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Who Knows?

Hundreds of Programs to Serve the Disadvantaged, but Who Knows about Them? To What Extent is Failure to Communicate Information a Factor in Disadvantage?

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Foreword

The Canada NewStart program, a joint activity of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion and certain provincial Departments of Education, was established on a term basis to develop new methods of training and counselling disadvantaged adults. Six NewStart corporations were formed, each operating within a clearly defined geographical area. They developed individual approaches to dealing with a variety of problems of human resource development and have attempted many innovative approaches.

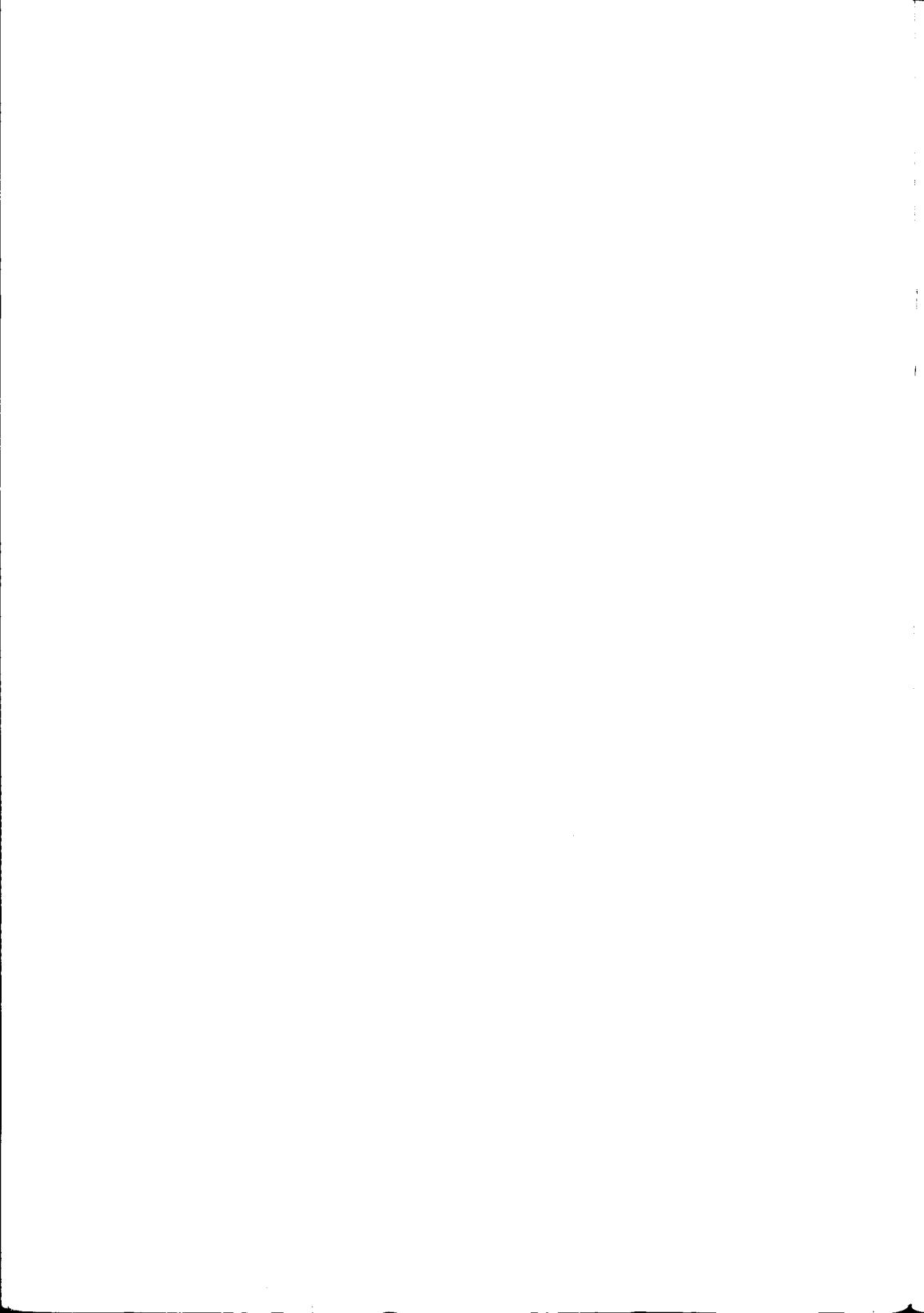
While it is too early to evaluate effectively the total impact of the NewStart program, it is important to disseminate the major findings of this program. We have commissioned a series of concise reports based upon each of the major areas of concern to which the program was addressed. These are essentially descriptive reports, and the evaluation will be limited generally to: a review of methods used to evaluate products or techniques; the identification of each corporation's basis for judging its effects; the means used to resolve problems of evaluation; the pointing up of alternative interpretations, where indicated, to those drawn from the available data; and an identification of areas where solid evaluation has taken place, and of others where future verification may be indicated.

The data bases for the preparation of these reports have been obtained from published and unpublished documents in NewStart files. Each report includes a bibliography identifying its informational sources; copies of these are available in microfiche to those wishing to explore a particular area in greater depth.

*Ottawa, Ontario
July, 1973*

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Introduction¹

A. BACKGROUND FOR THE CANADA NEWSTART PROGRAM

In 1963 the federal government announced a program of assistance to 35 areas in Canada characterized by high chronic unemployment and slow growth. It was assumed that unemployment and slow growth in these areas resulted from economic deficiencies. Assistance was, therefore, economic, and took the form of the promotion of capital investment. By 1965 it had become evident that it was necessary not only to promote capital investment but to increase manpower utilization. This was seen as a training problem. Adult basic education and occupational training programs had already been initiated under the Technical and Vocational Training Act. In May 1965 the Cabinet agreed to co-operate with the provinces in setting up joint pilot training projects to attempt to solve the training needs of the high-unemployment slow-growth areas. The following month a committee was named to prepare a detailed proposal. The committee included persons from the Technical and Vocational Training and Economics and Research branches of the Department of Labour and the Special Planning Secretariat of the Privy Council.¹

The committee proposed the establishment of a limited number of experimental pilot projects for the broad purpose of making individuals in the slow-growth areas, and hence the areas themselves, more productive. In the conduct of the pilot projects a number of programs and methods would be tried. The project areas would become, in effect, laboratories in which techniques and courses would be tested for later application in other slow-growth areas.

This proposal was put before the Federal-Provincial Conference held in July 1965 by Prime Minister Pearson, who said, "The federal government believes that this kind of experiment is essential to developing the improve-

¹ Material for this part from [10, 18, 56].

ments in manpower policies which the Economic Council of Canada has emphasized are essential if we are to realize the potentialities of our economy.” At that conference, it was agreed to convene a meeting of provincial ministers of education and labour to consider the proposal. In the meantime the committee added to the proposal more detailed specifications of objectives and terms of reference, and suggestions regarding program components. Many of their ideas came from reports on training programs in the U.S. War on Poverty, but *three suggested features made the proposed program unique*:

1. Study of job opportunities and characteristics of potential trainees *before* designing training programs.
2. Management training for poverty-level owner-operators.
3. A research component which would make it possible to adapt, discard, refine and adopt programs on the basis of knowledge of data.

Prior to the meeting of provincial ministers of education and labour, which was postponed because of the election in the fall of 1965, the expanded proposal was presented to a meeting of selected members of the Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation and the Canadian Education Association, who were also members of the National Technical and Vocational Training Advisory Council. Following discussion at this meeting the proposal was further expanded (particularly in the areas of project establishment, financing and administration, and technical support), and in January 1966 it was presented to the provincial ministers at a meeting chaired by the Hon. Jean Marchand, then Minister of the newly established Department of Manpower and Immigration. The ministers agreed with the concept.

The next step was to determine the form of organization and the powers to be given to it. It was agreed that the form of organization should be a non-profit company or society established jointly by the federal and provincial governments and funded by the federal government. This recommendation was conveyed to provincial departments of education and labour through a letter from Mr. Tom Kent, then Deputy Minister of Manpower and Immigration, dated March 23, 1966. The following are extracts from this letter: “The *primary tasks*¹ of the project will be to discover the economic, social and other obstacles to training, and to develop effective means to surmount them. . . The projects will be concerned with the training and retraining of all adults in the selected areas and, among other things, will develop programs for school dropouts, the unemployed, the underemployed, low income workers, workers displaced or threatened by technological change and persons whose productivity is affected by a decline in primary industries.”

¹ Our italics.

B. ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT PROJECTS BRANCH AND NEW-START CORPORATIONS

In October 1966 a Pilot Projects Branch was created in the Department of Manpower and Immigration to carry out the actual establishment of what was now being referred to as the "NewStart" program. The provinces had already been invited to submit proposals on NewStart areas for discussion. In June of 1967 the first NewStart corporation was formed, in Nova Scotia, through agreement between the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration and the provincial Department of Education. The project area, selected by the province, was Yarmouth County. In August Saskatchewan NewStart (project area, Prince Albert), Alberta NewStart (project area centred in Lac la Biche), and Prince Edward Island NewStart (project area, Kings County) were incorporated. In May 1969 New Brunswick NewStart (project area, Kent County) was incorporated, and in July 1969 Manitoba NewStart (project area centred in The Pas) was incorporated. For various reasons agreements were not included with the other provinces.

C. CHANGES IN FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION

In July 1968 the Pilot Projects Branch was transferred to the Department of Forestry and Rural Development, where it became the Experimental Projects Branch. The focus shifted somewhat from the training of disadvantaged people to "experimentation in the social and human aspects of development".

In April 1969 the Department of Regional Economic Expansion was formed, and the Experimental Projects Branch became the Social and Human Analysis Branch of this department.

D. TERMINATION DATES

From the outset NewStart was looked upon as a relatively short-term program. The experimental NewStart projects were limited to an operating life of three to four years with additional time for planning and preparation and for phase-out. Accordingly, Prince Edward Island NewStart surrendered its charter in August 1971; Manitoba NewStart, established in 1969, surrendered its charter in December 1971; Saskatchewan NewStart and Alberta NewStart terminated their activities on 30 June and 31 August 1972 respectively. Some parts of the programs of these corporations will be continued under sponsorship and funding by federal, provincial, or joint federal-provincial programs. Nova Scotia NewStart was extended to 31 December 1972 for the specific purposes of preparing consolidated reports and disseminating information on the DACUM [1] system. New Brunswick NewStart will operate until 1973.¹

¹ In Saskatchewan, the corporation assumed a new direction under the Department of Manpower and Immigration with the name of *Training Research and Development Station*.

E. PROGRAMS

The above is no more than the bare structure, or “bones”, of the Canada NewStart Program. The programs, studies, and findings which put meat on the bones are covered in this and other consolidated reports, as well as in the reports of the individual corporations.

Because of the autonomy granted to the individual corporations, and because they operated in different sections of the country among people with different problems and needs, there was great variation in NewStart programs. All, however, had some things in common. All corporations conducted adult basic education programs (although some gave this more emphasis than others), all had some form of “life skills” training, all included some form of occupational training and some counselling, and gave some attention to community development. All were alike in recognizing that disadvantaged persons have many problems and that much more than occupational training is needed for their rehabilitation.

Who Knows? Lack of Information as a Factor in Disadvantage

A. A GREAT DIVERSITY OF PROGRAMS

The well-being and development of every citizen is a central concern of governments at all levels in Canada. The federal government has a wide range of programs directed toward these ends [57]. (Lester B. Pearson)

To be precise, the index of what the then Prime Minister referred to as "main efforts" in human development, in the foreword of which the above sentences are a part, contains the names of 211 different programs directed toward "the well-being and development of every citizen". These programs include income support, housing, community processes and institutions, public services and service facilities, health, education, and social services, socio-economic integration and mobility, aids to productivity and industrial development, area development and land use, development of managerial and occupational skills, employment incentives and labour standards. This is indeed "a great diversity", as Mr. Pearson pointed out in the opening sentence of his second paragraph.

