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*Blaine House*  
*Conference on Families*

A Report to Governor Joseph E. Brennan  
on Conference Proceedings and Recommendations

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Blaine House Conference on Families  
Planning Committee

State House Station 11

Augusta, Maine 04333

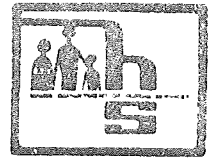
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JOSEPH E. BRENNAN  
Governor

## BLAINE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

c/o Department of Human Services  
State House Station 11  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
Tel: 289-2636



MICHAEL R. PETIT  
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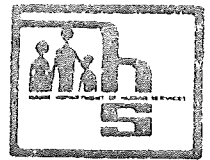
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MICHAEL R. PETIT  
Commissioner

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AUGUSTA, MAINE

September 1980

Governor Joseph E. Brennan  
State House  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Governor Brennan:

On May 29 and 30, the first Blaine House Conference on Families was held in Augusta. Nearly 200 delegates representing every county, various professions, income levels, ages, and constituencies attended. It is my pleasure to transmit to you this Report on the proceedings and recommendations of that Conference. We hope that you, the members of the 110th Legislature, and other Maine citizens will find the enclosed recommendations worthy of consideration and action.

The topics considered in the seven workshops were based primarily on the information that was gathered by the Blaine House Conference on Families Planning Committee through a series of five regional hearings. We believe that the recommendations represent a diligent effort to identify actions that should be pursued to support and strengthen families in Maine.

On behalf of the Planning Committee, I wish to express our sincere thanks for your support of this effort. The Planning Committee extends its appreciation to all delegates, staff, and others who contributed to the making of a very successful conference.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Petit  
Chairman  
Planning Committee



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## I. INTRODUCTION

Planning Committee: In the Fall of 1979, Governor Joseph E. Brennan called for a Blaine House Conference on Families to be held in the Spring of 1980. He called together a 20 member citizens' Planning Committee to organize and implement this unique effort on behalf of families. Michael R. Petit, Commissioner of Human Services, was asked to chair the Committee.

Funding: Funding for this project was provided primarily by the Department of Human Services, the Department of Mental Health and Corrections, and the Department of Education and Cultural Services. Additional funds were contributed by the Maine Teachers Association and the Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance Agency.

Regional Hearings: The Planning Committee organized a series of five regional hearings on families which were held in February and March in Bangor, Portland, Sullivan, Lewiston and Presque Isle. Nearly 1000 people participated in this process. From the regional hearings were identified problems and challenges facing Maine families and recommendations. This information was forwarded to the White House Conference on Families in preparation for the June 5, 6, and 7 national conference to be held in Baltimore.

Blaine House Conference: The Planning Committee held a statewide Blaine House Conference on Families on May 29 and 30th. The University of Maine at Augusta generously donated its facilities for the Conference. Nearly 200 delegates representing all sixteen counties attended the State Conference. Seventy-five of the delegates had been selected by lottery at the regional hearings and the remaining delegates had been appointed by the Governor.

Based largely on information gathered at the regional hearings, the Planning Committee selected the following workshop topics for the Blaine House Conference:

- FAMILY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION AND VALUES
- FAMILIES AND ECONOMICS
- FAMILIES AND GOVERNMENTAL INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS
- FAMILIES IN CRISIS
- FAMILIES AND SUBSTITUTE CARE
- FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES
- FAMILIES AND THE MEDIA

Each workshop was asked to identify the challenges and problems facing Maine families and to develop realistic strategies and recommendations to meet those challenges.

General Themes: The following themes were repeated throughout the Blaine House Conference:

Role of Government. Delegates in every workshop acknowledged

the important supportive role government must assume in solving many of the problems experienced by Maine families. However, there was also widespread recognition that families and local communities should rely more on one another and less on government to solve problems.

Alternative Work Schedules. Acknowledging the increasing number of households headed by single parents and households in which both parents work, delegates felt that private and public sector employers should institute and support alternative work schedules for their employees. Delegates suggested that flex-time, job sharing, compressed work week and part-time employment should be options for employees. They felt that job-sharing and part-time employment should be accompanied by prorated benefits.

In addition, delegates recommended that personnel policies in both the public and private sectors should be amended to help employees fulfill more easily their family responsibilities. It was felt that sick leave policies should be expanded to include caring for children and other family members.

Day Care. Delegates felt strongly that the public and private sectors should provide child day care in the workplace. Presently, the availability of child day care options is severely limited, yet more and more parents are seeking day care for children.

Family Life Education. Many delegates were concerned that our educations do not prepare us for the challenges of family life. They felt that there is a need to develop family life education as part of the educational curriculum, available to all age groups (not just to students) and provided through the combined efforts of schools, communities and citizens' groups.

Cooperation in Education. Many delegates believed that families, schools and communities should work hard together to break down the adversary relationships that often exist among them and to build cooperation. They felt that this new spirit of cooperation should involve increased participation by families and communities in the schools and by schools in the community.

In-Home and Community-Based Care. Many delegates argued that in-home and community-based care, (rather than institutionalization) provided by local service organizations and volunteers, should be a priority, and should be supported financially through revisions in federal and state reimbursement policies.

Media. Delegates in all workshops discussed the need for increased responsibility by the media in supporting and strengthening families.

Follow-up:

Delegates at the Blaine House Conference on Families recommended that the following actions should be taken:

-- Delegates should convene groups on a regional basis to review

this Report to the Governor; to monitor the implementation of the Blaine House Conference recommendations; to begin planning for future local and state conferences; and to continue identifying needs of families and the effects on families of public and private sector policies and programs.

1981  
Conference:

Delegates in all workshops felt that the Governor should convene a second Blaine House Conference on Families in 1981, in order to do the following:

- Keep the importance of family life in the forefront;
- Continue discussion of public and private sector policies and programs which affect families; and
- Assess the progress in implementing the recommendations made during the 1980 conference.

Delegates suggested that the following guidelines should be used in planning the 1981 Blaine House Conference:

- The 1980 Planning Committee should draft a critique of the 1980 conference to assist those who will plan the 1981 conference.
- The Governor should convene regional hearings to encourage and support local action on the 1980 conference recommendations.
- As a way of promoting continuity, selected delegates from the 1980 conference should be invited to attend the 1981 conference.
- There should be better representation from youth, the elderly, the business community and all socio-economic levels at the 1981 conference.
- The best format for the 1981 conference may well be the one used this year - a series of regional hearings followed by a state conference. However, other approaches which might provide increased citizen participation should also be considered.

Recommendations: The following recommendations represent a diligent attempt by the delegates to the 1980 Blaine House Conference on Families to define actions that should be taken to support and strengthen family life in our state.

It is important to note that we, as a Planning Committee, have merely reported the recommendations as they were stated by each workshop group. Voting did not take place at the Blaine House Conference. Thus, these recommendations must be viewed as reflecting the ideas of individual workshops and not the conference as a whole.

The recommendations have been organized by the seven workshop topics and have been subdivided, further, into areas of responsibility for implementation: "Families and Communities," "Business and Industry," "Government," and "Shared Responsibility."

It is our hope that people who read this report will find ways to contribute to the effort on behalf of families. The regional hearings and the 1980 Blaine House Conference on Families have been significant first steps.



II. Findings and Recommendations from Workshop Entitled  
"FAMILY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION AND VALUES"

- Findings:
- People are the most valuable resource in a community.
  - The adversary relationship that often exists between family and schools needs to be broken down and replaced with a complementary partnership.
  - While family is the first and foremost influence in the lives of young people, good schools are essential to their growth and development.

- Recommendations to be carried out by Families, Schools and Communities:
1. Partnership. The educational process should involve an equal partnership among families, teachers and students.
  2. Community Advisory Boards. To develop such a partnership, Community Advisory Boards should be created in each school district. They should be composed of teachers, parents, students, and other concerned community members and should report to local school boards and the Department of Education and Cultural Services.

I. Duties of the Community Advisory Boards:

- Organize broad based community forums that will provide citizens an opportunity to discuss their ideas and concerns regarding educational issues. Similar to the regional hearings held as part of the Blaine House Conference on Families, these forums will seek to evaluate the present relationship between family and school and explore community, teacher, student and parent expectations of the educational process.
- Provide parents with the opportunity to share in overall curriculum planning and evaluation of specific courses before they are offered.
- Present to the school board and the Commissioner of Education and Cultural Services, what citizens feel about education in their community. The Community Advisory Board in each district would be empowered to serve in an advisory capacity to the local school board whom they would keep informed of their work. The support and cooperation of local school boards would be needed to ensure the success of Community Advisory Boards.

II. Priority Actions of Community Advisory Boards:

- Community participation in schools and school participation in the community. This is a joint school-community responsibility. However, due to the hesitancy that many community members may feel, schools need to actively seek and encourage participation in the schools. In addition, business and community groups should create opportunities for student participation.

- The creation of intergenerational programs within the schools to tap the community as a resource. This requires participation, as do all these recommendations, by the Community Advisory Boards, school boards and community groups. For example, senior citizens who know how to sew can help teach sewing, and high school students could assist in school-based day care centers. Such experiments have often been cost effective and personally meaningful.
- Community members as a resource. Teachers should learn to regard parents and other community members as resources that can and should be tapped for use in the classroom and out in the community.

3. School Procedures. School procedures should be modified as follows:

- Regular parent-teacher-student conferences should be required by local school boards and by Community Advisory Boards.
- Inservice training programs for present teachers should be instituted on a regular basis. Present teacher training covers primarily academic areas, and needs to be expanded to include areas of family involvement and understanding. The medical model of residency, internship and subsequent training is offered as a strong concept.
- Teachers should increase their feedback to families regarding the performance of their children. Communications through the mail, conferences, home visits and telephone calls should all be expanded.

It was noted that increasing telephone communications between teachers and families could be expanded by an increased availability of telephones. Schools with over 500 students frequently have only one or two phones, which hampers communication.

- Prior parental approval should be sought when students sign up for alternative/elective courses.
- Parents have a right to expect their children to learn, unless there are exceptional learning disabilities.
- Lifetime activities such as art, drama, music and athletics should be instituted as curricular rather than extracurricular activities. As this will push teaching staffs to the limit, it will be necessary to regard the community as a resource.
- Schools, in conjunction with parents, should offer electives in child development as a way of preparing students for the difficult role of parenting.

4. Adult Education. Schools should offer a variety of adult education programs, including vocational opportunities, within their facilities wherever possible. Such existing programs should be encouraged or strengthened.

5. Family Life Education. Family life education courses should be available in schools and in the community at times which make family participation possible. Such courses, which were stressed in many of the regional hearings held by the Blaine House Conference on Families, should draw on community professionals to teach or help on either a salaried or volunteer basis, depending on the means of each community. Areas that could be covered include parenting, child rearing, single parents, retirement, aiding the elderly, etc.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

6. Community Forums. The Governor and the Department of Education and Cultural Services should support the concept of establishing broad-based community forums statewide or in a series of model communities to both evaluate the present relationship between the family and the school and explore community, family, teacher and student expectations of the educational process. Reports from various school districts should be submitted within a specific period of time to aid in the statewide evaluation of what Maine citizens want from their educational system. Funding should be provided for one staff person to aid in this process.

7. Teacher Certification. The Department of Education and Cultural Services should require that teachers take courses that will prepare them to work with the families of their students. To receive teacher certification in Maine, applicants should have completed courses that stress the sociology of the family, outreach techniques and communication skills.

8. Conferences. The Department of Education and Cultural Services should take the necessary steps to promote and encourage parent-teacher-student conferences.

9. School Health Education Project. The Department of Education and Cultural Services should reexamine certain sections of the School Health Education Project (SHEP). It should be noted that although the majority of workshop delegates viewed SHEP in a positive light, a small minority recommended that it be reexamined.

10. Family Impact Statement. The State Legislature and Congress should pass legislation that requires every public state agency to write a family impact statement as a part of policies now in operation and those that will be implemented in the future. There should be a common definition of "family impact statement."



Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

4. Marketing. Industry and chambers of commerce should develop marketing of local products and services.
5. Discounts. Businesses should give discounts for cash purchases in order to encourage the use of cash and lessen the use of credit cards.
6. Child Labor Laws. The State should allow exemptions in the Child Labor Laws that interfere with families working together, especially in the logging and blueberry industries and those industries that rely on a seasonal workforce.
7. Restrictive Employment Policies. Government should evaluate restrictive employment policies concerning the elderly and disabled.
8. Displaced Homemakers. Government should recognize the needs of and provide the necessary support services to displaced homemakers.
9. Tax Incentives. The State should offer tax incentives for utilization of Maine resources, including people. New and existing companies should be encouraged to use Maine workers and products first, before seeking them out-of-state. The State should offer "tax breaks" for small businesses, regardless of the number of employees, during the first five years of operation (similar to the arrangement that was made with Pratt and Whitney). The State should provide tax incentives for energy conservation that is appropriate to Maine.
10. Wages. The State should require that wages increase with inflation and cost-of-living.
11. Regulations. The State should provide, support and simplify government regulations that encourage locally owned businesses. The State should permit waivers with regard to some regulations. In some cases requirements for both state and local licenses should be eliminated.
12. State Development Office. The State Development Office should update its Marketing Directory and should encourage maximum use of resources within the State.
13. Educational Expenses. The federal government should reform the tax system regarding payment of educational expenses.
14. Federal Funds. The State should pursue its share of federal funds based on Maine's actual needs, rather than percentages thereof.
15. Agricultural Research. To improve Maine's economy, the State and Federal Government should encourage research on strains of vegetables that require a short growing season.

16. Office for Children and Families. The Legislature should pass and the Governor should sign legislation creating a State Office for Children and Families to coordinate and monitor state programs.

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Responsibility  
for carrying  
out  
Recommendations:

17. Expanded Use of School Facilities and Programs. The Department of Education and Cultural Services, local school boards and other community organizations should allow a greater use of school facilities and programs as resources for families and community members. School activities should be scheduled to meet the needs of families. Funds currently used for inter-scholastic sports should be rechannelled to fund community intergenerational recreational activities, including after school care. Buses should be made available to community groups. Perhaps the school year should be reexamined and changes instituted that would enhance family life.

18. Equal Pay. Business and government should provide equal pay for work of comparable value.

19. Training. Colleges, universities, vocational institutes, and the state and federal governments should locate training programs (including those for displaced homemakers) in available, accessible locations.

20. Federal Funds. If Maine is not receiving its full entitlement of federal funds due to inaccurate unemployment statistics, the Department of Manpower Affairs should coordinate activities in the public and private sectors to improve the reporting system. Unemployment statistics should, but presently do not, include the following: those who have exhausted their unemployment benefits, yet are still unemployed; the seasonally self-employed who at times are unemployed; displaced homemakers; and those who leave employment due to adverse work conditions.

21. Energy. Citizens and the public and private sectors should work together to develop alternative energy sources.

22. Transportation. Citizens and the public and private sectors should play an active role in securing better public transportation, especially in rural areas. The State and Federal Governments should allocate funds for railroad passenger service and regional public transportation.

23. Work Schedules and Child Day Care. Alternative work schedules and child day care in the workplace should be instituted by public and private employers.

24. Compliance with Federal Laws. The public and private sectors should be diligent in their compliance with laws pertaining to the Civil Rights Act (EEO), Section 504 (Handicapped), the Older Americans Act and Vocational Rights Act.

IV. Findings and Recommendations from Workshop Entitled  
"FAMILIES AND GOVERNMENTAL INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS"

Findings:

- Unequal eligibility guidelines for governmental income maintenance programs promote abuse of taxpayers dollars that support such programs.
- The public and private sectors have not provided people with enough meaningful incentives to become independent productive citizens.
- Society and many public officials fail to recognize that the maintenance of social service programs is a necessity, rather than a luxury that can be eliminated in periods of fiscal restraint.
- Benefits to those depending on governmental income maintenance programs are inadequate and are based on unrealistic levels and standards which do not keep pace with the cost of living.
- There is client humiliation and lack of fairness in the General Assistance process. The General Assistance Program lacks uniform standards and an enforcement mechanism.
- Society places its values and biases on the design and implementation of governmental income maintenance programs and they, in turn, have a tremendous impact on family systems.
- Presently, there is an absence of client involvement in policy decisions regarding income maintenance programs.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

1. Dignity. All income maintenance programs should reflect the dignity and self-worth of all people. People should be aware of the difficulties facing persons depending on income maintenance programs.
2. Single Program. Categorical assistance should be restructured into one income maintenance program. Until this happens, the Governor should appoint a task force to recommend ways of making uniform eligibility guidelines for the various income maintenance programs.
3. Benefit Levels. Benefit levels should be based on basic standard cost of living for the current year with yearly adjustments.
4. Need. The State should develop a standard definition of basic need which would include shelter, food, clothing and medical needs.
5. General Assistance. The State should clarify and develop uniform standards for General Assistance. The State should actively enforce the uniform standards.

6. Taxation. To pay for income maintenance programs, the State should restructure its tax system to a progressive rather than a regressive system.

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for carrying  
out  
Recommendations:

7. Small Business. The State should encourage and the private sector should assist with small business and cottage industry ventures for persons receiving benefits under income maintenance programs. This would provide them with a graduated method of joining or rejoining the workforce.

8. Terminating Assistance. People who have received some form of governmental income maintenance often fear the results if they choose to leave the system. There should be a process for terminating governmental assistance in order to facilitate more persons becoming self-sufficient, thus decreasing the cost of income maintenance programs.

V. Recommendations from Workshop Entitled  
"FAMILIES IN CRISIS"

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Families and  
Communities:

1. Special Needs of Certain Families. Programs of community support for families with developmentally disabled members should be instituted to provide public awareness of and education on the special needs of these families.
2. Family Life Education. A community network should be developed to provide young people with family life education.
3. Unmarried Pregnant Women. Communities should be supportive of women who are unmarried and become pregnant. Communities should establish community-based support groups for these women and their families. The media should help focus public attention on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies.
4. Self-Help. Individuals and communities should be sensitive to human needs and establish cooperative self-help groups.
5. Existing Programs. Families should make use of existing programs like Parents Anonymous and Ingraham Volunteers.
6. Domestic Violence. Communities should institute, and support financially, programs to assist families in crisis. Community groups and individuals should get involved with families in need of help. Communities should encourage the beginning and continuation of programs dealing with domestic violence that are based on the self-help concept with a minimum of bureaucracy. Individuals should work to reorganize the legal system so that it is more supportive of families.
7. Alternative Education. Schools and communities should support alternative education programs for students with emotional problems.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

8. Family Court. The Governor should consider the establishment of a Family Court System a priority. To this end, the Governor should convene a task force to study and make recommendations regarding such a system. The recommendations of the task force should address the resources and training for such a system.
9. Family Law. A Family Law Education Conference should be sponsored by the Department of Human Services and other relevant agencies to address family issues, and attendance should be mandated for judges hearing family matters.
10. Mediation. In all divorce matters in which there are minor children in the family, mediation should be required (except in life-threatening situations) by qualified family mediators and a report should be made to the court on the children and the family.

11. Child Protective Workers. The Department of Human Services should be responsible for reducing the caseloads and setting priorities for child protective workers.

12. Domestic Violence. The State should encourage the beginning and continuation of domestic violence programs which are based on the self-help concept. The best programs are those which involve a minimum of bureaucracy.

13. Alcoholism. The Governor should see that laws from other states are examined, laws which are already in force pertaining to alcoholism and abuse, to see if Maine laws can be improved.

14. Priorities. The State should conduct a serious examination of the priorities used in state funding of services for families in crisis.

15. Model Programs. The State should conduct implementation and evaluation of model programs for helping families in crisis.

16. In-Home Services. Programs for families in crisis using in-home services rather than institutionalization should be promoted and supported financially. Respite care, temporary placement (hours or days), and financial support to those providing such care should be made available. The Federal Government should reexamine its priorities for expenditure of Title XIX funds and make them more flexible and effective. In-home mental health services should be reimbursed under Medicaid.

17. Single Life Style. The Legislature should pass legislation that supports single life styles: i.e., child day care legislation and legislation permitting adoption of children by single persons.

18. Rights of Homosexuals. The Legislature should pass legislation guaranteeing rights for homosexuals: i.e., parenting rights and job rights.

19. Family Life Education. In order to prevent many family crises as they exist today, family life education programs should be implemented. The programs should deal with coping skills, sexual ethics, parenting skills, self awareness, life styles, career choices, interpersonal relationships, etc. Such programs should be available in public schools from grades K through 12, as well as from community organizations and the families themselves.

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for carrying  
out  
Recommendations:

20. Centralized Network. In the human services field there is a lack of coordination of existing services. As a result, there is duplication of some services and a complete absence of other needed services. A centralized help network needs to be established that would provide immediate help to anyone requesting assistance. This assistance should be provided with

a minimum of bureaucracy. The Department of Human Services, the Maine Coalition for Family Crisis, and others should work together to establish such a network. Every county should have a 24 hour-a-day crisis intervention hotline to assist those in need.

21. Domestic Violence. Shelter networks in Maine in conjunction with schools, churches and synagogues, the media and other community groups should provide and promote community awareness that domestic violence is prevalent at all levels of society in both rural and urban communities. The Attorney General's Office, Public Safety and community-based groups should vigorously monitor and enforce the new state statutes covering domestic violence.

22. Alcoholism. There should be on-going ways and means of making Maine citizens aware that alcoholism is the number one social problem in Maine.

23. Legal Services. The Attorney General and the Maine Bar Association should develop a plan to ensure legal services to individuals who cannot afford such services for themselves at the time of crisis, yet who have desperate need: e.g., in cases of domestic violence.

24. Involvement of Children. There should be increased involvement of children in discussions and decisions affecting them and their families. Children should be involved in pre-crisis intervention, including conferences, mediation, curriculum development, and other areas that have an impact on their lives.

25. Sexual Stereotyping: Workplace. Sexual stereotyping should be eliminated in the workplace through the following:

- equal pay for equal work;
- diligent compliance with affirmative action laws;
- tax incentives;
- promotions based on performance with no consideration given to the sex of the employee;
- awarding of contracts by the State on the basis of affirmative action; and
- more contracts to women's businesses and those businesses having a large female work force.

26. Sexual Stereotyping: Education System. Sexual stereotyping should be eliminated in our educational system through the following:

- curriculum should include "work rights" education; economic education, especially for women; teaching of life long sports and recreation; and courses in "life-coping" skills.

- Guidance counseling programs should eliminate sex bias in vocational education and provide non-biased counseling for careers and life planning.
- Teacher education should include consciousness raising courses regarding sex biases.
- Administrators should eliminate sex bias from personnel decisions.

27. Work Schedules and Day Care. Alternative work schedules and day care in the workplace should be provided by public and private employers.

28. Career Counseling. Private and public employers should make career counseling available to their employees.

29. Alternative Schools and Programs. There should be public support for parents who choose alternative schools for their children. Schools should develop alternative educational approaches and programs that would allow students in crisis to continue their education (e.g., pregnant students and students with emotional problems).

30. Displaced Homemakers. Displaced Homemaker programs should be established through adult education and CETA programs.

VI. Findings and Recommendations from Workshop Entitled  
"FAMILIES AND SUBSTITUTE CARE"

Findings:

Care of the Elderly

- Current programs, such as Medicaid, encourage institutionalization of the elderly. Benefits are often reduced if elderly persons choose to live with relatives instead of in an institution.
- Frequently, within such institutions, there is a severe lack of family settings for the elderly. Often, residents and their families do not know their rights and therefore the elderly sometimes do not receive the treatment and benefits to which they are entitled. The "medical model," commonly used in the care of the elderly, is often inappropriate. Often, there are too few physical and occupational therapy services available in these institutions.
- The elderly who wish to remain independent and who no longer want or are able to own their own home are faced with a severe shortage, statewide, of congregate housing.
- Much discussion took place regarding the rights of the elderly, especially the right of the elderly to "die with dignity."

