longer

1 how's it going James, what are you doing here or what are
2 you up to? And so there are many instances at which I
3 would have to say what happened to me, everyone should be
4 appalled at. This is no longer a black and white issue.
5 These are human rights. I heard people make reference to
6 that. These are human rights issues. If anyone believes
7 that and I've seen the media do this and trying to portray
8 my story. They haven't done an accurate job of doing it.
9 They want to portray me as this paranoid black man who
10 believes that you know, every white person is out to get
11 him and that's not the case. Anyone who knows me knows
12 that I'm not the type of person to assume just because I
13 have a disagreement with someone who happens to be of a
14 different nationality or race that they're racist. But
15 in this particular case, when it looks like a duck and it
16 acts like a duck and walks like a duck, I'm going to call
17 it exactly what it is. And I believe strongly that there
18 are people that need to be held accountable. I was sent
19 to prison by a so called liberal judge and I'm not afraid
20 to mention her name. Her name is Katherine Wier. I've
21 had contact with this woman for approximately nine years
22 and I believe I would have received her liberalism if I
23 came before her as a ignorant black man who was not able
24 to communicate and express his opinions to her and to that

1 court. I believe I would have received her liberalism and
2 I would not have even been sent to prison. But, God
3 forbid if there's someone who walks in and stands up for
4 what they believe in and address the issue for which that
5 court has to address, I was told to shut up, I'm turning
6 you over to the Commission of Correction for 11 months.
7 My life was put into an abyss. I guess I'm just thankful
8 that I've had an opportunity to speak before you and I
9 hope someday that a federal district court in the City of
10 St. Paul hears what happened to me because this should not
11 happen to any American, not today, not ever.

12 CHAIRMAN WIENBLATT: Thank you. Let me ask
13 what are you doing -- no, you said you were living in
14 Fergus Falls.

15 MR. CARPENTER: I'm living in Fergus Falls
16 just trying to put things back together. Believe it or
17 not, it's only been three months that I have been I guess
18 released from the Minnesota Correctional facility.

19 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Would you consider living
20 in Moorhead? And if not, why not? And let me ask why?

21 MR. CARPENTER: Well, I have concerns. My
22 concerns are that my intent is to hold so-called pillars
23 of the community accountable for their actions and I
24 believe I can prove the issues at which I'm accusing them

1 of and I have keep concerns that when you go over people's
2 livelihood. What they might do to try to shut me up.
3 I've already seen that they are willing to send me to
4 prison for misdemeanor that took place five years ago and
5 execute a sentence that took place nine years ago. It
6 didn't take me long enough to figure out what was going
7 on. Even my actual caseworker when I got into the
8 Correctional Center of Minnesota he looked at me and
9 said, I'm going to quote, You must be a bad ass to come in
10 here on a misdemeanor. I go, what do you mean by that,
11 sir? I knew what he was getting at, but I wanted him to
12 elaborate. He said I asked him are you saying you don't
13 see people come in here under these circumstances that
14 often and he looked at me and he says, I've been here for
15 20 years and I've never seen anyone come in here under
16 these circumstances that you have. And I asked him are
17 you willing to say that in a court of law because I have a
18 pending civil suit against the City of Moorhead and then
19 it was like, well, I'm not saying it isn't unusual, it's
20 just kind of not normal. And he was backtracking off of
21 his statement, but I believe if he's put on the stand,
22 he's going to have to answer and repeat some of the same
23 stuff.

24 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Did you graduate?

1 MR. CARPENTER: No, I'm still 60 credits away
2 from finishing, which I've come to find out well the
3 bachelor's degree in psychology doesn't hold the same
4 weight that it once did when I was 19, but I guess I plan
5 on finishing at some point in time. My mom wants me to.

6 CHAIRMAN WEINBLATT: Good luck to you. Thank
7 you for coming forward with your comments. Any questions?
8 Thank you very much, Mr. Carpenter and good luck.

9 This then will close the public
10 testimony portion of our fact-finding meeting.

11 Let me tell you what the next three
12 steps are. First, there will be a period of time and I
13 believe it's 30 days in which our record will remain open
14 for written statements by those persons in the community
15 that wish to do so. And if you want to make an -- or you
16 or persons that are not here today want to make a
17 principal statement which will be part of our record, which
18 the Committee will consider in reaching it's report,
19 please see Peter Minarik and he will give you the address
20 and place to send those materials. Secondly, our staff
21 will be continuing then concluding it's work on the
22 statistical portion of the data pertaining to the situation
23 of minorities, disabled, racial religious in Moorhead over
24 the next three to four months. As you heard Fred, he will

1 be utilizing the services of volunteer students at
2 Moorhead State University as well as the services that we
3 have already received with great thanks from students in
4 the social work department at Concordia College. When all
5 of those materials have been received, a report will be
6 drafted. It will be circulated first to members of the
7 committee. We will all have at least a sentence and a
8 half to say about the matter, if not more and then we will
9 have our next meeting to adopt, modify, amend the report.
10 We will make a report as I said, in the opening comments
11 yesterday, our report will go to the President, to the
12 Congress, to the Library of Congress, to the United States
13 Civil Rights Commission. But most importantly, it will go
14 to you, the citizens of Moorhead and to the government and
15 business leaders, to the organizations that have appeared
16 before us and to any other individual who gives his or her
17 name to Peter as wanting a copy of that report.

18 We hope that our appearance here today
19 is really just the beginning. What we want to do here,
20 but in fact did hear the good, the bad the indifferent,
21 but most important part would be what lessons the
22 community draws from what it heard these past two days.
23 Are you listening to one another? Are you hearing? Do
24 you care? And do if we can't be a catalyst towards

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1 encouragement of that dialogue between citizens and
2 government, between community and business, the we will
3 certainly have earned more than our keep since we're all
4 volunteers.

5 I wish on behalf of the State Advisory
6 Committee to thank the people of Moorhead for your gracious
7 hospitality, for your willingness to step forward. You
8 have been heard. Thank you very much. We're in recess.

9 (The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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I, VERNITA HALSELL-POWELL, the undersigned
Notary Public in and for the State of Illinois, do hereby
certify:

That the annexed and foregoing testimony of the
witnesses named herein was taken stenographically before
me and reduced to typewriting under my direction;

I further certify that I am not a relative or
employee or attorney or counsel of any of the parties to
said action, or a relative or employee of any such attorney
or counsel, and that I am not financially interested in the
said action or the outcome thereof;

I further certify that the proceedings, as
transcribed, comprise an accurate transcript of the
testimony, including questions and answers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my and
affixed my official seal this 30th day of July, 1999.

Vernita Halsell Powell

NOTARY PUBLIC in and for the
State of Illinois.