To these must be added a further "great diversity" of provincial and municipal programs. A directory of community services prepared by Nova Scotia NewStart Inc. lists 98 such services, federal, provincial, and municipal, available to the citizens of Yarmouth, a town of under 10,000 population. A report on government services prepared by Manitoba NewStart Inc. lists 62 such services available to the citizens of The Pas (population approximately 6,000). An editorial in the Lac la Biche (Alberta) Herald, entitled "A Case of Over-Help", begins "Have you ever considered the number of agencies and departments in Lac la Biche whose sole purpose is to 'help', or 'aid', or 'improve' the residents? For the relatively sparse population of the town and surrounding area, we have the Welfare Department, NewStart Inc., Community Development, Preventive Social Services, the Department of Indian Affairs, the Metis Rehabilitation, the Department of the Attorney General, and Lac la Biche School Division."

B. WHO PAYS? WHO BENEFITS? WHO SUFFERS?

WHO KNOWS?

The Lac la Biche editorial quoted in the preceding section asks, in capital letters, WHO PAYS? WHO BENEFITS? WHO SUFFERS? The answer to the first question is, of course, the taxpayer. "The answer to the second question is ideally the socially and economically deprived. But, are they really being assisted? If they are (and they should be with all the personnel working in this area), then these improvements, by this time, should be very noticeable. THEY ARE NOT."

The Lac la Biche editorial then suggests that the reason the socially and economically deprived are not benefitting from the great diversity of helping efforts is that these efforts are not co-ordinated. This is borne out by NewStart findings (one Prince Edward Island family was involved with 11 "helping" agencies). There is, however, another answer to the question of why thousands of the socially and economically deprived are not benefitting from helping efforts: *they do not know* about the help that is available.

The theme that recurs continuously in NewStart reports is that occupational training is "not enough" to rehabilitate socially and economically deprived persons. There are other needs, and one of these is the simple need for information about what can be done for them and about what they can do for themselves.

C. EVIDENCE OF LACK OF INFORMATION

I have this sort of a notion that the reason Indian people and Metis and a lot of white people are having difficulties is that they are excluded from society. (NewStart Worker)

Nothing excludes people as effectively from society, an organization, or a game as a lack of knowledge of the rules. Early NewStart efforts in all project areas revealed a lack of knowledge of even the most basic rules among many disadvantaged people.

An initial study of Kings County, Prince Edward Island, revealed that certain factors contributing to poverty were common to many of its communities: declining primary industries, lack of steady, well-paying employment, unsatisfactory living conditions, insufficient education and job skills, immobility, and *ignorance of or isolation from public and private service agencies* [46]. In a survey of approximately 5,000 families in this high-unemployment slow-growth area only about 100 were found who drew welfare benefits. Although maltreatment by welfare agencies was suggested as a possible cause, the evidence seemed to suggest ignorance rather than maltreatment.

Following the initial survey, Prince Edward Island NewStart made one survey of an information service: the public library service of Kings County. This survey revealed that the library service was used mostly by students and

housewives. Apart from students, housewives, teachers, retired people, and business men, the service was used by only 31 persons, including five farmers and fishermen and 26 "others" [49].

In its initial assessment of the resources of Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia NewStart Inc. discovered that lack of information, or inadequate distribution of information, was a significant factor in the depressed condition of certain individuals and businesses. In no sector was this more noticeable than in the fishing industry, which accounts for approximately 25 percent of the available employment in the county [50]. The fact that fishermen do not share even in the limited affluence of the project area was seen as evidence of the need for information and change. There was also evidence of lack of occupational information among persons other than fishermen. Many persons coming to an occupational training information and study centre established by the corporation lacked knowledge of occupational choices, training opportunities (regional, provincial, federal, independent institutions), compensating allowances, and other relevant information [39].

Early research in the New Brunswick project area associated disadvantage with lack of information. Information centres were established and a major project developed to measure the effects of setting up new linkages on economic and power structure and quality of life. Although the program has been in operation for less than two years, it has already had some visible effects, indicating the extent to which lack of information is a factor in economic and social disadvantage.

In the west, Saskatchewan NewStart Inc. stated that many communities were not managing their own affairs as well as they might because they did not have trained people organizing their activities, *did not know* how to interact and negotiate with more senior levels of government, and *did not know* what services higher levels of government would provide [53].

Alberta NewStart field staff were especially concerned about ignorance of the law among native people, feeling that the majority, especially in remote areas, were not aware of the laws and their rights under the law and the services available to them. These findings confirmed findings of the Special Projects Committee of the Canadian Corrections Associations [2].

Manitoba NewStart Inc. has documented the most evidence of lack of information. This does not mean to say that disadvantaged persons in the Manitoba project area are more handicapped by lack of information than persons in other areas, but based on data from the survey, and on agency conferences, Manitoba NewStart gave high priority to this factor. This corporation lists as item (b) in the "Statement of the Problem" for a Plan of Operations for 1970-71 [29] "much of the local manpower potential is neither fully prepared *nor well aware*¹ of the opportunities".

¹ Our italics.

Manitoba NewStart surveyed a number of the Indian reservations and Metis settlements in the project area for further data to add to the data from the initial survey. The findings are interesting. . . and consistent.

Many people were not aware of Churchill Forest Industries as a potential employer. The people of Camperville are for the most part unaware of and unaffected by the federal government.

They know how to manipulate service agencies such as welfare to maximize benefits, but they do not know how to get better schools and roads by contact with policy-making systems [24].

The people of Pine Creek may be described as politically inactive. They are largely unaware of the government systems which surround them.

Reserve residents find themselves in the midst of systems they do not always understand. The need to manipulate the political system is seldom understood.

Children in schools where they have no chance to mingle have incredible notions and ignorance. One white grade eight class wrote on the matter of Indians [28]:

"Scalping should be made illegal."

"They should be put in separate towns with their own schools, hospitals and stills."

"You're always hearing about Indians getting killed or something."

"Why should we pay their taxes for them, and they give us nothing in return."

"Why don't they work at jobs like everybody else."

Nearly 50% of the population state that they were not informed of government plans to establish a logging operation at Moose Lake [23].

Manitoba NewStart conducted a project in manpower need identification. Although, as the name suggests, the primary objective was the identification of job opportunities in the project area, some information was obtained regarding knowledge about Manpower services in the area. Indian and Metis people interviewed were familiar with three or four out of the eleven services offered. A report on the project includes an interesting side note to the effect that no Manpower centre in the area fully enumerated all the services they provide [25]. In fact, the writers of the report conclude that information transmitted to them through their questionnaire indicates no greater knowledge about Manpower services among Manpower employees than among the general public.

The report on Manpower need identification in The Pas area of Manitoba includes a report on Vocational Opportunities Services, an organization existing to guide the client past or through all government services simultaneously or in order, ending, where appropriate and possible, in job placement. Vocational Opportunities Services reports the areas of greatest ignorance among persons with whom they work to be:

- Vocational rehabilitation for disabled persons
- Services with no field representatives
- Services with no regular visits
- Canada Manpower services

Canada student aid

Housing off the Reserve via Indian Affairs.

Among all the persons surveyed, the report concludes, "there is an alarming ignorance of CMC's services".

The Manitoba report on manpower need identification includes as an appendix a report on information inputs into four northern Manitoba communities (Moose Lake, Split Lake, Easterville, Pukatawagan) by Allan Murray, Conservation Education Section, Manitoba Department of Mines and Natural Resources, based on interview material collected by Nelson Scribe of the same section in December 1967. One hundred and ninety-one homes were visited. In discussing the findings, Mr. Murray states bluntly [31]:

Studies in race-torn United States cities reveal that many unemployed men are not even aware of jobs that are available: they lack the information necessary for them to even seek employment. A similar situation exists in most of our northern Indian communities.

The reader can judge for himself. Of the 191 homes visited, none received a daily newspaper, 13 received a weekly newspaper, nine had television sets although some families interviewed had never seen television, and only nine magazines made their way into the four communities. In all four communities moving pictures were shown regularly. Seventy-two per cent of the homes visited contained one or more radios.

Inquiring about how the families surveyed received specific types of information, the interviewer obtained the following replies:

Job opportunities:	No information	89
	From Indian Affairs	39
	From Community Development Officer	24
	From radio news	19
	From other government employees	10
	From local people	6
Job training opportunities:	No information	106
	From Indian Affairs	48
	From Community Development Officer	18
	From radio news	4
	From other government employees	5
Welfare programs:	No information	92
	From Indian Affairs	87
	From radio	73
	From Community Health Worker	1
Manitoba Gov't programs in general:	No information	93
	From radio	46
	From television	4
	From government employees	2
	From Community Health Worker	1

The author of the report comments: "The communities surveyed got remarkably little new material in their information flow and what they did get was of an incidental nature and not of their own choosing." He goes on to say that this was not a systematic survey and its findings may be suspect. "They do, however, point out a serious lack of new information getting into these northern communities. Someone might want to validate this survey with a complete study by qualified social scientists. But if the evidence presented here is accepted as at least indicative of a problem, thought should be given to overcoming this information gap."

D. REASONS FOR FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE

It was not that such information did not exist, but the gap between those having the information and those most needing it had not been effectively bridged. (Nova Scotia NewStart Report)

In working with disadvantaged persons in six slow-growth areas of Canada, NewStart corporations not only found widespread evidence of a broad information gap, but were able to identify a number of reasons for this gap.

1. APATHY

An early Alberta NewStart proposal¹ drew the attention of the Ministers to whom it was addressed to the fact that "Indians and Metis are characterized by attitudes of passivity". In fact, disadvantaged people, generally, are characterized by attitudes of passivity and apathy. What may not be as well known is the effect this has on efforts to communicate. Dr. Mel Thistle, now (1973) Professor of Journalism at Carleton University, lists the states of mind in "an emotional tone scale", and, opposite these, assesses the prospects for effective communication with persons in these states of mind [58]:

Cheerfulness	Excellent
Conservatism } Covert hostility }	Very good
Anger } Fear }	So-so
Grief } Apathy }	Very poor

Discussing communication at these levels, he says: "At the two lowest levels, *grief* and *apathy*, communication is very poor: it must be limited to the good old days, now lost, or you will receive no attention. At these levels, words are seldom enough — you must use other symbols." And later, in the same paper, "In brief, emotional barriers to communication may and often do exist. If they do, it may be necessary to take the time to alter the acute emotional state before you attempt to communicate. Dealing with the chronic states is a long-term proposition."

¹ Unpublished memorandum leading to [4].

2. SEGREGATED SCHOOLS.

A Manitoba NewStart [28] report blames part of the difficulties in communication on the fact that in some communities white and native children are segregated, resulting in "incredible notions and ignorance." Examples of these incredible notions and ignorance are cited on page 8, above.

3. PROBLEM OF IDENTIFICATION OF INFORMATION.

Allen Murray, in his report on information inputs into northern Manitoba communities [31], suggests that "... a problem of identification of information exists. This is, some of the people are getting information, or got information, and did not realize what it was. The net effect, of course, is that they will act, or react, as if they had not obtained any information."

4. PROLIFERATION OF "HELPING" AGENCIES.

This is a recurring theme. From a Prince Edward Island NewStart report [46]: "One family reported as many as 11 different persons, representing highly diverse interests, attempting to help them. These writers hypothesize that if poor persons are hesitant to co-operate with service agencies, as has often been heard, it may be that they are simply tired of pouring out their problems to so many strangers." And from a Nova Scotia NewStart report [12], in a section on the role of guidance workers, "They were intermediaries between people in need and the various helping agencies". The report goes on to say that contact with these agencies often results in "confusion and anxiety" for the disadvantaged. What seems to be suggested in these and other NewStart reports is that, for many disadvantaged persons, obtaining information and help means going to so many different agencies that they feel they are being given the run-around. Others, hearing of such experiences, prefer to remain uninformed — and unhelped.

5. LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN AGENCIES AND THOSE THEIR PROGRAMS ARE DESIGNED TO SERVE.

There are many indications of lack of communication between agencies and those who are or should be their clients.