Child Day Care

- Values and economics often come into conflict when parents are forced to make a decision between working and staying home with children. Obviously, with more mothers joining the work force, there is a greater need for available child day care options. Yet, debate rages over who is responsible for providing such services. Both the public and private sectors seem reluctant at this point to assume any responsibility and to provide leadership in this area. Many wondered if the right to child day care services should be legally mandated.
- There is a lack of local control of child day care programs. There is inadequate training of child day care providers. Publicity regarding day care services is not readily available.
- There is a lack of infant day care options and after school day care programs. In addition, there is a shortage of day care opportunities for the children of shift workers.
- Because school hours often end around three o'clock and working parents do not usually arrive home until after five o'clock, working parents face the problem of having to find transportation for their children to and from after-school day care programs and other activities.

### Foster Care

- Early recognition and treatment of family problems would lead to a diminished need for foster care.
- There is a lack of innovative approaches to foster care and permanency planning for children in foster care. Too many children have multiple placements and/or spend extended periods of time in foster care, an option that is designed to be temporary.
- Families involved in the foster care system do not receive enough training and are faced with fragmented support services. An improved periodic review of children in custody by a third party is needed.
- Because adoption is not subsidized, some potential adoptive parents fail to pursue adoption, especially of special needs children.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Families and  
Communities:

### Care of the Elderly

1. Nursing Homes. The community, through volunteers, should become more involved in nursing homes.
2. Hospices. Hospices, facilities that care for the emotional, as well as physical, needs of the terminally ill and their families, should be more available to the citizens of Maine. Local voluntary groups should actively encourage the establishment of a hospice system throughout the State.
3. Living Will. There should be increased recognition of a person's right to "die with dignity." People, especially the elderly and seriously ill, should be made aware of their option to draw up a "Living Will," a document that states, in part, whether a person wishes to have life supporting machines used to maintain his/her life in case of serious illness and/or accident.

### Child Day Care

4. Working Parents. Working parents should voice their child day care concerns with their employers and encourage them to provide workplace child day care.
5. Parental Responsibility. Parents should initiate and support cooperative child day care arrangements. Parents seeking child day care have a responsibility to find and purchase quality services for their children.
6. Co-ops. Groups, such as the Maine Council of Churches, should set up baby-sitting co-ops. These groups could be encouraged to do so by the publication of a handbook which would be distributed through existing institutions to the general public.

7. Community Control. There should be more community rather than state and federal government control of child day care centers, particularly with respect to regulations and standards.

Foster Care

8. Reducing Pressure on Families. Neighborhoods and local communities can help to diminish the need to place children in foster care by implementing the following recommendations that would reduce the pressure on family units:

- Provide respite care for families in crisis;
- Accept the concept of and responsibilities associated with neighborhood extended families and organize neighborhood volunteers to help members of the neighborhood;
- Establish baby sitting co-ops;
- Form parent support groups and self-help groups; and
- Creatively use empty school rooms and buildings.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

Care of the Elderly

9. Medicaid. To discourage institutionalization of the elderly, Medicaid guidelines for reimbursement should be changed to allow identical reimbursement benefits for those elderly who choose to live with family members as for those who choose to reside in an institution. Medicaid should include coverage for physical and occupational therapy.

10. In-Home Services. There should be federal and state reimbursement and financial assistance for families who elect to have elderly relatives live with them.

11. Report Forms. The Federal and State Governments should establish one uniform report form for verification of information and eligibility to alleviate the multiple forms and "red tape" which is involved in caring for the elderly. All governmental report forms should be simplified in order to expedite the process of caring for the elderly.

12. Approach. The State should use a more psycho-social approach, rather than a medical model, in the care of the elderly.

13. Protective Services. The Division of Adult Protective Services within the Department of Human Services should be expanded in order to bring more and better services to the elderly.

14. Community Services. The State should add to and expand existing community services for the elderly, particularly in the areas of transportation, home health care, homemaker services and meal programs.

15. Rights. The State should make the institutionalized elderly and their families aware of residents' rights and privileges by publicizing them. The State should expand nursing home advocacy programs.

#### Child Day Care

16. Schools' Role in Day Care. The Department of Education and Cultural Services should study education's role with respect to child day care. The Department should investigate the possibility and feasibility of using school facilities during and after school for child day care.

17. Courses. The Department of Education and Cultural Services should mandate courses in child care education in all secondary schools.

18. Transportation. School systems should permit school buses and other vehicles to be used for transportation of children to and from after-school day care programs and other activities.

19. Role of the Department of Human Services. The Department as a regulator and with responsibilities for public relations and training, should institute a program of public education to attract more, qualified day care operators; to offer support systems and training for operators; to educate parents to make wise decisions on the choice of day care; and to inform parents of available day care facilities.

20. Regulations. Maine should communicate with the Federal Government regarding day care regulations. Certain regulations (i.e., the payment of minimum wage and Social Security benefits to anyone working over 20 hours a week) make it nearly impossible, in practice, for families to have child day care (or care of the elderly) in their own homes. These regulations severely limit the options for those seeking in-home care, particularly those seeking child day care for newborns.

#### Foster Care

21. Options. Once it has been determined that it is in the best interests of the child to place him/her in a substitute care facility, the State should make available a full range of options.

22. Support. Prior to making a placement decision, extensive support should be given to the child and his/her biological family in an attempt to avoid removing the child from his/her home. The decision regarding placement should be made after consultation with a variety of professionals who have had direct interaction with the child and his/her family. In cases where a child is in jeopardy, immediate removal, of course, must be considered as the first alternative.

23. Intervention strategies. These should include temporary

placement for all children being considered for substitute care, stabilization units, and group shelters.

24. Continuum. The following should be the continuum of Substitute Care Placement Services: \*

Relative Foster Home  
Traditional Foster Home  
Specialized Foster Home  
Therapeutic Foster Home  
Adoption  
Agency Owned Foster Home  
Residential Treatment Center  
Residential Treatment Facility  
Group Home  
Institution - including hospital  
Semi-independent living arrangement  
Respite Care  
Emergency Home

Shared  
Responsibility  
for carrying  
out  
Recommendations:

Care of the Elderly

25. Group Homes. The public and private sectors should encourage the development of more small, self-contained group homes and shared living facilities, as well as other forms of congregate housing, for the elderly.

26. Coordination. The elderly are often unaware of the services available to them. The Department of Human Services and local service agencies should coordinate their activities to communicate this needed information more efficiently and effectively to the elderly. The Information and Referral system should be improved. There should be a more local and regional, rather than statewide, focus. State and local services should be coordinated and a well-publicized "HelpLine" should be established in each county.

27. Support Services. More support services for adults in jeopardy should be available from local public and private agencies.

28. Team Approach. A team approach (medical, social, religious) should be used when providing counseling to those elderly facing death and to their families.

Child Day Care

29. Economic Situation. The public and private sectors should work together to improve the economic situation for families to allow parents more of an option to decide if both parents want and need to work.

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\* This list is not presented in a manner relevant to least restrictive alternatives. It is hoped that professionals charged with the task of placing a child will operate within the attitude of what is most appropriate for the child and not be locked into artificial schemas of restrictiveness.

30. Day Care in the Workplace. The public and private sectors should take more of a responsibility for and provide leadership in establishing workplace child day care. They should form committees to assist their employees in procuring quality child day care arrangements. Child day care should be provided to all who need it.

31. Geographic Distribution. There should be a better geographic distribution of available child day care.

32. Alternative Work Schedules. Public and private employers should provide alternative work schedules for their employees. Flexible scheduling would help reduce the need for child day care.

#### Foster Care

33. Responsibility. The continuum of responsibility for the care of a child should be: parent-family-local neighborhood-nongovernmental agencies-local government-state government-federal government.

VII. Findings and Recommendations from Workshop Entitled  
"FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES"

Findings:

- In communities, communication problems exist between individuals, among families, between generations, among various segments of the community, between families and the community and between families and providers of services.
- Due to such things as geographical distance, lack of community meeting places, age differences, differences in economic status, ethnic background, sexual preference and choice of lifestyles, feelings of isolation and alienation exist.
- There is a breakdown of sense of community and community values and a decline of leadership and citizen involvement due, in part, to an over-reliance on state and federal programs as well as an increase in the number of families with two parents working, an increase of selfishness, and a need for privacy.
- There is a lack of coordination among resource and service providers in the community.
- There is a need for a redefinition of family, of community, and of the relationship between the two, including non-traditional and "extra-legal" family networks. A functional, not a structural, definition is needed.
- Because the state and federal government have assumed and have been given authority in the areas of planning processes, goal setting, and decision-making, there is a lack of community control of services that are supportive of families, services which were traditionally provided by neighbors and local community organizations.
- Overall, there seems to be a prejudice against non-traditional families. Institutions, including religious and community organizations, discriminate against different family types in such areas as jobs, housing, taxes, insurance and bank credit.
- There is a lack of a sufficient number of family-oriented programs in communities (e.g., family recreation programs, substance abuse programs, programs that support single parents and individuals isolated from families, and family life education programs that include the teaching of parenting skills and marriage preparation).
- Defining the working relationship between self-help support systems and traditional formal organizations is one of the challenges faced today.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Families and  
Communities:

1. Local Councils. Communities should establish local community councils, responsible for conducting needs assessments at the local level and for implementing recommendations developed in response to these assessments. The purpose of the councils is to strengthen families and community life. The councils should be composed of volunteers from the community and representing all segments of the community. Incentive systems, such as tax credits, barter arrangements and stipends, should be developed by the councils to assist in the funding of activities. These councils should work with organizations to facilitate cooperation among community agencies and organizations.
2. Centers for Community Meetings. Citizens, organizations, and government at all levels should encourage traditional, tax exempt community institutions, including schools, churches and synagogues, and hospitals to expand their roles to become centers for community meetings and for integrating services and resources to meet family and community needs.
3. Schools. Educational institutions should re-orient adult education and regular school curricula to increase citizen participation in local community life and to strengthen families.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

4. Family Day. The Governor of Maine should proclaim a state-wide Family Day, the purpose of which will be to celebrate those human relationships which are the basis of family and community life.
5. Schools. The Department of Education and Cultural Services, the Legislature and the local SAD's should re-orient adult education and regular school curricula to increase citizen participation and strengthen family life.
6. Catalyst. State government should act as a catalyst in assisting communities with the development of their own resources and should provide incentives, such as vouchers, to communities and families so that they can meet their own responsibilities and needs. The State should not provide services to a local community unless that community has itself identified the need and will evaluate the results. Government should acknowledge that every person in the community has something to offer and should facilitate the development of organizational networks that utilize community resources to strengthen family and community life.

Shared  
Responsibility  
for carrying  
out  
Recommendations:

7. Incentives. Businesses/employers, including government, should increase the flexibility of work schedules and provide other incentives to allow and encourage employees to participate in community activities that meet family needs. Personnel, labor, pension and tax laws and policies should be changed to accomplish this.

8. Decisions. State policy and communities should maximize local community participation in decisions which affect the well being of families.

9. Co-ops and Support Groups. Local councils, other organizations, and the State should encourage the establishment of local co-ops and the formation of peer, family to family, and other support groups.

10. Definition of Family. \* State policies and community institutions should define the family as a "fulfilling relationship between two or more persons, in love and trust and an assumption of responsibility for each other, which enables growth in freedom and choice."

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\* This definition reflects the views of this workshop only and not the Conference as a whole.

