

At that time the decision was that the income ceilings for disabled persons would relate to the Old Age Assistance Act income ceilings rather than to the income ceilings for the blind. That is why at the present time the income ceilings under the Disabled Persons Act and the Old Age Assistance Act are precisely the same, whereas the income ceilings under the Blind Persons Act, under which blind persons come, are somewhat more generous.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): May I add to that that in 1957, when these ceilings were increased, the ceilings in all cases were increased at the same time.

Mr. McCLEAVE: Is it departmental thinking that this is a grant of pension or a grant of allowance? We have been using both terms this morning. If it is treated as a grant of pension, then certainly these arguments as to means test have little validity. They should be scrapped.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): What was it originally?

Dr. DAVIDSON: It was originally known as the Old Age Pensions Act; and in 1951 when the Old Age Security Act—which is a true pension—was passed, the new legislation providing assistance on a means test basis was written in terms of the Blind Persons Act and the Old Age Assistance Act and, later, the Disabled Persons Act.

In the Blind Persons Act and the Disabled Persons Act reference is made to allowances, so that we are now paying allowances on a means test to disabled and blind persons, and assistance on a means test basis to the aged persons between 65 and 70.

Mr. HALPENNY: And pension.

Dr. DAVIDSON: And pension, after 70.

Mr. CARTER: No; is not that pension called security? I think we have tried to get away from pension altogether, have we not?

Dr. DAVIDSON: The title refers to the Old Age Security Act, but you will find the law refers to it as a pension payment.

Mr. McDONALD (*Hamilton South*): Dr. Davidson, do you feel that through the registration of these 25,000 blind persons, so that you know where they are, they receive proper assistance and proper help, and they have greater opportunities for rehabilitation and proper jobs, because of the centralized amalgamation of these people on the permanent record kept by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind?

Dr. DAVIDSON: I would like to point out that the register is maintained, not by us but by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. And the Canadian National Institute for the Blind has, of course, over the years developed a very extensive program of rehabilitation. In very large part the work of rehabilitation for the blind in Canada is carried out through the medium of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind as the operating non-governmental activity. I think you undoubtedly know, and I am sure other members of the committee know, from the records of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, that it has a considerable record of accomplishment, so far as this area of rehabilitation of persons is concerned.

Mr. McCLEAVE: On the subject of blindness, I was wondering if periodic reports are made by different groups. I imagine that there are. I was wondering whether any review is made of this matter.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): Yes, representations are made by various groups at various times. Each representation is given the greatest consideration. As I said earlier, I would point out that representations are being made not only on behalf of blind persons at various times, but on behalf of all these other assistance programs.