"A helping hand is extended to those who feel they have not received, elsewhere, a satisfactory reply or who may have encountered problems and difficulties, either because of incomplete information or of wrong direction." [36]

"At a regular meeting of the second group (a Welfare Rights group) Department of Welfare representatives informed the group of hitherto unknown benefits." [46]

“We, the members of the Cross Lake Non-Treaty Association, DO NOT WANT Northern Affairs. Northern Affairs is a government by itself with all the powers, rights and privileges to VETO our requests. *They do not listen to us. They do not consult us. They hold information from us.*” [21]

“Main barriers appear to be the difficulty of getting accurate information from government agencies to the people, the difficulty of providing the information in a meaningful way, and the necessity for capital to begin projects.” [24]

“Training programmes, employment conditions, incentives to relocate might be improved if external bodies came to recognize the greater possibilities of productive discourse with community members.” [27]

6. LACK OF INTERAGENCY COMMUNICATION.

Some NewStart workers felt that lack of interagency communication added to their difficulties in conveying correct information to the disadvantaged. Louis Richard, who was in charge of social and community development work for Prince Edward Island NewStart, in an interview in July 1971 stated that they had discovered a great lack of communication among the agencies and a great tendency toward specialization which multiplied the difficulties of the disadvantaged. “The biggest capital sin (of service agencies)”, said Mr. Richard, “is that they have accentuated isolation rather than integration. They have let themselves become part of this specialization era. Somebody has got to take the first step, and somebody has got to get off his high horse.”

7. PATERNALISM.

This is a factor among the native populations of the western provinces. The Cross Lake Non-Treaty Association, which complains that Northern Affairs withholds information from them, are no doubt receiving all the information which Northern Affairs feels is good for them or can be absorbed by them.

Paternalism is not confined to Northern Affairs. Heather Robertson writes [47]: “Power is vested in the Church and the welfare officer. The people are expected to obey without questions.”

8. LANGUAGE BARRIER.

Another reason for lack of information among disadvantaged people is that information is not being given in the language which they

understand most easily. Saskatchewan NewStart attributes many ills to the language barrier [52]:

Among the Indian and Metis population in the northern part of prairie provinces the inability of many to use effectively the English language prevents the acquisition of literacy skills, thus precluding progress in school or in adult training schemes; hinders participation in economic and social development projects; lessens the probability of successfully managing their own affairs, either corporate or individual; frustrates the intentions of enfranchisement; inhibits the growth of self-confidence; and in general, limits their ability to cope with the daily problems of life.

Allen Murray, in his report on information inputs into northern Manitoba communities [31], writes: "Most people (132) wanted the additional information in English, although a significant number wanted it in Cree." On the east coast, Nova Scotia NewStart, in evaluating its own Occupational Training Information and Study Centre [17], admits to a "need to emphasize the bilingual aspect of the centre more effectively."

9. MATERIAL INAPPROPRIATE TO EDUCATIONAL LEVEL.

English-Cree and English-French are not the only language barriers which exist. There is an English-English language barrier which may be even more serious because it prevents more people from receiving information.

Nova Scotia NewStart recognized this barrier as a factor contributing to lack of knowledge or use of modern technological methods among Yarmouth County fishermen [43]:

"If fishermen generally are not well informed on matters relating to fisheries, it is not, as has been pointed out, due so much to the fact that information is not available as it is to the fact that there is no systematic, easily accessible facility for providing and interpreting the information.

"The matter of interpretation is important. Much of the available printed matter is written in technical language which cannot be understood by the average fisherman, whose education is not likely to have extended into high school. Three-quarters of the fishermen in Yarmouth County have not completed beyond grade 8.

"A wealth of information has been and is being published relating to the fisheries and marine fields. . . It should be noted, however, that most of the material, free or purchased, from whatever country, needs some interpretation for use by the average fisherman. *Most sources appear to overestimate the reading level of the primary producer.*"

In a report on the operation of another information centre, an Occupational Training Information and Study Centre, Nova Scotia NewStart writes [39]: "Printed material is ineffective in attracting those who cannot or do not read. Centre operators must rely heavily on word-of-mouth to tell people about their services. Radio and (where available) television might be used with some effect, but it is doubtful if this type of message is heard with much understanding or comprehension by those it is most desired to reach." Evidently much of the material in this centre was inappropriate for those with limited education. An evaluation of the centre [17] revealed that "the centre had little appeal for those with minimal education. Very few of the group with less than grade 5 came at all."

Public libraries could be a good source of information, but the only study of library service made by NewStart revealed that "Farmers and fishermen, who constitute 13% of the population, form a negligible 1% of library users." The writers of the report [49] hypothesize that this is due to the lack of education beyond the elementary level for these groups and the fact that Kings County libraries hold few books of special interest to these groups.

Saskatchewan NewStart examined two periodicals (*Our Native Land*, published by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and *The Native People*, published by The Alberta Native Communications Society, Edmonton) for reading difficulty [60]. They found that "The first was about Grade 11 or 12 on the Fry Readability Graph, while the second varied from that level to "post-graduate". The conclusion is that "These would not be useful to newly literate (Grade 5.0) adults remaining in the north."

10. SYSTEM NOT UNDERSTOOD.

A basic difficulty relates not merely to the ineffectiveness of present methods in communicating specific information but to their ineffectiveness in communicating an understanding of the system itself. This is true of the reserves and Metis settlements in the west:

"Reserve residents find themselves in the midst of systems they do not always understand. The need to manipulate the political system is seldom understood." [28]

"Many communities are not managing their own affairs as well as they might because, for instance, they do not have trained people organizing their activities, do not know how to interact and negotiate with more senior levels of government, and do not know what services higher levels of government will provide." [53]

This is also true of high-unemployment slow-growth communities in the east:

“In these communities, many individuals do not at present know how to use the helping agencies at their disposal for health, welfare and other social services. Many do not know how to make use of Canada Manpower facilities.” [45]

11. INCONSISTENT FLOW OF INFORMATION.

In one project area (Manitoba) lack of assimilation of information was attributed in part to its inconsistent flow: “Radio appears to be a principal source of information in most northern communities, but at present the flow of information supplied by radio is so spotty and unrelated that it is considered to be inconsequential as a significant means of changing behaviour or attitudes.” [22]

12. INEFFECTIVENESS OF MASS COMMUNICATION MEDIA.

Another basic reason for the lack of information among disadvantaged people is that efforts have been made to inform them through the mass media, which, generally speaking, are ineffective in reaching them. This was a finding of those involved in American retraining projects [6], and was a warning of the Pilot Projects Branch to NewStart executive directors at their first conference in September 1967 [44]: “Mass communications media are not really effective in reaching and influencing these people. The NewStart corporation must develop methods of overcoming these obstacles. . .”

Findings of the corporations confirmed this. Manitoba NewStart reported of one settlement in that project area [24] “Residents of Camperville appear to respond most positively to data which is conveyed to them verbally. . . Government agencies appear in some cases to be relying upon printed matter for information dissemination. Some Camperville people have difficulty, especially with the longer reports, because of their lack of formal education.” And Nova Scotia NewStart confirms [41] that “mass media have their limitations, particularly with regard to the disadvantaged, who tend to reject impersonal communication.”

13. UNAVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES THAT PERMIT EASY ACCESS.

The *Plan for Action Research*, quoted above, draws attention to the “unavailability of resources that permit easy access to information”. Nova Scotia’s Fisheries Information Centre was located on the public wharf because it was felt that its success depended on *easy access* to information which, in theory, was available, but which, in practice, was not used because it was not readily accessible [43].

The first evaluation of the use of the centre [20] contains clear evidence that the Fisheries Information Centre, after one year of operation, was considered by the majority of the fishermen to be successful on all counts. It is the opinion of Prof. Lafferty, study director and author of the report, that "this very favourable evaluation by the users of the centre can be explained by the fact that the centre is providing them with a useful and previously unobtainable service."

However, a later evaluation introduces another dimension of accessibility [19]: "In interpreting the decrease in use by fishermen, one should note that the centre was open a little more than half the number of hours compared to the first year. For the larger part of the second year, the centre was operated on a 9:00 to 5:00 basis. Fishing, however, is not a 9:00 to 5:00 job. Potential fishermen users land at the public wharf any time of the night or day. Because the evening shift at the centre was discontinued, one might have expected to lose nearly half of the fishermen visitors." Clearly, accessibility is not a matter of *place* only but also a matter of *time*. If one wishes to convey information, one must be *where* the persons to be informed are, at a *time* convenient to them.

E. EFFECTS OF LACK OF INFORMATION

"Early in the history of the corporation it became apparent that lack of information was one of the contributing factors to disadvantage." This sentence, introducing a report on a NewStart informational intervention [39], says what has been said, in effect, by all the Canada NewStart corporations after brief experience with disadvantaged persons. The ways in which lack of information contributes to disadvantage are implicit in what has been said in previous sections of this report. In this section an effort is made to summarize the effects, as perceived by NewStart staff, of lack of information in specific areas:

Lack of technical information makes it impossible for persons to meet more informed competition. This is brought out most clearly in the situation of fishermen who must now compete with fishing vessels from other countries whose operations are based on advanced technology. Because they cannot compete, "fishermen do not share in the affluence of the country as a whole". [43]

Lack of information about employment and training opportunities is one of the major barriers to the movement of disadvantaged persons into stable and rewarding employment. Manpower programs are not effective unless they are well understood [42], and it would appear that, in some areas, they are not well understood. Manitoba NewStart reports [25] that "there is an alarming ignorance of CMC's services", much of the local manpower potential being "neither fully prepared nor well aware of the opportunities". [29] Nova Scotia NewStart records, in a report on

the operation of an occupational training information and study centre [39], that many persons coming to the centre lacked knowledge of the ever-increasing number of occupational choices, the training opportunities (regional, provincial, federal, independent institutions), the compensating allowances, and other relevant information.

Lack of information about social services means that many who should be benefitting from these services are not. This is brought out forcefully in a Prince Edward Island NewStart report [46] of a meeting arranged by the corporation at which Department of Welfare representatives informed the group of "hitherto unknown" benefits. Attempts by the centre personnel to obtain these "extra" benefits proved futile. The conclusion to be drawn is that agencies must begin to correctly inform the public of the services they provide. "The result of present practices is that families and individuals in need tend to receive a piecemeal solution for a multiplicity of problems; they are looked upon as either fulfilling or not fulfilling the criteria for services of a particular agency. In other words, they are expected to fit into neat slots of program." Manitoba NewStart [28] draws attention to a specific effect of lack of information on the part of those who should be receiving social service benefits. "Frequently government employees use the storekeeper as the main source of information. Usually the storekeeper is white. Many times his biases prejudice the civil servant. Thus the storekeeper becomes a powerful man with the ability to exert control over the Indian population — control so complete it determines who does and does not get money for food."

Lack of information about laws and law enforcement puts many ill-educated persons at a legal disadvantage. This is particularly true of native people, as reported by both Manitoba and Alberta corporations. From Manitoba: "An Indian person is often at a disadvantage in a court of law. The laws, the rituals and the forms are all foreign." [28] And from Alberta: "The majority of Indians (especially in remote areas) are not aware of the laws and especially are unaware of their rights under the law and the services available to them." [2] The problem is not confined to native people. Prince Edward Island NewStart invited an R. C. M. P. officer to meet with a group of trainees [9]. "After the presentation, many of the trainees expressed the feeling that they would now feel confident enough to call on the R. C. M. P. for help at any time, whereas before they were always afraid of the R. C. M. P."