VIII. Findings and Recommendations from Workshop Entitled  
"FAMILIES AND THE MEDIA"

- Findings:
- There is good use and some misuse of television by families and schools.
  - The media has a responsibility to provide and individuals a responsibility to encourage accurate reporting.
  - The mass media must be recognized as having a tremendous impact on the development of values.
  - Television can be used to create both positive and negative role models.
  - There are too many sexual overtones in television, radio and print advertising.
  - Violence is often incorrectly portrayed on television as an accepted way of life.
  - Too few television programs support the divorced and and those who are single heads of household.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Families and  
Communities:

1. Advisory Boards. Individuals should form local volunteer Citizens Advisory Boards for television, radio and the press to promote a positive impact of the media on the family.
2. Neighborhood Groups. Volunteers should organize grass-roots family neighborhood groups to discuss television programming. They should begin by contacting churches and synagogues, schools, granges, extension services, local cable and commercial television stations, newspapers and radio stations.
3. Commendations. Individuals should commend media that are sensitive to family and community issues through their programming, reporting and advertising. Equally, individuals should let the media know when they are dissatisfied.
4. Advertisers. Individuals should make advertisers aware of their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their commercials and/or programs they choose to sponsor. The names and addresses of sponsors should be made available to the public to facilitate consumer input.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Business and  
Industry:

5. Support of the Family. The media should make sure that public service announcements and programs on television support the family. Public service announcements should include those that help parents with problem solving and communication skills.

Recommendations  
to be carried  
out by  
Government:

Shared  
Responsibility  
for carrying  
out  
Recommendations:

6. Advisory Board. A Governor's Advisory Board on Licensed Media should be created to promote a favorable impact of the media on the family and to forward recommendations and complaints to the FCC.

7. Alternatives to Television. Individuals and groups should form and support alternatives to television viewing: recreation, local libraries, community activities and groups, and family activities.

8. Delegates. Delegates from the Blaine House Conference on Families should contact their community action groups, parent-teacher organizations, churches and synagogues, civic clubs, etc. and encourage them to promote parent awareness of the impact of the media on children and families. Each delegate to the 1980 Blaine House Conference on Families should critically analyze the media coverage of this conference and take responsibility to correct and/or praise the coverage.

9. Training. There should be in-service training for teachers conducted by such groups as the Maine Teachers Association, in cooperation with colleges and universities, to increase the creative integration of the media experience into the classroom.



APPENDIX A.

BLAINE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES



A.

BLAINE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

MAY 29-30, 1980

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT AUGUSTA

A G E N D A

THURSDAY, MAY 29

8:30 - 9:30	AUDITORIUM	REGISTRATION COFFEE AND DONUTS
9:30 - 9:45	AUDITORIUM	WELCOME INTRODUCTION OF PLANNING COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION OF WHCF DELEGATES WALK-THROUGH OF THE AGENDA Neil Michaud, Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee and Chairman of the BHCF
9:45 - 10:00	AUDITORIUM	HISTORY OF THE BLAINE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES Michael R. Petit Commissioner of Human Services Chairman of the BHCF Planning Committee State Coordinator for the WHCF.
10:00 - 10:20	AUDITORIUM	GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS Governor Joseph E. Brennan
10:20 - 10:30	AUDITORIUM	"CHALLENGES FACING US" Rev. Peter Gorham, Pastor St. Joseph's Church, Ellsworth
10:30 - 12:00	WORKSHOP ROOMS	WORKSHOP SESSION I Get to know each other; define the challenges/problems

JEWETT: FIRST FLOOR

ROOM 185 FAMILIES AND GOVERNMENTAL INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS  
ROOM 187 FAMILIES AND ECONOMICS

JEWETT: SECOND FLOOR

ROOM 291 FAMILIES AND SUBSTITUTE CARE  
ROOM 293 FAMILIES IN CRISIS  
ROOM 295 FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

RESOURCE CENTER: LOWER RAMP

ROOM 11 FAMILIES AND THE MEDIA

RESOURCE CENTER: UPPER RAMP

ROOM 102 FAMILY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION AND VALUES

THURSDAY, MAY 29 (con't)

12:00 - 1:00	STUDENT ACTIVITY CENTER	LUNCH FOR DELEGATES
	JEWETT HALL LOUNGE	LUNCHEON FOR WHCF DELEGATES AND BHCF PLANNING COMMITTEE
1:15 - 1:30	AUDITORIUM	RESTATING OF THE GOALS OF THE CONFERENCE Neil Michaud, Chairman
1:30 - 3:30	WORKSHOP ROOMS	WORKSHOP SESSION II Recommendations(rough draft)
3:30 - 4:14	AUDITORIUM	REPORT BY FACILITATORS ON CHALLENGES/ PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED IN WORKSHOP SESSION I (5 minutes each) Moderator: Neil Michaud
4:15 - 5:30	AUDITORIUM	MIKE NOBEL AND HIS MUSIC
5:30 - 7:00	STUDENT ACTIVITY CENTER	SPAGHETTI DINNER (optional) \$2.25 per person
7:00 - 8:30	AUDITORIUM	PANEL: "EFFECTS ON THE FAMILY OF THE CHANGING ROLES OF MEN AND WOMEN"  Moderator: JoAnn Fritsche, Ph.D. Director of EEO, University of Maine-Orono

FRIDAY, MAY 30

9:00 - 9:20	AUDITORIUM	OPENING REMARKS Neil Michaud, Chairman
9:20 - 9:30	AUDITORIUM	"OUR CHILDREN--OUR FAMILIES" A.L. Carlisle, Cape Elizabeth
9:30 - 12:00	WORKSHOP ROOMS	WORKSHOP SESSION III Refining recommendations Developing priorities
12:00 - 1:00	STUDENT ACTIVITY CENTER	LUNCH FOR DELEGATES WORKING LUNCH FOR FACILITATORS/RECORDERS
1:00 - 1:15	AUDITORIUM	STATING OF GOALS FOR WORKSHOP SESSION IV Neil Michaud, Chairman
1:15 - 3:00	WORKSHOP ROOMS	WORKSHOP SESSION IV Discussion of strategies to encourage action on recommendations

FRIDAY, MAY 30 (con't)

3:00 - 4:15

AUDITORIUM

GENERAL REPORTING SESSION

10 minute feedback by a recorder from each workshop:

A. Recommendations as reported from Session III

B. Strategies as reported from Session IV

Moderator: Neil Michaud

4:15 - 4:30

AUDITORIUM

CLOSING REMARKS

Michael R. Petit, Chairman  
BHCF Planning Committee

We would like to thank the University of Maine at Augusta for allowing us the use of Jewett Hall and the Resource Center. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by Janet Fuller in making the arrangements at the University.



Remarks of Governor Joseph E. Brennan

Welcome to an historic event--the first Blaine House Conference on Families.

As Governor, I am pleased to be addressing you today about a subject that is so important to all of us--the present and future condition of Maine families.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your interest, concern, and, most of all, your willingness to set aside valuable time and participate in what promises to be an intense and challenging discussion of a wide range of issues.

I also want to thank the members and staff of the Planning Committee which organized this Conference in my behalf.

The tremendous preparation that they undertook reflects their determination--and mine--that, when this Conference ends, it will have made an important contribution to the discussion of public policy in an area that touches the lives of each person in Maine.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the work of Commissioner Michael Petit of the Department of Human Services, who has brought renewed drive, fresh vision and real advocacy to one of the most important and sensitive departments in state government.

More than 200 of you from all parts of Maine have been invited to examine the challenges confronting Maine families. Some of you have a unique professional perspective from which you will view these challenges. All of you have a unique personal perspective. And, while the challenges before us may appear at times to be awesome, I believe Maine is uniquely suited by its history, its temperament and its natural and human resources to confront and manage these challenges directly.

The difficult but exciting task I am asking of you is to offer recommendations on what can and should be done to support and strengthen family life in Maine as we enter the decade of the 80's. In particular, I look forward to your thoughts about striking a proper balance between public and private initiative in pursuit of this goal.

The Conference has been structured to ensure participation by each of you.

You will find that there are no easy answers to the profound questions you will be addressing in your workshops.

But they are questions that must be asked--and must be answered--for I believe that the quality of life in Maine will improve in large part only to the extent that we can strengthen our families and improve their ability to better deal with the problems they experience.

The structure of the family has changed greatly in Maine since the first settlements 300 years ago.

For many of our citizens, this change has occurred in just the past generation or two, since Maine's rural way of life prevailed well into this century.

The family as an institution has been subjected to unprecedented change and stress.

Today, the realities are a stagnating economy, greater mobility, an increasing number of households in which both parents work and a mass media that often sells instant gratification. These and many other factors will help ensure continued change and stress in the lives of Maine families.

We've all heard talk about the death or disintegration of the family.

It's said that family life as we knew it--or imagined it to be--is in grave danger.

We are warned that the family is losing its ability to fulfill its basic responsibility of providing a protective and nurturing environment to its members.

Statistics concerning child abuse, divorce rates, domestic violence, juvenile crime and other indicators of family breakdown are alarming.

They have been rightfully cited as evidence of family stress.

They will be the focal point of much of your discussion in the next two days.

I've seen the statistics.

I've read the reports.

I've participated in long, thoughtful discussions with service providers in and out of government, with judges, police and many others.

But I am an optimist by nature.

I believe it's much too early to sound the death knell for the American family.

But, while the family may not be dying, it certainly is working overtime to survive.

It is undergoing tremendous change.

And I believe the real failure is not so much with families as with the inability of our institutions--public and private--to adapt to--and to respond to--these changes.

I agree with Cornell's noted family researcher Urie Bronfenbrenner, who has said that "what we are experiencing is the unraveling of the social fabric which makes the society. When that unravels, none of the parts of it can function. What we face is the need to reweave, to rebuild the connection between family, church, school, so they understand each other and complement each other."

So I see the objective--and the duty--of this Conference as one of defining how to get that community and institutional support--without causing more pressure, more unnecessary intrusion or more undue interference.

The change--or breakdown--in family and community life has been a major contributing factor to increased demand for public resources to deal with many social problems.

But simply spending more for services to address the problems experienced by today's families is not enough.

It's not enough because, by itself, it is not effective.

The political and economic climate have also been changing dramatically, and the new mood demands that we look beyond the state and federal governments as the main source of help. Instead, we should be looking to our communities and the people within those communities living in families as an equally important resource for solving our problems.

I believe it is time to reaffirm that families should be the first line of defense in addressing their own problems.

I truly believe that the best human services department of all is the family.

Of course, this does not mean that government doesn't have a role to play in addressing social problems.

Government will always have a responsibility--and an obligation-- to aid the most vulnerable among us.

I have held this belief throughout my career as a public official.

As a legislator, I consistently voted to support the outstanding network of human services Maine has developed in response to our social problems.

My belief in government's obligations was tested again this winter when we faced impending cutbacks in federal spending for social service programs. At that time, I did not hesitate to send the Legislature a plan for \$1.6 million to help offset these cuts--reduction which would have affected such programs as day care, homemaker services and other important programs that play a major, supportive role in the lives of our citizens.

But these services alone are not enough to deal with family stress, and that is why I have called you here today.

As you may be aware, I have convened four other citizen groups to advise me on some of the major social and health problems confronting our state and our families.

These include task forces on:

--Maternal and child health, which is examining the health care needs and problems of mothers and children;

--Long-term care, which is looking into new ways of dealing with the problem of increasing dependency by our expanding older generation;

--Foster care, which is considering more effective ways to assist children who need care outside their natural family environment;

--Prevention of alcoholism, which I believe may be the most serious and pervasive social and health problem in our state.

I have asked each of these task forces to look at these problems with an eye toward early intervention and to deal with them at the closest level possible to the family and community itself.

I hope you will bring this same philosophy to your deliberations today and tomorrow.

This Conference would not have been convened if I did not believe that your individual and collective talents can make a difference in the lives of families in Maine.

So I am looking forward to the results of your efforts.

I will be discussing your recommendations with people in government and in the public.

The more practical and realistic they are, the greater chance there is that we will be able to implement them in the future.

I fully expect significant differences of opinion to be expressed at this Conference. That is to be expected when more than 200 people of different persuasions gather together. But I believe there is more about Maine families that binds than separates, and I trust you will work cooperatively during your deliberations.