Lack of information about "the system" means that not only individuals, but also communities are disadvantaged by not being able to manage their affairs as well as they might and obtain for themselves the benefits that might be available to them through governmental and other sources. "They don't know there's lots of money in government programs that they could fight for." [28] "They know how to manipulate service agencies such as welfare to maximize benefits, but they do not know how to get

better schools and roads by contact with policy-making systems. Consequently, they are the victims of poor financial and economic development. Lobbying for the things which the community views as important is almost always done by secure, no-risk, white employees of the civil service.” [24] “Too often, needs and plans are presented to civil servants at the field level. These people, despite their best efforts, often cannot promote the plan to its logical conclusion.” [28]

Finally and in summary, lack of information about the things which govern their lives means that people are unable to make knowledgeable decisions about their lives. Even in areas where there are opportunities, “the disadvantaged whites, Indians and Metis have little prospect of participating in any of the developments.” [4] Although lack of information is not the sole reason for lack of participation, it would seem to be a significant contributing factor. “They don’t understand what the agencies, etcetera, are supposed to be doing.”¹ “Many individuals do not at present know how to use the helping agencies at their disposal.” [45] “Where communication has broken down the residents set up their own network; asking questions and giving their own answers.” [23] “If such residents are to make knowledgeable decisions about their lives and the choices open to them. . . it is imperative that they be given more and better information.” [30]

Findings of the NewStart corporations are confirmed by Heather Robertson, who perhaps sounds a warning in her description of a Metis settlement within the Manitoba project area [47]:

The people have only a hazy conception of the state; it is viewed primarily as a source of infinite wealth. When riches are scattered among the people, the people love the government; when the state is stingy, the people hate it. They become ugly and rebellious.

¹ Stanley Wilson, a native NewStart worker, in conversation October 1971.

Closing the Gap — Information-Giving as a Means of Overcoming Disadvantage

In some cases, individuals possess all the necessary ingredients for change except information on how to achieve this change. In other cases, people are blocked from further progress by lack of information. The provision and dissemination of information by a variety of means is considered a prerequisite to any program requiring changes in behaviour [37].

In a broad sense, all NewStart programs required changes in behaviour, and incorporated the provision of information. In some projects information was given from centres which also had other objectives. Other projects also encompassed information-giving as a significant component. This report will discuss first the centres in which information-giving was a major or *the* major objective; and then the information component in other projects.

A. INFORMATION CENTRES

1. PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND NEWSTART COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTRES

In its Annual Plan for 1969 [45] Prince Edward Island NewStart proposed to establish community service centres in three communities¹ in the project area, the objectives to be:

- Immediate: to improve recruitment and project development through close liaison with the people;
- to enable community members to better identify the strengths and resources presently available within the environment;
- to assist community members in identifying individual and community needs and problems;

¹ Community service centres were actually established in two communities.

- to improve the utilization rate, through referrals, of the existing helping agencies;
- to involve community members in planning for change;
- Ultimate: to improve adjustment to life style and vocational situation among the target population;
- to encourage and permit occupational and vocational upgrading;
- to enable individuals in the communities to make better use of the resources available for their livelihood.

Following the statement of objectives are two paragraphs under the heading "Treatment Proposition":

"In these communities, many individuals do not at present know how to use the helping agencies at their disposal for health, welfare and other social services. Many do not know how to make use of Canada Manpower facilities. Yet we have learned that, in many instances, people who staff these agencies are well able and highly interested in reaching the people who need their help. What is needed is not a spark; merely the electrician to make the connection. Prince Edward Island (NewStart) proposes to provide that mechanism.

"We feel that if we establish representative offices in several districts we can provide a counselling and referral service, improve our recruitment, gather valuable information, and demonstrate that good results in employment and improved life style would result from having community service centres in local labour market areas."

Ten months later Dr. Bowman, Executive Director, Prince Edward Island NewStart, writes [8]:

"The community service centre project was initiated to provide an information centre to disadvantaged persons, to provide an outreach and recruitment centre for the Corporation, and to enable the disadvantaged to make more effective utilization of the resources which they have at their disposal."

Dr. Bowman adds:

"Although quantitative measures for this type of project are more difficult to define than for the Comprehensive Manpower Development System¹, the total impact in the target population appears to be more noticeable. This project indicates the need for improved delivery of social services to the disadvantaged and for greater coordination of existing services."

The report on the project gives a description of the program [46]. Each centre provided service in the following areas:

- Community action
- Counselling
- Day care

¹ Full information regarding the Comprehensive Manpower Development System is available in [9, 15, 48].

Homemaking services
Information dissemination
Referral
Recruitment for NewStart training programs.

Each centre was staffed by one counsellor and one community development worker, a teaching homemaker, a day care supervisor, and four day care attendants. The supervisory staff consisted of a social worker (project manager), a consultant in community development, and a home management specialist (home economist).

The counsellor was given the task of informing the public of the services and programs of Prince Edward Island NewStart as well as of other agencies, governmental and private. To quote the report, "He provided a link between the services and the people. A good deal of his effort was directed at informing agencies of persons in need, as well as informing the population of the existing services."

One of the outcomes of the above efforts was the formation of a committee of eight agencies representing health, social, and rehabilitation services. This committee acted in an advisory capacity to the project and also discussed such matters as closer interagency co-operation, duplication of services, and public information about existing services.

Another result was the formation of a welfare rights group, which invited Department of Welfare officials to a meeting at which the welfare recipients were informed of "hitherto hidden" benefits.

A number of other outcomes, not concerned with information-giving, are discussed in the report of Mr. Richard and Mr. McKee [46].

2. NEW BRUNSWICK NEWSTART INFORMATION CENTRES

New Brunswick NewStart has established a number of information centres in the project area of Kent County, New Brunswick. The need was recognized soon after the corporation commenced operations and facilities were provided at corporation headquarters in Richibucto. This centre was operated initially by one corporation-trained community worker, but so great was the demand for information that within a few months a second corporation-trained community worker was added to the staff. Information was requested about: family allowance, fisheries, housing, youth, municipal affairs, manpower, veterans' affairs, welfare, retail sales tax, national park, new industries, and tourist attractions [54].

A second information centre was established in Buctouche. Again two corporation-trained community workers were the information-giving staff. At the beginning, there were up to 30 inquiries each day.

Within a short time the head of projects reported [36] that the Buctouche centre had already “experienced the participation of approximately 95% of this (disadvantaged sector’s) population”.

No percentage figures are given in New Brunswick NewStart’s annual report covering this period [32], but the report states that “The information centres at Buctouche and Richibucto are very extensively used by the population of the county”. The report contains the further information that during the year the Richibucto centre processed approximately 675 requests for information in many areas (housing, welfare, manpower, industry, unemployment, agriculture, fishing, health, education, taxation, recreation and tourism), while the Buctouche centre, which had been open only a short time, had already processed several hundred requests for information in the following areas:

Welfare	435
Unemployment insurance	103
Manpower (employment and training)	36
Other (youth, agriculture, health, taxation, workmen’s compensation)	31

The above figures do not include information requested of a local welfare officer who spent two half-days a week in the Buctouche centre and saw “considerable numbers of clients” there.

A quarterly report [34], printed several months later, mentions information centres in Saint Louis, Saint Paul, and Acadieville and provides the additional information that in Acadieville a local resident has been hired as an information officer.

A later quarterly report [35] advises that “The information centre in Acadieville has been responsible for producing an information bulletin every two months. The bulletin has served a real purpose in informing citizens about services available to them at local, provincial and federal levels, courses and other community activities.”

The same report advises that the information centre in Richibucto processed 315 cases during the final three months of 1971; 124 in October, 127 in November, and 64 in December. “These cases dealt with housing, Canada Pension Plan, the Departments of Fisheries, Welfare, Rehabilitation, Youth, Legal Aid and Manpower. Requests also dealt with Local Initiative Programs, school buses, income tax, Farm Credit Corporation, unemployment insurance, public health nursing, banking, drama activities and sports.”

In summary, New Brunswick NewStart established information centres in five towns and villages in the project area: Richibucto, Buctouche, Saint Louis, Saint Paul, and Acadieville. These centres were

staffed by local people, some of whom had been briefly trained by the corporation as community workers. The Buctouche centre had 3,000 requests for information and the Richibucto centre 675 requests for information during the first year of operation.¹ At the time of writing, figures are not available for the smaller, more recently established centres. All centres are still operating and more complete information will be available from reports of New Brunswick NewStart on completion of operations.

To date the centres have been used most extensively by persons seeking information regarding welfare and employment. A local welfare officer spends two half-days a week in the Buctouche centre. This centre has become a planning centre for the citizens of the area (within a radius of 15 or 20 miles). *This seems to support the contention that with more information more easily available to more people there would be more participation in, and more co-operation with, government programs.*

3. NOVA SCOTIA NEWSTART EXTENSION CENTRES

In 1968 Nova Scotia NewStart established four extension centres. These were set up in a disadvantaged area of Yarmouth town, in West Pubnico, in South Ohio, and in a mobile unit which was located first in Wedgeport, then in Tusket. Although these centres are referred to in Nova Scotia NewStart's annual report for 1968 [37] as extension counselling centres, they are listed in the following year's report [38] among the corporation's "information-giving" activities. This report states that "They were designed, from an informational point of view, to direct disadvantaged people to sources of assistance." As extension centre staff were trained by the corporation's counselling unit, it can be assumed that in most instances clients were not only directed but counselled. At the same time it is apparent that the services rendered were similar to the information-giving services of New Brunswick's information centres and Prince Edward Island's community centres since, like the other centres, the extension centres were established "to make people aware of the opportunities which the corporation might be able to open up for them and also of the services offered by several other human service agencies". At the same time they provided the corporation with "a continuing flow of information about the needs and aspirations of the people" [12].

The report from which the above quotations are taken classifies the kinds of assistance extension centre staff offered and the percentage of time spent on each:

Discovering training needs and exploring opportunities	39%
Job-seeking	20%

¹ Conversation with Information Officer, New Brunswick NewStart Inc., October 1971.

Financial and housing problems	8%
Personal and social development	8%
Emotional, medical, and dental problems	7%
Information-giving	6%
Family and other relationships	4%
Listening and general talk	4%
Other	4%

From the above, one would not assume information-giving to have been an important function of the extension centres. However, the report adds that "One important role of the guidance workers was to refer people to the individuals or agencies which had the greatest likelihood of being able to meet client needs." This is an activity which, in other corporations, is referred to as "information-giving". In any event, the intervention would appear to have been effective. "The number of referrals made very nearly equalled the number of clients. Of course some clients were referred to more than one agency, so this does not mean that all were referred." The writer goes on to cite data which, in his opinion, make it reasonable to suggest that "referral assistance was effective for at least half of the individuals referred". Presumably these were individuals who could have contacted the proper individual or agency themselves *had they known* what action to take to meet their own needs.

4. NOVA SCOTIA NEWSTART FISHERIES INFORMATION CENTRE

Nova Scotia NewStart's Fisheries Information Centre was established for the precise purpose of demonstrating a means of transmitting new ideas to fishermen. With the shift to deepsea fishing and the many technological advances in the industry, it was felt important to find some way of making contact with members of the fishing community, and particularly with primary producers, in order to [40]:

Facilitate changed practices by:

1. the provision and interpretation of technical information
2. introduction to, and informal instruction on, new methods and equipment;

Motivate and counsel some fishermen toward further training or retraining.

"It was felt that the entire success of the Centre depended on *easy access* to information which, in theory, was available, but which, in practice, was not used because it was not easily accessible." [43] For this reason, the centre was located on the public wharf in Yarmouth and, during the period for which it was operated by the corporation, was

open during evening hours and on Sunday afternoons as well as during regular working hours. It was staffed by a project manager and two assistants who were experienced and knowledgeable and able to convey their own knowledge as well as locate and interpret printed and other resource material assembled at the centre. Specifically, the Centre:

- (a) Provided information to help fill the communications gap between those engaged in the fishing industry and the scientists and designers whose work was seen as having potential value for the industry. This information was provided in several ways:
 - (i) Directly by centre personnel.
 - (ii) Through books, periodicals, and pamphlets. (The centre contained approximately 150 books, 35 periodicals, and thousands of pamphlets from all over the world.)
 - (iii) Through films. (Films were requested 320 times during the first 11 months of operation.)
 - (iv) Through displays in a display room which was used by industry for equipment and catalogue display.
- (b) Made charts available to fishermen and other interested persons.
- (c) Provided offprints of material in the centre.
- (d) Interpreted literature written in language difficult for fishermen to understand.
- (e) Motivated fishermen toward further training or more up-to-date and profitable methods of operation.
- (f) Provided liaison between fishermen, mariners, vessel owners, and fish processors. All were encouraged to make suggestions and recommendations, and these were recorded and passed along to the appropriate persons.
- (g) Clarified the roles of federal and provincial Departments of Fisheries for the purpose of bringing about a closer relationship among all concerned with fisheries and related industries.
- (h) Provided instruction in such things as the construction and use of small flounder nets for catching bait.
- (i) Provided marine weather forecasts.
- (j) Provided a place to which fishermen could come to sit down and talk. This was seen as valuable as fishermen traditionally gain information by talking among themselves, and, when such talk took place in the Fisheries Information Centre, information and opinion could be verified by printed material and knowledgeable, respected staff.