The regional hearings which preceded this Conference, today's Conference itself and next week's White House Conference on Families are only a beginning.

This Conference is significant because it provides an important forum for public discussion of a vital issue.

By itself, it cannot solve the problems Maine families face in the 80's. That responsibility rests with all of us.

I know you share the urgency I feel to encourage a process that will result in better lives for Maine families.

I give you my best wishes for a thoughtful, productive and successful Conference.

Thank you.

Remarks by Michael R. Petit  
Commissioner of Human Services

Good morning and welcome to the Blaine House Conference on Families.

This is a moment many of us have hoped for and waited for a long time.

It is a clear signal that Government is finally recognizing the importance of families themselves in addressing the problems that families experience. It is a major step towards official recognition of the simple truth that what strengthens families strengthens society.

And, as Governor Brennan said in his thoughtful remarks, strengthening Maine families is what this conference is all about.

Why a Blaine House Conference on Families in the first place? Certainly not to resolve in two days the very serious problems confronting Maine families...problems that have been years in the making and will take years to effectively resolve.

But it is a beginning, and a significant beginning, because it provides an organized forum in which the public can discuss and focus on an issue of concern to each of us.

Before discussing the activities of the next 2 days, let me give you a brief history of this conference and how you all came to be here.

Governor Brennan had been interested in the idea of a conference for several years. He had always been impressed with the Blaine House Conference on Aging first convened by Governor Curtis. We discussed the possibility of a conference during the gubernatorial campaign, and shortly after my appointment as Commissioner he asked that the Department of Human Services assume administrative responsibility for organizing a conference. The Department assigned a full time person, Nancy McCallum, to staff the effort. Twenty citizens from across this State were appointed by the Governor to actually organize the conference.

Convened last fall, the Blaine House Conference on Families Planning Committee has been meeting at least bi-weekly since then.

The committee decided that prior to planning the conference it wanted to hear what Maine citizens thought should be the issues to be considered at the conference.

So, the committee decided to hold public hearings on the family to learn of those issues. And it further decided that these hearings would be a good way to find concerned citizens interested in attending the conference itself.

Five hearings were held in the spring in Portland, Lewiston, Bangor, Sullivan, and Presque Isle. Nearly 1,000 people attended and hundreds testified. Seventy-five persons - 15 from each region - were selected by lottery to attend the conference. The remainder of the delegates here today include the 20 members of the Planning Committee itself and approximately 100 persons who were invited by Governor Brennan directly.

In addition to the responsibility for organizing this conference, the Planning Committee also was given responsibility by the Governor to help organize Maine's delegate - and issue - selection process for the White House Conference on Families to be held in Baltimore next week.

Again, the Planning Committee turned to the regional hearings. One delegate from each of these hearings was selected by a modified lottery system to attend the White House Conference. The remaining 7 delegates were selected by Governor Brennan.

Ten major issues of concern to Maine families identified by the citizens attending the hearings were forwarded to the White House for consideration as agenda items for the national conference. The issues, conclusions and recommendations that flow from this conference over the next two days will be carried by the Maine delegation to Baltimore next week.

I should say something about the fact that this conference today is converging with the timetable of the White House Conference. Believe it or not, it's strictly a coincidence. With or without the initiative of the White House, there would have been a Blaine House Conference, and with or without significant modification in federal attitudes and policy towards families - and I hope there will be - I firmly believe Maine itself can take the actions necessary to strengthen its families. I am confident that fact will be reflected in the discussions and recommendations that emerge from the workshops.

A couple of more things...

Recent stories in the press suggest the "fur will fly" at this conference because there will be sharp differences over such issues as to what actually constitutes a family.

When more than 200 people gather together to discuss any subject - much less one as complicated and value-laden as the family - there is bound to be disagreement. That is to be expected and is not entirely undesirable. I am hopeful, however, that ideological differences will not interfere with the real communications needed between all of us if we are to focus on the problems facing Maine families and are to make the progress and changes necessary if family life is to be strengthened.

Finally, although Governor Brennan's comments about the importance of the family reflect my own sentiments, I'd like to add just one personal observation.

I've been involved in addressing various social problems for more than a dozen years. And in my present capacity I see more clearly than ever before the tremendous social, psychological and financial costs associated with the failure of our institutions to be more responsive to the changing structure and needs of our families.

I am personally convinced that no additional amount of money, laws, or professional intervention can effectively address the social problems our culture is experiencing unless we recognize the central role of, and elevate to its proper status, that most basic unit of caring and social organization - the family. I am hopeful your deliberations today and tomorrow will help provide guidance and impetus for all of us in moving toward that goal. I look forward to discussing these issues with you over the next two days.

Thank you.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

## BLAINE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

MAY 30, 1980

I am, indeed, pleased to be here today. I served as Chairman of the United Way Substitute Care Task Force, which published a report in 1976 entitled "Children and Families at Risk in Cumberland County." Our recommendation #1 B was that a Blaine House Conference on Children and Families should be convened by the Governor. The Substitute Care Task Force was composed of a group of volunteers--professionals, service providers, consumers, interested citizens. We expanded our focus beyond substitute care, itself, to the reasons for the need for substitute care. Among our findings were the following:

1. The extended family had largely disappeared, and the nuclear family was disintegrating.
2. Families increasingly were unable to cope with their problems with their own internal resources and were dependent upon the community for some type of assistance.
3. The community was failing in its response to children and families at risk. Community response was often inadequate, inappropriate and even contributed to the problem.
4. The Maine Legislature and Executive Branch, as architects of state public policy, contributed to the problems by both their actions and inactions.
5. As a community and a state, we were falling short of our potential to protect children and to provide support services which would enable most children to be properly cared for within their own families and communities.

The Task Force made over 100 recommendations. I would like to mention just a few of the results of our recommendations. An emergency shelter facility for boys has been established, as has a respite care program for parents of children with exceptional needs. A sexual abuse project with two components has begun, the Cumberland County Child Abuse and Neglect Council has been formed, and a Family Life Education network has been established. The 108th Legislature passed a family resolution which provided the rationale and philosophical framework justifying the State's commitment to strengthen Maine families.

Some of these results were due to Task Force efforts alone, some involved coordinated efforts, and others were the result of groups and agencies responding to appropriate recommendations. Basically, they were the result of citizen involvement on several levels, citizens who cared and who made a commitment to change and improve services to children and families.

This Conference, sponsored by the Governor and supported by the Department of Human Services, provides us with the opportunity to impact on the laws, policies and procedures at the state level, all of which will affect us at the

local level. Yesterday, we identified some issues and problems. Today, we need to determine what to do about them. It is not enough to say that there are problems. We need to define those problems and recommend solutions. Our recommendations need to be based on the concept of limited funding. There will be little or no new money. We will need to reallocate existing money or to develop solutions that basically do not cost money.

I think it is important to recognize that the family has changed. A study recently released by Harvard and MIT sociologists projects that within ten years nearly two-thirds of all households in the nation will have no children in them and that husband and wife households with only one married partner working will comprise only 14% of all households. Our energies should be directed to recognizing and accepting these facts and working together to respond to these changes in a positive, helpful manner.

We hear a great deal about how institutions and society are not responsive to our needs, that they are often more harmful than they are helpful. I would suggest that we, you and I, are our institutions and our society. If they are unresponsive, it is because we have abrogated our responsibility to make them responsive to our needs. We have failed to become involved, to understand what is happening, to develop alternatives and recommendations reflecting a changing world. We have become too accustomed to letting the government, local, state and national, take care of too many things. We, as individual citizens or groups of citizens, can and must work to make our society and institutions more responsive, to forge new links of cooperation with all levels of government, where local citizens provide support to each other within their families, neighborhoods and communities and where government supplements that support when services are clearly beyond the realm of local effort.

How do we do that? I would like to offer some suggestions. Do you know your School Board members, your superintendents, principals, teachers? Do you know what your school policies and regulations are? Do you know what effect those policies and regulations have on your children, your family, your community? Do you know what your Town Council is doing? Do you evaluate their actions in terms of what effect they will have on families? I think we need a Family Impact Statement, like an Environmental Impact Statement, at all levels of government and at the institutional and agency level. There needs to be an awareness that almost every law that is passed, every policy that is adopted and every procedure that is developed has an impact on families.

I would like to share with you what is happening in Cape Elizabeth due to, among other things, declining enrollment and more demand on limited resources because of mandated services. Cape Elizabeth has a strong interscholastic athletic program beginning in the seventh grade for both boys and girls. However, there are no programs for ninth-grade girls. The Affirmative Action Committee recommended that there be sports for ninth-grade girls. Two options were offered: add sports for the girls at an additional cost of \$5000 or eliminate sports for boys and save \$10,000. The recommendation was to drop ninth-grade sports for boys because of concern about the amount of the tax increase, particularly for older citizens on a fixed income who have no school-age children. The ramifications, however, would have gone far beyond those envisioned by the school board.

I would like to mention my fourteen-year old son's responses to the above situation for two reasons. The first reason is that there are very few young people here. They have a very important perspective to add, but we, as adults, tend to forget to include them in our deliberations or to ask them their opinions. I think that is a mistake on our part, as well as on the part of society as a whole. The second reason is that I found my son's remarks to be very perceptive and to be backed by the prevailing theories of delinquency prevention. His concerns were as follows:

1. We have a great class--close, cooperative, committed to school.
2. We do have kids who use drugs and who drink.
3. For those kids involved in sports, there is either none of that or far less than there would be if they were not involved in sports.
4. Athletics keeps kids interested in school and keeps grades up.
5. If we have no ninth grade sports, we will lose kids to drugs, etc., and we'll never get them back. They'll never feel part of the high school.
6. It will cause resentment in our class between those few who may be good enough to make junior varsity and varsity teams as freshmen and those who aren't.
7. What will happen to our class when we're seniors?

This particular example deals with athletics, but it would hold equally true for other extra-curricular activities. If our youth do not develop a sense of commitment to our institutions--families, schools, work places, communities, they will also tend not to develop a sense of commitment to law-abiding behavior. If my son's reasoning is correct, some of those youths, who might have remained committed to school through athletics, may develop serious drug and alcohol problems, may drop out of school, may have more free time, may be unsupervised for long periods of time because of working mothers. A supposedly simple budget cut could, in fact, result in increased family stress and disintegration, abuse of drugs and alcohol, increased vandalism and crime in the community, all of which lead to increased costs to all of us, by whatever measures used. We need to be aware of such possible ramifications.

Our institutions will not change by themselves. They need to be prodded and poked and pushed in order to become more responsive. People within them are often too close to see the problems and too involved in day-to-day operations to be able to look ahead or outside the institutions to see what is really happening. That is where we come in--we citizens who feel the impact and who must deal with the results. It takes time, energy, commitment--but it can be done.

If institutional change is seen as too overwhelming at the moment, there are other kinds of changes that can be effected at the local level with little or no money and with varying degrees of time involvement. I would like to offer these suggestions for your information with the hope that some may be helpful to you right now.

1. We are all familiar with food co-ops. What about baby-sitting co-ops, garden co-ops, skills co-ops (you share your skill as a seamstress, your neighbor shares hers as a cook, a plumber, a car mechanic, an organizer, etc.)?
2. Do you have a school volunteer program? Why not start one? Besides providing extra services and enrichment activities for your children, it could also provide a sense of understanding about and commitment to the school on the part of parents and develop cooperation between parents and teachers.
3. Do you have a Parents' Association in your school? If not, find some interested parents and start one.
4. Do you have any after-school programs? Such programs would use schools during normally empty times and would keep youths occupied. How do you set one up? Hire a staff person, full or part-time, charge fees (working mothers would probably be more than willing to pay something), use volunteers to help plan, teach and supervise. Or use volunteers for the entire program.
5. Support child-development classes in your high schools. Set up a pre-school nursery in conjunction with these classes. Cape Elizabeth has such a program. The nursery is self-supporting, and the students work with the children for actual experience.
6. What about a community-services director? In Cape Elizabeth, the town pays half his salary and the school the other half. The director is responsible for all adult education programs, Saturday morning programs for youths, the summer recreation program, etc.
7. Do your schools make any allowance for working parents? Do they schedule school performances at night? Teacher conferences at night or early morning?
8. Would local businesses give their employees time off to work as volunteers in the schools or community as a community service?
9. Do your employers permit flexible work schedules? Have you ever spoken to them about your needs to spend more time with your families?
10. Institutions, agencies and groups, particularly those committed to supporting the family, need to be informed or reminded that, in some cases, they may not be sensitive to the needs of their own employees, staff or volunteers.
11. Do you have a school-town newsletter? Such a newsletter could be a cooperative venture on the part of many people and could be an invaluable learning experience for students.
12. Do your schools have any programs that would give students credit for volunteer work in the community? Some schools work closely with community groups to train students as volunteers and then give them credit for their work. "Alienation of many young people can, in part, be traced back to the lack of any vested

interest in the daily fabric of community life." Think of creative ways to give young people an important role in their own communities.