After one year of operation, the usefulness of these services provided by the centre was evaluated by Prof. Louis Lafferty and Mr. Charles Pattinian of Acadia University [20].

From the logbook at the centre it was determined that during this year the centre was visited by 1,774 persons who made a total of 2,586 visits and requested information about 4,719 items (466 pertaining to operating techniques, 458 about marine gear concerns, 280 about economic matters, 991 related to educational interests, 2,524 of a general nature).

A sample of users and non-users of the centre was surveyed for attitudes about the usefulness of the centre. The first survey question was: "Could you tell me whether you think that the Fisheries Information Centre is a good idea or a bad idea?" The great majority (92 per cent) replied that they thought it was a good idea. This high level of endorsement was maintained throughout the interview, although some questions were asked in such a way as to invite a negative response. Some typical responses follow:

"Where else can one go for information?"

"Any kind of information set-up for the fishermen must be good".

"It keeps you abreast of current changes in the state of the art and technology of fishing."

"Anybody that wants to learn anything about fishing can go there."

"The questions you ask, the staff are most generally able to answer them."

"It's a place where one can get answers to questions."

"It gives a man a chance to find out what is going on."

"Fishermen have to be informed and kept up-to-date on new ideas and methods (and) techniques."

The evidence obtained was clear. The Fisheries Information Centre, after one year of operation, was considered by the majority of the fishermen to be successful on all counts.

During the second year of operation major changes took place. After eighteen months of operation the corporation felt that it had served its purpose as a demonstration project and began negotiating for its take-over by the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries. In the meantime staff and hours of operation were reduced and the weather forecasting service was discontinued. On June 15, 1970, the centre was taken over by the provincial Department of Fisheries, who operated the centre on a 9 to 5 basis with staff of one. It is hardly surprising that during the second year of operation there was a 38.9 per cent decrease in the number of fishermen who visited the centre.

The writer of the final report on the Fisheries Information Centre concludes: "The government of our country has seen fit to support the fishing industry in Yarmouth County by large grants and loans to both foreign and Canadian companies involved in processing fish. However,

efforts to aid the fisherman himself have been manifested to a lesser degree. Loans to fishermen to purchase large modern boats are not of much value if the fisherman does not have the technical know-how to make the operation a success. Certainly fishing is a technical industry today. The Fisheries Information Centre could be a valuable tool in providing the technical information required by our fishermen to enable them to compete successfully with fishermen from other countries who have the technical support of their governments." [19]

5. NOVA SCOTIA NEWSTART OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING INFORMATION AND STUDY CENTRE

Nova Scotia NewStart's occupational training information and study centre was established for the purpose of demonstrating a means of providing information of a vocational and technical nature. A secondary purpose was the provision of study facilities.

The centre, which was located on Main Street in Yarmouth town, included a technical library, audio-visual facilities, and a study room, and was staffed by a manager with occupational training experience, an assistant manager who was an occupational technician, a receptionist-secretary, and three young men of the area, two of whom had had brief corporation training as guidance workers.

While it was proposed that the centre should particularly attract and be of service to those who were economically, educationally, and occupationally disadvantaged, efforts were made to create an informational service which was as comprehensive as possible and therefore of value to any who might be able to benefit from its services [39].

There are indications that the centre was not used as extensively by the most disadvantaged persons in the area as was hoped. There are several possible reasons for this. The centre was located in the middle of town, not in a specifically disadvantaged area. The mass media (newspapers and radio) used to attract people to the centre probably did not reach the disadvantaged, who are difficult to reach other than by word-of-mouth. This, while effective, is slow; and like other corporation projects the centre was in operation for a limited period. Although some of the staff were bilingual, perhaps the bilingual aspect of the centre was not emphasized sufficiently; people of French or mixed background tended to use the centre less, proportionately to their numbers, than did those speaking only English, despite the fact that the French group in Yarmouth county, as elsewhere in Canada, is somewhat disadvantaged economically relative to the English group. Another factor which has to be considered is that, while audio-visual material was available, most of the material in the centre was printed, and people who read more

(being less disadvantaged educationally and, therefore, probably economically and occupationally) are more likely to use a resource which involves reading.

Whatever the reasons, an evaluation of the centre [17] reveals that about 90 per cent of the use was not directly related to the centre's primary objectives. A relatively small proportion (11 per cent) of the population of Yarmouth South (a disadvantaged area) used the centre. A disproportionately large number of the sample of users, when compared with the population at large, came from families in which the newspaper was read regularly (65 per cent versus 46 per cent respectively). However, some data indicate use by those most needing training information: the centre was, for instance, more used by the less mobile, and it can reasonably be assumed that such help is more needed by the less mobile than by the more mobile persons.

The centre, as has been indicated, had little appeal for those with minimal education. Very few (4.5 per cent) of the group sampled who had less than grade 5 education used its facilities. The centre appears to have failed in its objective to attract the most poorly educated. Nevertheless, centre staff found that many persons coming to the centre lacked knowledge of occupational choices, training opportunities, compensating allowances, and other relevant information.

In summary, the centre operated from October 1969 to December 1970. During this period 1,470 persons used its facilities a total of 6,701 times. About 10 per cent of the visits were concerned with occupational training. Another 19 per cent were concerned with furthering education, which, of course, may, in many cases, have had a direct relationship to an occupational goal. The predominant activity at the centre was "browsing", which, together with "other", accounted for 44 per cent of the visits. "Asking questions" and "group discussion" comprised another 23 per cent, "viewing films" 15.5 per cent, and "reading" and "study" totalled 17.6 per cent. The provision of study facilities was an objective of the centre, but it must be pointed out that a large proportion of the studying was done by high school students, for whose use the facilities had not been provided and who, in fact, had to be discouraged from using the centre as it was felt that their presence in such large numbers discouraged use of the centre by disadvantaged adults.

It was anticipated that the centre would be found useful by employers or groups of employees as a place in which to hold training programs, but group use was limited. Centre staff feel that this was because they did not put the necessary time into making personal contacts with employers, employee representatives, and agencies who might have used the centre for this purpose, and they still see this as an important potential use of such a centre.

B. INFORMATION COMPONENT IN COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

1. PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND NEWSTART COMPREHENSIVE MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Following the development and operation of a number of smaller and essentially independent interventions, Prince Edward Island NewStart developed a comprehensive manpower development system designed to improve the employment status of a sample of the disadvantaged population of the project area through an integrated program of guidance and counselling, job placement, educational and skill upgrading.

One objective of the guidance component of this program was to provide the trainees with information of a vocational and social nature. *Half of the trainees who felt that they had been helped by the guidance component indicated that this aid had been in the area of information* [15].

Part of the education component of the program was an "exposure program" designed to increase motivation, to make trainees more *aware* of assets and facilities in their environment, and to provide opportunities for them to use these facilities. Field trips were a part of this program. (It was found that 43.5 per cent of the trainees had never been to Confederation Centre in Charlottetown, approximately 30 miles away, before going on a field trip to the centre.) According to the report on the program, field trips were an effective initial step in making the trainees aware of the assets and facilities of their community [9].

Other aspects of the education and guidance components, as well as of the job placement and skill upgrading components, are covered by Prince Edward Island NewStart reports on the comprehensive manpower development system, which include, in addition to the two quoted above, an evaluation of the entire system [48].

2. NEW BRUNSWICK NEWSTART STRUCTURAL-LINKAGE INTERVENTIONS¹

While the information component of the New Brunswick "centres" discussed in Section A can be assessed independently of the other functions of the centres, the centres are also an important component of a comprehensive action-research experiment aimed at the validation of fundamental theoretical propositions regarding social change and regional development.

A preliminary structural analysis of communities in the project area provided data for the grouping of these communities into a series of pairs. From each of the community pairs, one community was selected

¹ Material for this section from [55] and from conversation with the author.

for intervention, leaving the other community for an experimental control. The intervention in each case is the setting up of new linkages through the centre. In each centre, although the information-giving function is performed by community workers, a professional person or task force directs the multifaceted operation. Persons with differing background and interests have been selected, and what the new linkages produce will depend to a large extent on the orientation of these persons:

In Buctouche the director is a social animator who has effectively mobilized a large part (95 per cent) of the disadvantaged sector of the community.

In Richibucto Village a task force of economists and other professionals directs a program oriented toward business promotion and entrepreneurship.

In Saint Paul the program is directed by educators.

In Acadieville the program is a classical or traditional community development program.

In Saint Louis staff are playing a negotiating role between two factions: the established population and an influx of new population relocated from a new national park area. The aim here is two-way information, and integration of the two factions through peaceful negotiation.

In all communities information-giving is seen as *the* major component of the program. Access to information and flow of information are seen as basic agents of social change and regional development. It is hypothesized that the newly-introduced linkages have the potential to produce four types of change:

- (a) Increase in exports.
- (b) Change in differentiation (an effect of new information is the perception of new possibilities for increasing occupational skill, etc., and the creation of new roles, which increases the cash flow in the community).
- (c) Redistribution of income and thus power.
- (d) Increased probability of effective solutions to community problems.

How effective the newly-established linkages are in producing each of these four types of change in the five New Brunswick communities will depend to a large extent, as has been indicated, on the orientation of staff in the communities. This will be assessed on completion of the program, but already the new linkages have had some visible effects.

In Buctouche there has been a notable change in fluidity patterns. Previously uninformed and politically inactive persons are competing

with the established power structure,¹ resulting in representation in government at the municipal level and a change in representation in provincial government. Buctouche has become a volatile, competitive town.

There has been a reversal of migration patterns in the project area. The population of the area has been steadily declining since 1956 [14]. Since fertility is similar to that of Canada as a whole, out-migration, which reached 4 per cent in the years of 1967 and 1968 [5], explains the decline. Current population gain is concentrated in the area between and including Buctouche and Saint Louis. The population of the villages off the highway has not declined so gain cannot be attributed to in-migration from these villages. There are, of course, other factors. There is some tendency at the present time for people to leave cities, and, because of increased welfare benefits, there may be a tendency for some to remain who in former years might have migrated. However, apart from those set up by NewStart, no new linkages have been established.

3. ALBERTA NEWSTART FAMILY CENTRES

In an initial proposal² Alberta NewStart lists as an objective that the corporation shall "act as an information, technical assistance, and public relations centre for the promotion of economic and social development in the area, so as to insure job opportunities for its trainees".

The 1969 Plan of Operations [3] expresses the informational objective in these words: "To constantly interpret to communities and individuals what is happening to them in their community and in the world around them."

Interpretation of what was happening to them was seen as a basic need in working with the native people of this project area. These people were found to be poorly informed about welfare rights and other services and opportunities which might be available to them. Indian and Metis associations recognize this and have attempted to provide some service in this area but have been hampered by limitations of budget and staff.

Alberta NewStart attempted to meet this and other problems of disadvantaged persons in the area by training native community counsellors and by working with families in training centres.

Part of the training of the community counsellors was the provision of information on programs and services available so they could in turn inform people on the reserves and in the Metis settlements.

¹ "Only informed people can compete. Information is power. People who have access to information can if they wish achieve power. If you wish to create new competitive power, you have to give access to information to people who did not theretofore have access to such information and the power it generates." Sergio Sismondo, Research Director, New Brunswick NewStart Inc., in conversation March 1972.