13. Are there items, facilities, new programs that your town or school needs or wants but no money to purchase or begin them? Form a committee composed of a cross-section of the community-- parents, youths, elderly citizens, teachers, town officials, etc.-- and let them develop ways to obtain what is needed.
14. What about an in-school suspension policy? Most suspended youths need school desperately. Suspend them to a special room, manned by volunteers to provide special attention, instead of to the streets.
15. Offer life-skills or coping-skills to all interested people, young and old, through the schools, adult education, PTA's or Parents' Associations, the churches.
16. Provide support for different people, like informal rap groups or "Coping with Kids," "Life after Divorce," or "Living with Teen Agers." Sometimes it is enough to know that you are not alone or not the only one going through a certain experience.
17. For an extra-special gift for a mother with a new baby, offer to baby sit for an afternoon or evening, or offer to take care of older children once in awhile. It may be just the breathing space needed for a new mother.
18. Do you have career education courses in your junior and senior high schools? Invite members of your community into the schools to talk about what their jobs entail. Make a point of including women, particularly those involved in non-traditional jobs.
19. Since children and youths will watch television, teach them how to watch it critically. Teach them how to make and produce their own movies, how to write their own newsletters. Encourage reading.
20. Recognize that you know your own situation, your own child better than others do and that you have a right and an obligation to be part of decisions made affecting you and your child. Do not be put off by "experts."
21. Organize family parties, neighborhood or block parties, or community parties and invite people of all ages to attend. We have too few activities that encourage participation of all age groups.
22. Most importantly, dare to care about your children. Ask them where they will be, with whom they will be, when they will be home. Do not be afraid to set limits--I would welcome company as the "meanest mother in town!" In the words of a juvenile delinquent with whom I worked, "I knew my mother did not love me any more when she stopped caring about who I was with, when I'd be home, or where I was."

Let us define our problems, prioritize them and develop strategies for implementing our recommendations. We have a unique opportunity to learn from each other. We have different perspectives, each one of which is valid for

each of us. Let us decide what needs to be done, determine who best can do it, and make a commitment to see that it is done. Let us remember that we can and must impact on both the state and local level and that, if we care enough and try hard enough, we can succeed. Each one of us has a unique contribution to make to improving the quality of life for ourselves, our families, our communities and our state. As Thomas Jefferson said, "I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves." We are the people, and it is time we exercised our powers and responsibilities to make society cognizant of and responsive to our needs. This Conference is the first step in what could be a concerted state-wide effort to ensure that the needs of Maine families are recognized and that they will be met. It is up to us to make sure this effort succeeds.

A. L. CARLISLE

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We are very appreciative of the time, energy and talents contributed by these facilitators.



APPENDIX B.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES



## A. OVERVIEW: WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

- History:** The WHCF, originally planned for 1979, was changed to 1981 and then finally rescheduled to take place in the summer of 1980. It was decided that three regional conferences, rather than one national conference, should comprise the WHCF. Maine sent 13 delegates to the Baltimore Conference on June 5, 6, and 7. Over 650 delegates from the Eastern part of the United States attended that conference. The second regional conference was held in Minneapolis on June 19-21 and the third in Los Angeles on July 10-12. All together over 2,000 delegates attended the WHCF from 57 states and territories.
- Topics:** Prior to the WHCF, states and territories conducted various activities, including statewide, regional and local forums and hearings. From these activities each state and territory identified the issues of most concern to their people and forwarded them to the WHCF. (An outline of the topics sent by Maine can be found in Appendix B on the next two pages). The WHCF National Advisory Committee reviewed the individual reports and chose the broad areas that would be discussed at the national conference.
- Format of the Baltimore Conference:** There were three levels of organization at the WHCF. The 650 delegates were subdivided into 4 major topic areas which were then sub-divided into 20 work groups. Each work-group was permitted to submit only three recommendations of no more than 100 words each on their topic area. When the delegates met with the other work groups in their subject area, they voted to establish priorities among the recommendations. All of the delegates from all 4 major topic areas met on the last day of the conference to vote on the recommendations.
- Recommendations:** Fifty-six of the sixty recommendations passed. Those sixty recommendations and the votes they received are listed on the following pages. Due to the different formats used at the Blaine House and the Baltimore White House Conferences, notably the absence of voting procedures at the Blaine House Conference, it is impossible to compare their recommendations other than in a most general fashion. It is safe to say that many areas of concern voiced at the Maine Conference in May were reiterated at the Baltimore Conference in June.
- Future Steps:** Following the White House Conference, a National Task Force of 117 members will meet to consolidate recommendations from the three White House Conferences into a single final report. After the Task Force completes the final report at the end of August, a six month implementation period is scheduled to help translate conference recommendations into action.

## B. OUTLINE OF TOPICS SENT TO WHCF FROM BHCF REGIONAL HEARINGS

### I. ECONOMICS

- Increase economic development; create more jobs; reduce inflation.
- Promote small business and self-employment as well as big business.
- Increase job training and vocational education.
- Make the workplace more supportive of families by instituting workplace day care, flex-time, job sharing, etc.

### II. FAMILY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION AND VALUES

- Who should teach values: homes, school, both?
- Improve home-school, parent-school partnership.
- Establish and support family life education courses: (e.g., courses on childbirth, nutrition, health, marriage, parenting, child development, family life, care-giving, etc.
- Redefine the goals of education.

### III. COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS: NATURAL NETWORKS AND SELF-HELP VALUES

- Improve cooperation between schools, civic groups, and religious organizations.
- Give more community control over programs and tax dollars.
- Increase volunteerism.
- Encourage families to participate in self-help and support groups.
- Encourage families to join other families to develop extended family networks to help each other.

### IV. HOME-BASED AND COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL SERVICES

- Give priority to in-home and community-based supportive and supplemental services rather than institutional and substitutive services.
- Provide respite care and flexible services that strengthen families.
- Increase preventive services.
- Decentralize human services, cut red tape, end duplicative services and end fragmentation of family services.

## V. CHILD CARE

- Increase day care resources by increasing funding and using existing facilities in the community.
- Provide tax incentives for work place day care.
- Increase community involvement and intergenerational and interfamily child care.
- Provide flex-time and create programs for latch-key children.

## VI. GOVERNMENT - ENHANCE FAMILY STATUS

- Empower families: recognize them as resources; recognize the dignity of the family regardless of economic status.
- Recognize families as equals to "experts," professionals, and government.
- Provide tax incentives to families to care for their own elderly and handicapped.
- Include family impact statements as a part of all policies and legislation affecting families.
- Train families to cope with bureaucracy and service providers.
- Change the tax system to favor keeping the family unit together.
- End marriage penalties in tax policies and assistance programs, including AFDC, Social Security, disability insurance, unemployment compensation.

## VII. SPECIAL CHALLENGE

- There is a need for a dialogue on abortion.

## VIII. MEDIA

- Educate the media and the businesses that sponsor programming regarding their influence on and responsibility to families.
- Encourage the media to be more positive about and more supportive of families.



C. The Sixty Recommendations Voted on at the  
Baltimore White House Conference on Families

June 5-7, 1980

I. FAMILIES AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Economic Pressures

1. It is imperative that all branches of government strengthen and enforce existing legislation on programs of full employment. Each person should have the opportunity to obtain a job which provides a feeling of usefulness and dignity at wages sufficient to support a decent standard of living. The Humphrey-Hawkins Act must be implemented - not ignored. Teenagers, minorities, women, all unemployed and under-employed must have specifically targeted programs initiated and carried out by government and industry to assure full employment. (YES-507 NO-83).
2. Since inflation is one of the most destructive elements affecting families, we move that government anti-inflation policies should place special emphasis on components that hit families hardest: food, health, energy and housing. Federal, State and local governments should support a coherent energy program (including all energy sources, and support for mass transit), comprehensive national health program, and lower interest rates to enable families to buy homes and to meet other family needs. Anti-inflation programs should not be at the expense of human services such as employment, housing and welfare. Government should refrain from policies that cause unemployment in order to slow the economy and control inflation. (YES-457 NO-132).
3. Federal, State and local governments should take positive steps to improve the employment situation by: The vigorous enforcement of existing legislation prohibiting racial, sexual and age discrimination in employment, such as the Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act and other affirmative action programs; The establishment of special services in the Small Business Administration for the encouragement and financing of family enterprises, and; The participation of the development of comprehensive skill training centers under adult education programs for family members who are unemployed or under-employed and providing adequate financial support to families attending such centers. (YES-540 NO-49).

Family and Work

4. Full employment is essential to the economic and general well-being of families. It can be assisted through government policy, such as enunciated in the Humphrey-Hawkins Act. Citizen groups and government agencies should monitor effective enforcement of these policies. Career counseling, career development, vocational education, and personnel manpower training especially targeted at the unemployed or underemployed need to be redirected and expanded to reflect current needs and expected developments in employment. This should be done through cooperative efforts of industry, labor, community groups and government. Adequate public transportation to connect rural and city people with job markets should be addressed. (YES-523 NO-60).
5. Business, labor and government should encourage and implement employment opportunities and personnel policies that enable persons to hold jobs

while maintaining a strong family life. Family-oriented personnel policies can result in reduced absenteeism, greater productivity and decreased stress. Toward such desirable ends there is need for creative development of such work arrangements as flexitime, flexible leave policies for both sexes, job sharing programs, dependent care options and part-time jobs with pro-rated pay and benefits. Additionally, employers should recognize the possible adverse effects of relocation on families so that they may provide support and options. (YES-569 NO-21).

6. We urge: effective monitoring and implementation of laws concerning fair employment practice in accordance with legislative intent, emphasizing improved enforcement procedures against discrimination in employment (based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, and disability) such as--affirmative action, equal pay for equal work, employee development and promotion, and prohibition of sexual harrassment; that federal, state and local government be urged to explore ways to define and support equal pay for comparable work. We urge the White House and States to do everything possible to ensure ratification of ERA. (YES-471 NO-119).

#### Tax Policies

7. President and Congress should encourage family responsibilities and functions through: additional first year exemption for birth or adoption of a child; double day care credit for handicapped or elderly dependent without existing taxpayer work requirement; \$250 credit for elderly dependents in taxpayer's home; expand Earned Income Tax Credit to benefit families with children up to the Bureau of Labor Statistics lower living standard; deductions for Family Responsibility Savings Accounts for: dependent education, handicapped dependents' care, first home purchase, retirement of family members regardless of work history; increased day care credit from 20 to 35%; refundable day care credit. (YES-318 NO-268).
8. We recommend that the President propose and/or the Congress enact legislation to provide for the equitable taxation of two-worker married couples through the elimination of the marriage penalty by permitting married individuals the option of using the tax rate for single individuals. (YES-560 NO-584 FAILED).
9. We recommend that the President propose and/or the Congress enact legislation which would adjust the federal personal income tax rates and brackets to avoid the inflation penalty. With the current level of inflation and high prospects of a long-term inflation trend, this adjustment must be substantial. Such action would also correct the unlegislated increase in tax burden on families. (YES-297 NO-286).