² Unpublished internal memorandum leading to [4].

Training centres were established in Lac la Biche, Kikino (Metis settlement), Janvier (Indian reservation), Fort Chipewyan, and Fort MacMurray. These centres provided educational upgrading, counselling, and information services as well as training, and, in most instances, they provided their services to families rather than individuals. Women were trained in homemaking and other skills while their husbands received trade training. Whole families were moved into Fort MacMurray, where houses were provided for them. In the other centres the facilities, which included residential quarters for staff and in some centres for trainees, were mobile units and ATCO prefabricated buildings. Staff included as many native persons as possible.

A part of the training was in human and social relations, and this included information-giving by both staff and by guests such as R. C. M. P. officers and health and welfare officers.

Information was given about parliamentary procedure, the functions of government at federal, provincial, and municipal levels, laws as they affect the native citizen, budgeting and comparative shopping.

At the time of writing this report, no assessment of the effectiveness of the above and other Alberta NewStart interventions has been made, and it is not thought wise to attempt to anticipate the findings of Alberta NewStart research reports now in preparation.

4. MANITOBA NEWSTART COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Manitoba NewStart was incorporated in July 1969 and surrendered its charter in December 1971. Most of this period was spent in assembling staff, obtaining facilities, and obtaining information about the project area and its disadvantaged inhabitants. The objective was to make an in-depth study of the project area before undertaking extensive interventions, and from this study have come a number of the findings with regard to lack of information as a factor in disadvantage recorded earlier in this report.

During this period some small projects were undertaken and a community development program was initiated. A training centre was established in Camperville, and three trailers were moved around to different Indian and Metis settlements in the project area. The trailers were staffed by field workers, some of whom were natives.

The Camperville training centre had a field worker (white) in residence; additional staff moved in when training programs were being conducted. When no training was being carried on, the centre served as an information centre. The report on the Camperville operation [24] states that the main barriers to helping the people appeared to be "the difficulty of getting accurate information from government agencies

to the people, the difficulty of providing the information in a meaningful way, and the necessity for capital to begin projects." The report elaborates on the difficulties involved in getting information to the people:

In an age in which verbal communication has become increasingly important, face to face contact through one-to-one contact, small group meetings in which information is exchanged, or community meetings appears effective. Most Camperville people are facile in two languages — Saulteaux and English. There is a definite tendency for people to "turn off" when "big" or "high" words are used.

Residents of Camperville are also found to take in information very effectively if it is presented to them experientially. Field trips to their areas appear to be particularly successful.

It appears that use of media such as video-tape and films would be useful additions to inter-personal contacts as a means for residents of Camperville to gather data relative to their situation.

The activities of Manitoba NewStart thus were concentrated on research, although a few suggestions for overcoming problems were made by it. No interventions were undertaken to test means of overcoming problems in communication. That these problems loom large in the over-all problem of disadvantage is suggested by these words of a native field worker (Manitoba) in commenting on the termination of Manitoba NewStart activities:¹

With such well-qualified people with good reputations, I thought we would really show the world that new and wonderful things could be done. The average everyday Joe in Cross Lake would get a lot of information he never had before and someone would see that it was used and people would have a basis on which to make decisions.

¹ Stanley Wilson, Manitoba NewStart field worker. Conversation October 1971.

What Did We Learn?

A. SUMMARY OF NEWSTART INTERVENTIONS

1. INFORMATION CENTRES

NewStart corporations in the three Maritime provinces established 13 "centres" (Prince Edward Island, two; New Brunswick, five; Nova Scotia, six), a part of the purpose of which was to give information. One, the Fisheries Information Centre in Nova Scotia, was devoted wholly to this purpose. The others were variously called community service centres, information centres, extension centres, and (one) an information *and study* centre. The latter was established for the purpose of dispensing information in a specific category; i.e. occupational training.

Objectives additional to information-giving:

- Community service centres: recruitment, project development and operation, identification of community needs and problems, community action, occupational and vocational upgrading, day care and teaching homemaker service.
(P.E.I.)
- Information centres (N.B.): cultural, community planning, project centres, changes in fluidity patterns and differentiation (see pp. 21-23).
- Extension centres (N.S.): counselling, discovering training needs and exploring opportunities, job-finding, personal and social development, recruitment for NewStart demonstration projects.
- Occupational training information & study centre (N.S.): study, career guidance, short-term training, tutorial.

Staff:

- Community service centres: counsellor, community development worker, teaching homemaker, day care supervisor, 4 day care attendants, with supervisory staff (P.E.I.) (social worker, consultant in community development, home economist) whose time was divided between the two centres.
- Information centres (N.B.): dependent on size and activities of centre. One community worker in smaller centres, director, 2 community workers, day care supervisor, and day care attendants in largest centre.
- Extension centres (N.S.): 4 guidance workers in each centre, with project manager supervising the program of all 4 centres.
- Fisheries information centre (N.S.): project manager, 2 assistants, secretary-receptionist.
- Occupational training information & study centre (N.S.): project manager, assistant manager, secretary-receptionist, 3 information aides.

Contacts made or requests for help received:

	<i>1st 12 mths.</i>	<i>2nd 12 mths.¹</i>
Community service centre, Morell, P.E.I.	807	693
Community service centre, Souris, P.E.I.		4,281 ²
Information centre, Buctouche, N.B.	3,000	
Information centre, Richibucto, N.B.	675	
Information centres, Saint Louis, Saint Paul, Acadieville		figures not yet available
Extension centres, N.S. (4 centres)	1,000	
Fisheries information centre, Yarmouth, N.S.	visitors—1,774 visits —6,701	visitors—1,464 visits —2,076
Occupational training information & study centre, N.S.	visitors—1,470 (14 mth. period) visits —6,701 (14 mth. period)	

Even where figures are available for identical periods of time, the reader is cautioned against making comparisons because there were no standard data collection or recording procedures; neither were the centres established for identical purposes. Figures for Prince Edward

¹ Some centres did not operate for a second 12-month period.

² Covers 21-month period. Figures not available for 12-month period.

Island centres, for instance, include contacts made by homemaker staff, who operated homemaking and day care services. Of the multipurpose centres, only the figures given for New Brunswick are specific to "requests for information". The difference between the number of contacts made by the two community service centres in Prince Edward Island must be considered in relation to the size of the communities they served: Morell has a population of about 400 people, Souris a population of approximately 1,400. The centre in Buctouche, New Brunswick, is also the centre for oyster culture and day care projects and, in fact, has become a "planning centre" for the community.

Categories of information requested:

- Community service centres, P.E.I.: Recorded for these centres only in terms of referrals made. Referrals were made to social assistance agencies, clergy, P.E.I. Housing Authority, relatives, health services, NewStart training centre, police, visiting homemaker service, friends, child welfare, in that order of frequency.
- Information centre, Buctouche, N.B.: Requests for information were received in the following categories: welfare (more than all others combined), unemployment insurance, employment, and training (also significant), and (in lesser numbers) opportunities for youth, agriculture, health, taxation, and workmen's compensation.
- Information centre, Richibucto, N.B.: Requests for information were received in the following categories: housing, Canada Pension Plan, fisheries, welfare, rehabilitation, youth, legal aid, Manpower, Local Initiatives Programs, school buses, income tax, Farm Credit Corporation, unemployment insurance, health, banking, drama activities and sports.
- Information centres at Saint Louis, Saint Paul, Acadieville: Information not yet available.
- Extension centres, N.S.: Most of the time of the counsellors in these centres was taken

up with discussion and exploration of training needs and opportunities (39 percent) and employment (20 percent). Persons contacted were also counselled and informed about financing, housing, personal and social development problems and opportunities, health.

Fisheries information centre, N.S. [19]: Visitors requested information in the following content areas:

	<i>Year 1</i>		<i>Year 2</i>	
	<i>No. of¹ Visitors</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>No. of Visitors</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
Educational matters	616	34.7	383	26.2
Operating techniques	303	17.1	355	24.2
Marine gear	224	12.6	333	22.7
Economic Concerns	183	10.3	141	9.6
General Topics	1,517	85.5	1,393	95.2

Occupational training information and study centre [17]:

	<i>14 - Month Period</i>	
	<i>No. of Visitors</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
Educational Matters	1,221	18.2
Career Information	389	5.8
Hobby Information	195	2.9
Training Information	169	2.5
Job Information	112	1.6
General Information	3,898	58.1
Did not request information	417	6.2

Means used to impart information:

Community service centres, P.E.I. Personal contact, meetings (often with guests from service agencies), audio-visual.

¹ Refers to number of visitors making requests in the content area, regardless of the number of requests made, or whether other content areas were also targets of requests during a first visit or subsequent visits.

Information centres, N.B.	Personal contact, meetings, printed material, audio-visual, welfare officer operating part-time from centre (Buctouche).
Extension centres, N.S.	Personal contact, meetings (sometimes with guests from service agencies), audio-visual, printed material.
Fisheries information centre, N.S.	Personal contact and interpretation of printed material, display and demonstration, films.
Occupational training information and study centre, N.S.	Personal contact and interpretation of printed material, audio-visual, group training sessions.

2. INFORMATION COMPONENTS IN COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

Information-giving was a component of the major comprehensive programs developed in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Alberta, and Manitoba. Three of these were programs designed to improve the status of a sample of the disadvantaged population by means of interventions in counselling, education, skill development, and job placement. The Prince Edward Island program focused on improvement of employment status, while Alberta and Manitoba programs sought to promote social as well as economic development of families and native communities. The New Brunswick program (on-going) focuses on communities, making interventions on community structures for the purpose of validation of theoretical propositions regarding social change and regional development.

Information objectives:

Comprehensive Manpower Development System (P.E.I.)	To provide trainees with information of a vocational and social nature.
Interventions on the structures of communities (N.B.)	To increase social and economic linkages by making information available.
Family centres (Alta.)	To interpret to communities and individuals what is happening to them in their community and in the world around them.
Community development (Man.)	To provide information in a meaningful way (seen as a serious lack in this project area).

Information-giving staff:

Comprehensive Manpower Development System (P.E.I.) Counsellors, education staff

Interventions on structures of communities (N.B.) Community workers

Family centres (Alta.)

Community counsellors

Community development (Man.)

Field workers

Information needs:

Comprehensive Manpower Development System (P.E.I.) Trainees were found to be unaware of assets and facilities in their environment. This was felt to be a factor in lack of interest and motivation in academic programs.

Interventions on structures of communities (N.B.) Communities selected for intervention were seen to be lacking in linkages, which lack was related to limited economic and political activity. Findings from the program are not available, as it is still in its early stages.

Family centres (Alta.)

Findings from program not yet available.

Community development (Man.)

Program terminated before fully implemented. Preliminary findings indicated that difficulties of getting accurate information from government agencies to the people and of providing information in a meaningful way were chief barriers (together with lack of capital) to helping people in project area.

Means used to meet informational needs:

Comprehensive Manpower Development System (P.E.I.) Personal contact, audio-visual, field trips.

Interventions on structures of communities (N.B.) Dependent on orientation of supervisory staff in the five centres (see pp. 29-31).

Family centres (Alta.)	Personal contact with families in training centres, native community counsellors, meetings with persons from service agencies and MPs.
Community development (Man.)	Field workers (some native), meetings, field trips, audio-visual.

B. CONCLUSIONS FROM NEWSTART EXPERIENCES

NewStart personnel, working among disadvantaged people in slow-growth high-unemployment regions in six provinces, reached similar conclusions about information as a factor in disadvantage:

1. THE PEOPLE WHO MOST NEED HELP DO NOT KNOW ABOUT THE HELP THAT IS AVAILABLE.

Generally speaking, this is true with regard to both financial help (welfare programs) and opportunities for training, employment, and community improvement. With regard to one community in Manitoba, the conclusion is that they know how to manipulate service agencies such as welfare to maximize benefits but do not know how to get better schools and roads by contact with policy-making systems [24]. People in communities which are largely dependent on welfare are probably more adept at the manipulation of service agencies than are families scattered among a population generally able to maintain themselves at a subsistence level. Thus, in a survey of approximately 5,000 families, Prince Edward Island NewStart found only about 100 who drew welfare benefits [45]. The suggestion is that many more were eligible but did not draw benefits because of ignorance or maltreatment. It is not likely that ignorance would exist to the same extent in communities in which welfare payments were the principal source of income.