#### Income Security for Families

10. The Federal Government shall ensure a minimum living standard for all citizens in the United States and territories. The AFDC and UP programs be combined into a Family Assistance program, providing 100% of the lower level standard of living, regionally adjusted, fully funded by the Federal Government. Child Support Laws apply to either or both parents.

Federal income tax refund set aside programs shall be a means of enforcing child support laws, and state compliance incentives be provided by the Federal Government. All providers under investigation for fraud participating in income assistance programs shall have a stay placed on bank accounts. (YES-283 NO-298 FAILED).

11. We recommend Social Security allow: (a) Higher limits on income earned in retirement; (b) Removal of dependency category for spouses and development of an earned sharing program providing coverage for both spouses based on 50/50 distribution of combined credits during marriage, dispersed at divorce or retirement; (c) Providing quarters of men and women's coverage for child-rearing time taken off from employment; (d) Handicapped and elderly to live at home with reimbursable services given now by hospitals and nursing homes; and extended time for services in hospitals and homes; (e) SSI to have non-discriminatory eligibility definitions; and (f) Survivor benefits to be given regardless of age and children. (YES-536 NO-48).
12. Full employment opportunity should be supported by the Government through the private and public sector toward the support of self-sufficiency and short-term total government dependency. Appropriate preventive-comprehensive supportive services ought to be available including appropriate access services enhancing upward mobility, such as transportation, child care, etc. The provision of supportive services should be non-punitive and should build on strengths in the family and other voluntary and informal support systems and should be achieved through a partnership arrangement between the public and voluntary non-profit sector. (YES-520 NO-59).

#### Status of Homemakers

13. The intrinsic value of homemakers should have national recognition as a conceptual and practical framework for legal parents/guardians performing a primary nurturing, socializing responsibility within the familial unit. Action: Promote positive recognition and active support of the primary homemaker, through public awareness initiatives that declare the intrinsic value of the homemaker: (a) media campaigns; (b) education; (c) establishment of homemaking as a career by the Department of Labor; (d) government declaration which prescribes an established time such as National Homemakers Week for recognition of primary homemaker; and (e) address the need for support services for the displaced homemaker. (YES-557 NO-29).
14. Local, state, and federal governments should recognize the economic value to homemaking. Marriage is an economic partnership and financial resources earned by the spouses should be shared equally. Social security and pension funds should be vested equally during a marriage without reducing existing benefits. Assets accrued during a marriage should be considered equally earned and owned so that at dissolution it can be divided fairly or at death there is no tax when it is passed on to the surviving husband or wife. Assistance to displaced homemakers, particularly in job training, can be supplied by the public and private sectors. (YES-549 NO-35).

15. Revise IRS laws to provide: (a) additional tax exemption for homemakers providing primary care for preschool, handicapped, and/or elderly family members in the home; (b) eliminate inheritance tax for spouses; and (c) remove marriage penalty for two earner married coupled. (YES-558 NO-26).

## II. FAMILIES: CHALLENGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Preparation for Marriage and Family Life

16. Federal, state and local governments support development, personnel training and implementation through public/private sectors of comprehensive, bilingual, multicultural family life education for children, youth and adults. Parents, children, youth and community representatives (teachers, clergy and family professionals), shall plan, implement, and evaluate experiential and didactic programs. They should be holistic, recognizing ethnical and personal dimensions of human sexuality, respecting all sectarian positions and including parenting education, communication and decision-making skills, law, interpersonal relationships, medical and natural family planning and sex roles. Community organizations, businesses and other family-serving groups share responsibility for family life education. (YES-488 NO-106).
17. Recognizing that many marriages are already in serious trouble within the first 18 months, we recommend that tax incentives be given to couples participating in public or private experiential programs exploring responsibilities of marriage before and up to 18 months after the marriage. In addition, marriage and family counseling should be recognized and actively supported by both government and non-government agencies as both preventive and treatment approaches to help strengthen families throughout their life span. (YES-238 NO-357 FAILED).
18. It is recommended that the national Government consider establishment of a publicly supported center for the study of prevention. This center would serve as a clearinghouse for the development and publicizing of information about effective practices and models which prevent family conflict, child abuse, spouse abuse, neglect, emotional disturbance, and other forms of personal and family dysfunction. Costly rehabilitative and treatment programs will continue to grow unless increased study and funding is devoted to preventive approaches which promote wholesome personal and family health. Studies undertaken would require normal informed consent of participants and parents for minor children. (YES-418 NO-174).

### Specific Supports for Families

19. The White House Conference on Families recommends that government and the private sector join together to provide supports to meet the special needs of families. Federally-supported programs should encourage agencies and organizations to seek ways to involve families in the provision of services. Federally-supported programs should provide incentives for linkages with public, private, multi-cultural community-based systems,

and voluntary organizations. Services should include the use of volunteers and family self-help programs. We further recommend that federal and other support programs designed to help families offer services to the entire family as well as the individual. (YES-534 NO-54).

20. Recognizing that family stability is a national societal strength, governmental, private, and non-profit agencies should provide family enrichment programs and develop such programs where needed. Recognizing the unique needs of all families, we draw attention to: (1) the nuclear and extended families and their support; (2) the single parent families and their support; (3) the military families and their support; and (4) the migrant, immigrant and dislocated families and their support. (YES-429 NO-168).
21. Every private and public agency be encouraged to write a family impact statement as part of every policy implemented. Legislation to this end be adequately provided by federal, state and local legislative bodies that voluntary independent commissions for families be created by interested localities and states, and at the national level, to insure that public policies impacting on families, including those of business and industry, be sensitive to the diversity of families and accountable to their special needs. (YES-526 NO-69).

#### Parents and Children

22. Resolved: that WHCF recognizes that current Federal policies in foster care and adoption have unnecessarily deleterious effects on families and children and that a reorientation of these policies is long overdue; that WHCF accepts H.R. 3434 as a bill that effectively redresses many of the inequities presently in law and notes that it has broad and enthusiastic support among persons and groups advocating policy reform in these areas; that therefore, WHCF strongly endorses H.R. 3434 and calls upon Congress and the President to enact it into law forthwith. (YES-535 NO-37).
23. Preventive approaches to the crisis of teenage pregnancy must receive high priority. These should include, but not be limited to, family life education and comprehensive health services. This may be provided by parents, religious institutions, community organizations and/or public and private agencies. Pregnant adolescents, adolescent parents, and their families should have access to comprehensive health, education, and social services that will help them overcome the problems associated with early pregnancy and teenage parenthood. (YES-527 NO-63).
24. Whereas a child without supportive and nurturing parental relationships is a hurting and damaged child; and whereas Federal, State and local programs should not alienate children psychologically or spiritually from their parents; and whereas closer ties between parents and their children is to be presumed a good not an ill--be it resolved that parents not be excluded from decision-making participation in those programs which affect their children and youth unless the protection of the interests and rights of the individual family member is at risk especially in the case of children and youth. (YES-342 NO-252).

## Family Violence

25. Federal, State and local government should give a high priority to preventing and dealing with all victims of domestic violence and neglect by helping all types of families to avoid stress, violence, and crisis through allocation of more monies or reallocation of existing monies for multicultural: (a) treatment services, preventive services and research; (b) development and implementation of educational curricula and enhanced professional training in family life, parenting, sex roles, sexuality, and intergenerational relationships starting in kindergarten; and (c) media campaigns that promote greater public awareness of, and responsibility for prevention of family stress, crises and violence. (YES-520 NO-74).
26. Federal, State and local governments should give highest priority to the development and implementation of comprehensive treatment services and programs to alleviate stress, violence and crises in all types of intimate relations and families by: (a) establishing family multi-service centers to provide convenient, comprehensive affordable, multi-lingual 24-hour services; (b) providing community crises shelters with supportive, health, legal and rehabilitative services to abuse victims and their dependents including counseling, referral advocacy and community education and self-help programs; and (c) mandating interagency coordination of services and the inclusion of community-based and advocacy groups. (YES-513 NO-74).
27. The Federal Government must take the leadership role and responsibility through the passage and funding of the Domestic Violence Prevention and Services Act of 1980 and increased funding under the Child Abuse Act of 1974 for the research and development of services through a single coordinated federal effort. Pre-existing programs should be promoted and strengthened. Planning should come from a state agency with service delivery by community and self help groups, providing multi-cultural/lingual programs focusing on interrelationships of family abuse. All levels of government should strictly enforce current laws, enact appropriate new laws, and provide funds for related training of criminal justice personnel. (YES-538 NO-46).

## Substance Abuse

28. As substance abuse, including alcohol, causes many severe family problems, preventive programs should include: (a) Schools, K-12 and agencies should provide educational and vocational preventive studies concerning dangers of alcohol, drug abuse, abuse of prescription drugs, and the necessity of positive parental example; (b) Media should avoid showing drugs as a cure-all, promote public awareness of constructive alternatives, and must provide equal time to counteract alcohol commercials; (c) there should be a movement toward parental meetings, both with and without children to educate them regarding prevention; and (d) medical professionals should undergo extensive training on drug abuse, especially prescription drugs and alcohol. (YES-578 NO-15).
29. It should be the policy of government and private agencies to offer a wide range of community-based substance abuse treatment programs - that is, accessible to families and in the language and culture of these families

receiving services. These treatment programs should include a multi-disciplinary team, holistic approach which encourages strong family participation and offers a variety of options, e.g., employment and student assistance programs, self-help groups, residential facilities, etc. Programs should be accountable and client follow-up done. Through-out treatment and intervention, the primary focus should be on the family. (YES-552 NO-35).

30. Alcohol, drug abuse and nicotine abuse are our number one health problem. Society denies this problem because of its dependence on these substances. We recommend that these problems receive the highest priority. That includes no budget cuts and sufficient funding for prevention and treatment; a recognition of the cultural and economic aspects of drugs and alcohol; the need for changing attitudes; the need for family and community involvement; and the need for national efforts against the drug and alcohol epidemic. We should help children discover their gifts, talents and abilities and cultivate these through a strong, loving family to raise the children's self-esteem. (YES-547 NO-42).

#### Aging and Families

31. That the Social Security (SS) System be reformed so that: (1) two independent persons receiving SS payments will experience no reduction because of marriage; (2) limitation on earned income of aged families will be eliminated for those collecting SS; (3) all assured an adequate income level; and (4) all pre-retirees receive an adequate and simple explanation of SS benefits in their dominant language. (YES-534 NO-54).
32. To encourage home care support alternatives to institutionalization and promote choice for families and the elderly, we recommend: (a) appropriate changes in Medicaid/Medicare policies; (b) tax benefits to cover costs incurred for homemaker services, day care, night care, transportation, and appropriate home improvements; (c) local development of services by the public or private sectors such as telephone reassurances, meals on wheels, friendly visiting, companionship, dial-a-ride and respite care; and (d) funding services to help elderly individuals maintain their own homes. (YES-572 NO-22).
33. To revise the tax laws to benefit families who care for and keep the elderly in their own homes which provides a tax incentive for a household that includes a person 65 years of age or older. Should that household modify its dwelling to accomodate an older person, an additional tax incentive should be given and we recommend that public policy provide tax incentives to individuals who assist older citizens without regard to income qualifications and study the effect of how family support is considered in determination of income eligibility for the elderly to participate in programs. (YES-553 NO-36).