Widespread ignorance of opportunities for education, training, and employment is perhaps even more significant in view of increasing public expenditures designed to provide such opportunities and by this means reduce unemployment and disadvantage in slow-growth high-unemployment areas. Even in areas where opportunities were expanding it was found that the neediest persons were not benefiting because *they did not know about them*. Nearly 50 percent of the population of Moose Lake, Manitoba, stated that they *were not informed* of government plans to establish a logging operation in *Moose Lake*. Many unemployed people were *not aware of Churchill Forest Industries* as a potential employer. Only a small percentage of the labour force were seeking jobs in Thompson. Despite existing and potential opportunities in the Alberta New-

Start area, the disadvantaged whites, Indians, and Metis had little prospect of participating in any of the developments under way. "As the economy of the area expands, they are being by-passed and have no opportunities to participate in the development and exploitation of the resources of their homeland." [4].

Opportunities are not so abundant in the eastern provinces, but many persons were found to lack knowledge of such opportunities as there were, as well as of occupational choices, training opportunities and allowances, and other relevant information.

The conclusion is not that information is not being *given* but that it is not being *received*. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

2. PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT BEING TOLD IN WAYS WHICH ARE MEANINGFUL TO THEM.

The great diversity of welfare and training programs and programs designed to alleviate hardship and increase employment are not helping the people who most need help because, generally speaking, the agencies through which they are being implemented are failing to communicate,

- (a) with those they are supposed to be helping. Impoverished families in Prince Edward Island learn about hidden welfare benefits. Natives of the developing north are not aware of employment opportunities in neighbouring communities. The members of the Cross Lake Non-Treaty Association write of an agency designed to serve them: "They do not consult us. They hold information from us."
- (b) with each other. Many agencies work in isolation, seemingly unaware of other agencies. Frequently families receive the services of a number of agencies simultaneously. One NewStart social worker concludes: "The biggest capital sin (of service agencies) is that they have accentuated isolation rather than integration."¹

The problem of co-ordination and improved delivery of services has recently been brought to the fore by the findings of the Senate Committee on Poverty and others. It is mentioned here simply as a part of the problem of communication. Lack of communication among agencies adds to the confusion and frustration of service recipients, and it is suggested that agencies who cannot communicate with each other cannot communicate effectively with disadvantaged people, which presents special difficulties.

Disadvantaged people tend to reject impersonal communication. The mass media, which send out an endless stream of messages to the middle class, are not effective in influencing the disadvantaged. Written

¹ Louis Richard, director of Prince Edward Island NewStart social and community development work, in conversation July 1971.

material is obviously ineffective in reaching those who cannot or do not read. Even those with some reading skill find that writers have overestimated their reading level. Material which could help subsistence-level owner-operators in primary industry is written in technical language which they cannot understand. Indians and Metis on the prairies and fishermen and unemployed in the east are "turned off" by big words. Sometimes they are addressed in English when they could understand better in Cree or French.

Some government agencies seem to be relying almost entirely on printed matter for the dissemination of information, and the message is not getting through.

3. LACK OF INFORMATION IS A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN THE DISADVANTAGE OF INDIVIDUALS AND OF COMMUNITIES.

Early in the history of the NewStart corporations it became apparent that lack of information was one of the contributing factors to disadvantage. Initial studies revealed that ignorance with regard to public and private service agencies was commonplace. Groups such as fishermen were found to lack information about technical advances in their own industry. Further studies and projects revealed a number of specific effects of lack of information:

Isolated individuals and families suffer extreme poverty because they are ignorant of programs which could help them.

"Helping" programs are not maximally effective because they are not understood.

Many unemployed persons are not aware of jobs that are available; they lack the information necessary for them even to seek employment.

Many persons in primary industry lack knowledge of technical advances whose application could raise their income above the subsistence level.

Uninformed persons are at a disadvantage in courts of law. They are ignorant of the law and of their rights under the law. On a community as well as on an individual level, uninformed persons live among systems they do not understand. They are unable to define needs or make knowledgeable decisions, work together toward common goals, or make maximum use of programs which would benefit the community.

In short, both individuals and communities are blocked from progress by lack of information about the systems and programs which might assist them.

4. MANY RESPOND READILY TO EASY ACCESS TO INFORMATION. TO REACH OTHERS WILL REQUIRE MORE CONCENTRATED AND SUSTAINED EFFORT THAN WAS POSSIBLE WITHIN THE LIMITED TERM OF THE NEWSTART MANDATE.

From the beginning the Pilot Projects Branch recognized the ineffectiveness of mass communications media as a means of reaching and influencing disadvantaged people. They saw this as an obstacle to recruitment, and NewStart executive directors were asked to experiment with methods of identifying and using community resources to the end of overcoming this obstacle [44].

The community resource commonly identified and used was the human resource. Each corporation identified a group of persons from among the target population for training as coaches, community workers, counsellors, field workers, or guidance workers.

In all provinces but Saskatchewan, which operated in one municipality, at least some of these paraprofessionals worked out of outposts (community service centres, extension centres, family centres, or information centres) established in two or more communities in the project area. Some of these were mobile centres. A primary function of these centres was recruitment, but they were also extensively used as sources of information on welfare, employment, training, and other government programs.

It is difficult to separate the information-giving function from the other functions of most of these multipurpose centres, but New Brunswick NewStart reports substantial numbers of requests for information received by the Buctouche and Richibucto centres (see p. 35). These figures would seem to give ample support to the statement, in the Annual Report for 1970-71, that these centres are very extensively used [32]. Figures available for Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia seem to indicate that fewer persons visited these centres, although it is possible that the centres were used more intensively, but by a smaller group. The report on the Nova Scotia extension centres shows a gradual decline in the numbers of new contacts established from the first through the sixth month of operation. Figures are not available beyond the sixth month. The explanation given for the decline is that "the numbers of disadvantaged people in the vicinities of the centres were not large enough to maintain a constant flow of people coming to the centres." [12]. Unfortunately, data are not available to make it possible to isolate the factors influencing response to these centres.

Nova Scotia NewStart established one centre designed to make occupational information easily accessible to a specific occupational group. This was the Fisheries Information Centre. A survey directed by a member of the staff of Acadia University after one year of operation

revealed a high level of endorsement (92 per cent) among users and non-users for this centre. Both the quantitative and the qualitative data strongly confirmed that this centre provided a desired and useful service and was considered by the majority of fishermen to be successful on all counts. During the second year of operation staff and hours of operation were reduced and use of the centre fell off, indicating that those seeking to provide easy access to information must provide such access not only through a convenient location but also through hours of operation convenient to those whom it is desired to reach.

Nova Scotia NewStart also established a centre designed to provide access to varieties of occupational training information. This was the occupational training information and study centre described in Part III, which as its name indicates also provided study facilities. This centre attracted enough users to indicate that there is a use for such a facility, but its success in attracting disadvantaged persons primarily interested in obtaining occupational training information or in studying training material was limited. An evaluation of the centre [17] suggests that greater effort should have been made to recruit these persons; there should have been more emphasis on the bilingual aspect of the centre, and means of learning other than reading should have been more emphasized. Unfortunately, time did not permit experimentation to determine the effect of these suggested changes or of changes which might have been made to increase the response to other NewStart informational interventions. Findings do, however, suggest some new directions.

C. NEW DIRECTIONS SUGGESTED BY NEWSTART FINDINGS

Two corporations (Manitoba and Nova Scotia) stress the need for a complete study of the problem of communicating information to disadvantaged people. Manitoba NewStart puts it bluntly: "A study of the kinds of information they want and need and of the best way of getting it to them would be well worthwhile *if we are serious about helping* these communities bridge the gap between their culture and ours." [22] Nova Scotia NewStart states: "There is need to determine how to communicate more effectively the nature of government programs so as to optimize effectiveness and minimize conflict." [16] The Nova Scotia corporation suggests specific questions for study:

How do informational programs influence the mobility of labour within a region?
What are the significant community and psychological factors which distort the meaning of messages concerning programs?

What is the pattern of communication among the public, the government organizations, labour unions, and business?

These are just three of a number of questions which need to be answered to provide a full understanding of how information and communication

patterns influence the effectiveness of welfare, economic development, and other programs. In the meantime NewStart findings provide evidence of a problem and suggest some new directions.

1. MORE USE MUST BE MADE OF THE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS COMMONLY USED BY DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE.

To know exactly what these channels are would require a study of the scope suggested above. NewStart findings do, however, give some guidelines:

- (a) *Personal contact is important.* The "centres" established by NewStart corporations reached several thousand people, most of whom had not been reached by mass media. The extent and intensity of their use would seem to indicate that there is a place for such centres. There would also seem to be a place for centres designed to provide primary producers with technical information. Only one such centre, for fishermen, was established by NewStart, but this centre was felt to be useful by over 90 per cent of persons interviewed after one year of operation. Similar centres might be equally useful as a means of communicating with other primary producers (farmers or foresters) whose progress is blocked by lack of technical information.

One centre was established in Nova Scotia for the provision of occupational training information. This centre might have been more successful in reaching its objective if greater effort had been made to reach more of the hardcore disadvantaged. As it was, it was sufficiently successful that many of its features have been adopted by Metrocenter, a community information and referral service, in Sydney, Nova Scotia. In the first nine months of operation, Metrocenter received approximately 2,300 telephone and "in-person" requests for information in a wide variety of categories. At the present time (letter from executive director dated March 13, 1972) 14 or 15 inquiries for information are being received each day. The figures would seem to support the hypothesis, tested by NewStart, that there is a place in the community for a facility which offers easy access to information.

The writer of the final report on the Fisheries Information Centre says, with regard to the future operation of the centre, now the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries, "complete and comprehensive records should be *diligently* maintained on all phases of the centre's operation. Particular emphasis should be placed on records dealing with the types of services given and types of requests made. Furthermore, special note should be made of all requests that

could not be met or services that were requested but were not available. From the evaluation of the information contained in these records it would then be feasible to identify further types of information or programs that can best serve the fisherman in increasing his knowledge, skill, and effectiveness as a fisherman." [19]

Similar data collection and analysis would no doubt serve to make more useful any centres of the types operated briefly by NewStart.

- (b) *Radio is important in isolated communities.* Of 191 Manitoba homes visited in a survey [31] made by the Conservation Education Section of the Manitoba Department of Mines and Natural Resources in Moose Lake, Split Lake, Easterville, and Pukatawagan and included in Manitoba NewStart's report on radio coverage [22], none received a daily newspaper, 13 received a weekly newspaper, nine had television sets, nine subscribed to magazines, and 137 contained radios. Next to personal contact, radio was by far the most important source of information (personal contact 241, radio 142, television 4, printed material 0). In spite of its being almost the only means (apart from personal contact) of communicating with most of these homes, radio was felt by Manitoba NewStart to be so inadequately used that it was considered inconsequential as a factor in changing behaviour and attitudes. Manitoba NewStart recommended extensive use of radio to "transmit a broad program of information and educational material for all the government agencies concerned." It was further suggested that "information packages" be developed to suit needs determined by local people. Manitoba NewStart did not exist long enough to test the effectiveness of extensive use of radio in their project area, but some guidance is contained in the finding of the survey of the Department of Mines and Natural Resources that "Message programs or programs that include music and messages were by long odds the most popular in all four communities". A more extensive survey, which is suggested by Mr. Murray, would reveal whether or not the findings of this survey are typical of other communities. In the meantime it may perhaps be assumed that they are.
- (c) *Audio-visual materials should be more extensively used.* Audio-visual materials were available and used effectively in most of the NewStart information and service centres and training facilities. The report on a Nova Scotia NewStart information centre recommends [39] that "operators of an information-giving centre for disadvantaged persons should make *maximum*

use of audio-visual materials (films, film strips, slides)." Manitoba NewStart follows an explanation of the difficulties posed by printed material with the suggestion [24] that video-tape and films would be useful supplements to personal contact as means of communicating information to disadvantaged persons.