### III. FAMILIES AND HUMAN NEEDS

#### Education

34. Priority should be given to Family Life Education through all life cycles (K-12, Continuing Education, Higher Education, Vocational Education, Community Education) which include: (a) parenting skills; (b) communication skills; (c) life skills (effective use of family resources be encouraged through education in: consumer homemaking, budgeting and money management, nutrition, energy, family health, use of time and other related home management and home maintenance areas); and (d) human relation skills (including human sexuality and non-violent conflict resolution skills). (YES-531 NO-61).
35. Federal government should increase its funding of education. Congress should increase appropriations to implement the federally mandated programs. Priority should be given to increasing state and local appropriations and standards for quality sex-equitable educational programs inclusive of: (a) K-12; (b) Bilingual Education; (c) Special Education (including Exceptional and Gifted); (d) Community Education; (e) Education for Handicapped Persons; (f) Continuing Education; (g) Vocational Education; (h) Adult Education; and (i) Higher Education with encouragement of parental involvement. (YES-468 NO-123).
36. Public education must be maintained. The federal and state governments should work to secure equal educational opportunity for every child. This education should recognize the multi-ethnic diversity of our nation. Children must be taught in language they understand. Bi-lingual, bi-cultural programs which reflect the culture and traditions of our pluralistic society should be instituted as part of the process of learning English and becoming integrated into the mainstream of American life. Congress should enact legislation and appropriate adequate funds for awareness training for educators in order to deal more effectively with the diversified needs of students. (YES-480 NO-114).

#### Health

37. Comprehensive health care should be totally accessible to all segments of the community, recognizing that special emphasis must be directed toward the medically underserved families in rural and urban locations. Specifically, access barriers such as culture, geography, physical barriers and cost must be adequately addressed, if this goal is to be achieved. The WHCF should support and encourage the continued use of medically underserved rural areas as the criteria for establishing priorities when distributing federal funds. (YES-540 NO-52).
38. Whereas families are responsible for the prevention of disease and the promotion of wellness, in both the physical and mental health of their members, we urge that the private and public sectors focus their resources toward prevention, voluntary early intervention, education, and outreach services, in both specific and comprehensive programs. These should be both accessible for all segments of the community and reimbursed

by third party payors or tax credits. Priority shall be to eliminate the discrepancy in health status between the minority and general populations and reduce suicide, homicide, alcohol and drug related deaths. (YES-524 NO-60).

39. America was founded on deeply held principles of religious freedom, liberty and pluralism. The decision whether to have a child is a personal decision of conscience for each woman in consultation with a doctor. Government restriction would endanger the health and well-being of the woman and the family. Therefore, the full range of family planning services including pre-and post-natal care and safe, legal abortion must be available to all who freely make this decision. Regarding abortion and all reproductive services, neither the WHCF nor the government should pass any proposal that should be mandatory for parent or child. (YES-383 NO-202).

### Housing

40. We recommend that the federal government, states and localities assure the right of all families to safe, decent, affordable and energy-efficient housing:
- A. Implement legislation and additional appropriations to increase low and moderate cost housing available for rental, home and apartment ownership, including: (1) additional tax incentives to homeowners, housing providers and lenders; (2) subsidies for low-interest loans for homeowners; (3) acknowledgement of "sweat equity" (to increase loan amounts available to homeowners); (4) expansion of "Homesteading" Programs; (5) Real Property tax abatement for homeowners; (6) rental and mortgage subsidies; and (7) tax-free housing revenue bonds.
  - B. Citizen participation in planning, implementation and monitoring be mandated. (YES-478 NO-102).
41. We recommend that all discriminatory practices in housing against families regardless of size or composition be prohibited at all levels of government. This policy should be implemented by: (1) strict enforcement of existing legislation; (2) enactment of Edward-Drinan Bill (Enforcement of Title VIII "Fair Housing Act" by H.U.D.); (3) enact legislation for the public and private sector prohibiting discrimination against families with children, aged, handicapped and singles; and (4) State enactment of "Fair-Share" housing laws. (YES-478 NO-105).
42. We recommend that federal and state governments shall recognize the interdependence of our current programs in order to promote coordination among health, education, social welfare, transportation, child care, energy and environmental programs to assure the preservation of a sense of neighborhood (1) through the encouragement of home ownership and effective rehabilitation (2) through the development of effective housing codes and code enforcement at state and local levels to prevent the displacement of families due to lack of repair and maintenance by landlords, the lack of protection for renters in buildings subject to condominium conversion and tax delinquency. (YES-523 NO-52).

### Child Care

43. That federal, state and local government and private industry redirect and expand current funding for quality child care to provide family support and preventive services for all families who require these services including, but not limited to, child care services that would prevent the removal of children from their own homes and into institutions and foster care settings. (YES-533 NO-54).
44. In order to assure that child care programs involve families and reflect their diverse values and choices for their children, it should be the policy of government at all levels to promote the development of alternative forms of quality care, both center and home based. Families must be central to any child care program for ideal impact on children's development. (YES-547 NO-44).
45. To insure the safety, health and developmental potential of children, quality licensing standards for all child care-programs should be required on the local, state, and federal levels and these standards should require that child care personnel be adequately trained and receive wages which fit the level of qualifications and competencies required. (YES-531 NO-59).

### Handicapping Conditions

46. To assist families with disabled members to live productive, independent lives within the community, emphasis should be placed on respite care; attendant care; subsidized adoption with medical assistance; early identification; diagnosis and infant stimulation programs; financial assistance for special equipment for the working and non-working disabled; the design of adaptive products by industry; employment opportunities to encourage self-support; tax deductions to encourage families to care for disabled members of all ages at home; counseling; low-interest mortgage loans and assistance in adapting homes to meet individual needs; and full implementation and funding of existing laws and programs. (YES-534 NO-26).
47. Educate the public and private sectors to the value of handicapped persons in our society to achieve total integration: (a) Education of employers and employees to capabilities and needs of handicapped persons within work force; (b) Appropriate training of handicapped persons for career, home and life skills; (c) Organizations and institutions build into their professional school curricula standards for accreditation, in-service training, the appropriate educational information and requirements to create a responsive service delivery system; (d) Use of handicapped persons to promote national media campaign to educate the public; and (e) Secondary educational curricula include practical work with handicapped persons. (YES-544 NO-17)
48. Government at all levels must develop and implement policies and programs responsive to the needs of handicapped persons and their families: (a) Tax credits for families caring for handicapped persons; i.e., housing, equipment, personal care, adoption; (b) To finance and implement present and future laws which are supportive; i.e., transportation, fair housing, income maintenance, education, mortgage guarantees, adoption, advocacy,

rehabilitation; (c) Provide option to institutionalization; i.e., community alternative living arrangements, respite care, homemaker services, parental counseling, training, day programming recreation; (d) Insurance and licensing discrimination should be eliminated; and (e) Cut red tape and bureaucracy to encourage the support of the private sector.  
(YES-526 NO-33)

#### IV. FAMILIES AND MAJOR INSTITUTIONS

##### Government

49. We support policies which preserve and protect basic legal and human rights of all family members. To guarantee these rights we support: (1) Ratification of the ERA; (2) Elimination of discrimination and encouragement of respect for differences based on sex, race, ethnic origin, creed, socio-economic status, age, disability, diversity of family type and size, sexual preference or biological ties; (3) Protection against violent and abusive action; (4) Right to open, accessible, accountable, and responsible government at all levels; and (5) Right to decide whether or not to bear a child including access to the full range of family planning services, abortion, and maternal and infant care. (YES-292 NO-291)
50. Family Impact Analysis structures representative of the diversity of family life should be established by state and local constituencies to provide a voice for families, family impact studies and family research programs. At the federal level, accountability should be implemented through the establishment of an independent high level cross cutting commission to monitor and evaluate the impact of federal policies on families. More organizations and agencies--both public and private--should examine and improve the ways in which their own practices affect families (YES-492 NO-95)
51. (Resolve) that government assume responsibility for enhancing the ability of families to function by guaranteeing basic human needs necessary for their material, physical, intellectual and emotional development, with the objective of providing for the independence and self sufficiency of families. Such basic needs include universal health insurance, jobs which enhance dignity and respect, guaranteed adequate income, safe and decent housing, and access to education and day care, and that government regulations, governing aid to families with dependent children programs, or those on public assistance be changed to eliminate disincentives to a father staying in the household to support his family so that the family can begin functioning as an economic unit. (YES-419 NO-164)

##### Media

52. The FCC should require stations to fully inform the public in prime time as to the ways they can effectively respond to objectionable material and further that the FCC should establish a grievance mechanism at regional levels to address complaints or objections in addition to seeking a com-

mission membership which is reflective of cultural and ethnic diversity and increases the positive visibility of ethnic and racial minorities. To insure more general involvement in the station's programming, commercial stations should be required to form community Advisory Boards before license renewal, as they are now required for public broadcasting systems. (YES-478 NO-91)

53. Families, PTA's, community, educational and religious groups, and the general public should marshal their forces to persuade advertising sponsors, government agencies and the media to eliminate the violence and the abusive programming having negative effects on the family. Any race, religious and sex stereotyping should be eliminated. Families should be educated about how to express their reactions to detrimental programming as well as the programs they endorse. Families should have the opportunity to invite mass media into their homes as safely as they invite in family friends. (YES-496 NO-86)
54. All media must present views in a balanced manner on all issues of concern. American families rest on a foundation of diversity. Such diversity is sorely lacking in the models provided by the mass media both in advertising and in the content of entertainment fare, much of which ridicules strong family relations and provides negative roles for children and other family members. Stereotyped portrayals of women and minorities are particularly destructive and dangerous. (YES-218 NO-363 FAILED)

#### Community Institutions

55. That Governments (a) increase support of local community organizations of proven effectiveness for planning, coordination, and delivery of community services thus promoting citizen participation and self reliance among families and strengthening institutions, such as religious groups and institutions, family law services, comprehensive health and community centers, family counseling, and community-based education centers; (2) encourage and promote the increased use of existing physical and human resources in local communities, including self-help groups, supported by a wider range of professionals who emphasize preventive health education; (3) recognize and affirm the role of religious institutions in strengthening families; and (4) provide for comprehensive, universally accessible social services. (YES-495 NO-75)
56. In heartfelt concern that families continue to be able to choose to have children despite the present economic realities that force most parents to work, we urge community institutions to provide and support programs of maternal and paternal leave and adequate child-care options. We also urge community to provide and support access to legal medical help in family planning services for people of all economic circumstances to safeguard their health and their choice to have children. (YES-460 NO-114)
57. That Governments confront the negative impact of racism and discrimination on the total community and promulgate and enforce policies that directly reduce its influence in everyday life of families. Basic social policies should insure equity and social justice for all individuals regardless of and respecting differences of age, sex, race, ethnicity, religious, cultural, or moral tradition and values. Also that community institutions

have a responsibility to provide services to all members of the community and make available a choice of public and community services which take into account individual preference and differences in family makeup, and community pluralism. (YES-457 NO-120)

#### Law and the Judicial System

58. It is the recommendation of the WHCF that States be encouraged to revise their justice systems to minimize disruption on families, to remove status offenders from the court structure and to consider particularly the impact which removal of children has upon families. State laws must assure that children be provided with due process protection including the hearings and legal representation and including least restrictive placement whenever they are removed from home, whether for reasons of delinquency, dependency, mental illness, mental retardation or other social reasons. The cultural and linguistic heritage of the families involved in this process must be taken into consideration. (YES-523 NO-43)
59. Recommend that court-connected conciliation and mediation services become available in all states and territories, with careful consideration of the linguistic and cultural differences of the involved families to assist families in self-determining issues relating to marriage, divorce, custody, support, visitation and any matter relating to their family unit; and to that end joint custody of children should, whenever possible, be preserved between the parents as an alternative mechanism to the traditional adversary system; and that the states consider laws that impact on the preservation of the family unit. (YES-521 NO-50)
60. It is the recommendation of the WHCF that each State establish a court system or level of judiciary to deal only with legal matters affecting the family (divorce, property division, custody, support, visitation, adoption, child abuse and neglect, and other juvenile matters) and that each provide opportunities for continuing legal education and cultural awareness for the judges and attorneys serving in this capacity. Also that community advisory groups be established to assist the court in determining effectiveness of policies on family and community life. These groups should consist of parents, public and private service providers, religious interest groups and elected officials. (YES-506 NO-60)



D.

MAINE'S DELEGATES TO THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

JUNE 5,6,7 in Baltimore

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APPENDIX C.

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Sharit Bruneau	Carol Bombard	

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