- (d) *Printed material should supplement other means of communication.* Newspapers, magazines, and other printed material should not be the principal means of communication when attempting to provide information to those with low reading skills, but they can be used to supplement other means. New Brunswick NewStart reports that an information bulletin produced by their information centre in Acadieville served a real purpose in informing citizens about services available to them and about community activities, but it should be noted that *this was a supplement to personal contact provided through the centre.* Manitoba NewStart *added to a proposal for extensive use of radio* [22] the suggestion that "Thought might also be given to a special newspaper or magazine published on a monthly basis for northern communities. Such a publication should cater to local people, sitting in an advisory capacity." Operators of American retraining projects found [6] that "illiterates can be reached through *pictorial* newspaper efforts." The mistake commonly made is in assuming that the printed material which informs middle-class persons will also serve or will alone serve to inform disadvantaged persons.

2. PEOPLE CAN ONLY BE REACHED THROUGH WORDS WHICH THEY UNDERSTAND.

This would seem to go without saying, yet disadvantaged people are consistently addressed in language which has little meaning for them. Even publications prepared especially for native people were found by Saskatchewan NewStart, when tested on the Fry Readability Graph [60], to vary from about Grade 11 or 12 to 'post-graduate'. Several steps would seem to be desirable, if not essential, in any serious effort to communicate with disadvantaged people:

- (a) *The educational level of the persons to be addressed should be determined.* For many subpopulations this information is available, but it does not appear to be used in preparing material presumably designed to inform them.
- (b) *Written material should be examined on a readability graph* to determine its appropriateness to the reading level of its primary audience.
- (c) *All communication, oral and written, should use words and expressions which are meaningful to the persons addressed.* This is essential as otherwise there is no communication.

- (d) *People should be addressed in their first or native language.* This is particularly important in addressing, orally or through the printed word, persons of limited education, whose communication skills, even in the language which they commonly use are, in most cases, limited.
- (e) *People with low reading skills should be encouraged to read books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., which contain material which could be of value to them.* It is not enough to make such material available. Since the purpose is communication, help must be given with difficult passages, as is done at the Fisheries Information Centre in Yarmouth. Such centres can make available to persons with low reading skills a wealth of technical information of which, to this time, they have been unable to take advantage.

3. MORE USE SHOULD BE MADE OF THE PRIMARY RELATIONSHIPS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE.

Indications are that such relationships (with family and peers) are more important to disadvantaged than to more advantaged people. Robert Mills French, in his work on the community [13], found that the disadvantaged sector tends to be tied together by family and close kinship bonds more than the advantaged community. A study conducted by Nova Scotia NewStart found [7] that "there is some indication that the disadvantaged community may be confining their relationships to a fairly small circle of friends, or largely within close kinship ties". All NewStart corporations recognized this phenomenon in choosing to work with and through indigenous paraprofessionals. These persons served the corporations as coaches, community workers, counsellors, field workers, and guidance workers. One of the areas in which they were most successful was in "bringing information (job opportunities, training alternatives, legal aid, welfare services, sources of loan and other assistance to businesses, etc.) to those in need of information in order to increase the number of options open to them." [12] The use of indigenous paraprofessionals in all NewStart information centres and outreach efforts no doubt helped make it possible for NewStart to reach many people who were previously uninformed about welfare programs and training and employment opportunities. Increased use of indigenous persons in information-giving roles is indicated.

The above are the larger areas of exploration and development opened up by NewStart experiences in communicating with the disadvantaged. Several findings of individual corporations also suggest new directions.

4. FIELD TRIPS WERE FOUND SUCCESSFUL.

Two corporations emphasized field trips as an effective means of informing disadvantaged persons. Prince Edward Island NewStart reports [9]: "Field trips successfully served as a beginning towards making the trainees more aware of the assets and facilities of their community." Manitoba NewStart used field trips "to familiarize the students with agencies, programs and human development professionals" and reports [26] that these people took in information "very effectively" when it was presented to them in this manner.

5. SCHOOL PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTE TO PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION.

Two points are made in Manitoba NewStart's study of Pine Creek Reserve [28] which might be applicable to other communities:

- (a) "The separation of. . . schools. . . tends to reinforce the inability of Pine Creek residents to move in the sphere of the rest of the community. It also tends to separate the children from the realities of the modern world."
- (b) "Canadian History textbooks presently in use in Manitoba are harmful to the Indian child's sense of racial dignity."

6. FARMERS AND FISHERMEN SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO USE LIBRARIES.

This point is made by Prince Edward Island NewStart, who conducted the only assessment of public library service made under the Canada NewStart program [49]. This found that virtually no use is made of public library service in Kings County by farmers and fishermen. The assessment of the service draws attention to the fact that both agriculture and fisheries are undergoing rapid technological change, and suggests that technical information could be made available at low cost through public libraries. The report suggests three means of encouraging farmers and fishermen to use library facilities:

- (a) Provide books relating to farming and fishing.
- (b) Provide special materials for adults with low educational level.
- (c) Improve facilities and publicize their utility.

7. THE NEED TO EDUCATE PEOPLE.

"There is an obvious need to educate the population of communities on how to work together toward common goals, and to assist them in developing the competence and knowledge to make maximum use of existing systems and government and voluntary agencies which might assist them." [51] The need to develop community competence to handle problems and opportunities was also observed and recorded a number of times by Manitoba NewStart. Nor was this need confined to native communities. Prince Edward Island NewStart writes optimisti-

cally, following an election in a town in the project area, "With a more informed Mayor and Councillors, it is hoped that more initiative will be taken on the part of the Council to improve the Town, particularly with a view to economic improvement." [46] Without the development of community competence and knowledge, writes Saskatchewan NewStart, "*the development of human competence by upgrading and the provision of improved services by changes in structure and organization will not be enough to meet the total needs of the people*".

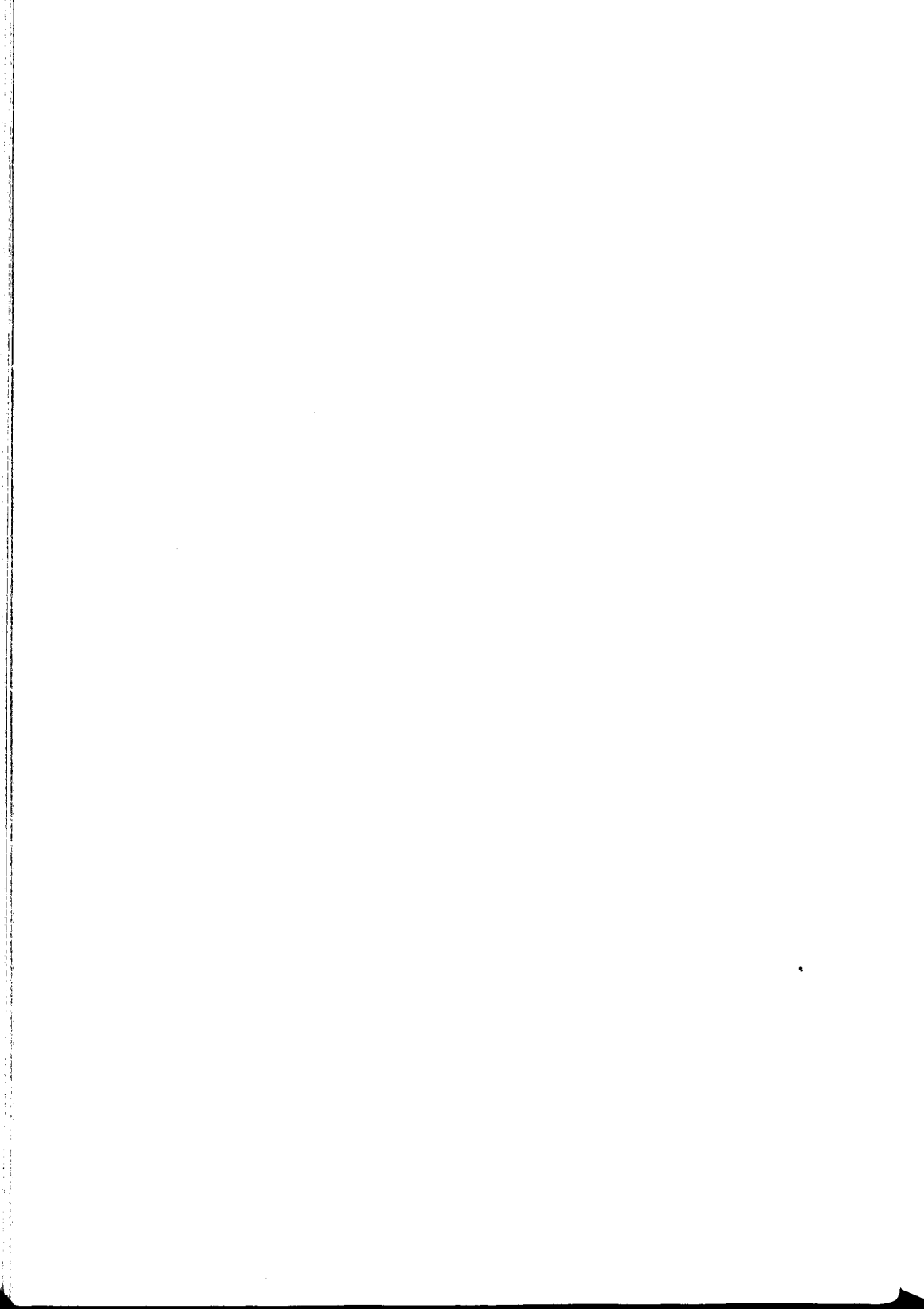
Obviously, the development of community competence requires that people not only be informed but that they have an opportunity to inform. Attempts to stimulate this two-way communication were an essential component of NewStart social development programs, which are the subject of other reports. They were also a component of the information centres, which did not limit their service to information-giving but which in almost every case included counselling, in which an exchange of information is implicit.

This exchange of information is acknowledged as an important aspect of communication, as is the problem of filtering a proliferation of information to determine what is relevant and significant. The latter, however, is primarily seen as a problem of the more literate and affluent, contributing to the problem of the less literate and advantaged by making it difficult for the advantaged to conceive that, while they are bombarded with information, others are actually suffering from its lack. The problem of the more advantaged person is that he cannot absorb or use all the information he receives. The problem of the disadvantaged person is that he does not receive information because it is not sent in language he understands or through the communication channels he uses.

There is some appreciation of the need to inform people about programs designed to contribute to their welfare and growth. The need was stated forcefully in the findings of the Government Task Force on Information Services, an outcome of which was the establishment of Information Canada. Dhalla [11] has pointed out that "Experience has shown that the training programs (and opportunities for employment) alone are not enough. The public has to know about them" and has called for "continuing publicity on a large scale, using all the available communication media."

Conclusion

The message of this report, covering the experiences of NewStart corporations in six high-unemployment slow-growth areas of Canada, is that continuing publicity on the largest scale will not reach those who most need training and employment unless it is conveyed in their own language and through their own communication channels. Making printed material available to those who do not read is not communicating. Talking at college level to persons who are barely functionally literate is not communicating. Addressing in a second language persons who have limited command of a first is not communicating. Information-*giving* is not communicating — information must be *received* and *understood* before communication takes place. Until these facts are acknowledged and acted upon by those responsible for providing training and employment opportunities, these opportunities will go to the most literate and sophisticated rather than to the most needy, the gap between the poor and the affluent will continue to widen, and the problems which helping programs are designed to alleviate will be compounded. There is the most immediate and urgent need to avoid continued waste of effort and public money and what one corporation refers to as an “inevitable” confrontation between underprivileged minority cultures and the dominant cultural groups [30], by devoting serious attention to public education in terms which those who need help can understand.



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