

We have asked for one principle to be recognized, at least on a temporary basis, by the provinces and by the federal government, and that is that we should pay no attention, at least in our preliminary deliberations, to the question of jurisdiction, because we feel that would only impede the possibility of getting a good overall social security program. So, what we want is for everyone to come forward with what they think is the ideal solution; and once we have come down on one side or another on a series of these questions, later on we can begin to look at the jurisdictional problems, as to who will implement it, who will pay for it, how it will be cost-shared, et cetera.

I know that the minister and, I think, the provincial ministers are putting a great deal of stock in the forthcoming conference. To say that that would be resolved quickly would be rather naïve, because it is a major problem involving all the provinces.

Senator Cameron: It is obvious, with the varying programs being applied federally and provincially, that there is a tremendous "bureaucracy"—to use that term in quotes. Have you done anything to anticipate what would happen if the guaranteed annual income were put in and everybody—or even a select group—were to start now getting that income? How many civil servants would be displaced? It is very hard to say, and I have not seen any figures, but this has been kicked around for quite a while. You might put in a guaranteed income but still have the same number of people. It does not make sense.

Mr. Cafik: I think one would have to realize that the civil servants probably most affected by a change of that nature would in all probability be provincial—that is a personal view—because most of the implementation of a large number of these programs, such as welfare itself, is administered largely by the municipalities, and there are many people involved.

If one were to develop a program where local municipal welfare offices no longer had the pressure on them and the work load they have, if it were handled by some either province-wide or nation-wide scheme, it would probably eliminate much of the repetitive work on the lower level. But it does not appear to me, at least on the surface, that there would be very much difference as far as the federal government is concerned. It would depend on how the pie was cut and who accepted responsibility for doing each job in relation to the new program.

Senator Cameron: This is part of the background information that should be compiled; and this would be very useful, in order to put it in its proper perspective.

Mr. Cafik: Yes, this is an important point. It should constitute part of the consideration in building up models of various alternatives to solve the problems, to eliminate duplication and red tape.

Senator Croll: The American study on this, which you must have seen indicates they would cut the administrative cost in personnel by two-thirds. That is their study. Both their first and second studies have indicated that. Of course, that is one of the reasons why we are getting opposition from behind the table, in that a great

number of civil servants see their jobs going out the window and perhaps their getting some other kind of job.

Senator Denis: If I understand Senator Argue's point, it relates to those pensioners in homes for the aged or in institutions of that kind. There could be old age pensioners who are not in homes or that kind of institution. It would not be fair to give a comfort allowance to people who are in homes and not to give the same comfort allowance to those who are living outside and have to look after themselves. Is there not any other way that the provinces could look after them, for example, in regard to preventing an increase in rent? I think rent is the most expensive part of it all.

I have in my hand a bill passed in the Province of Quebec, assented to on February 28, 1973, an act to prevent excessive increases of rent in 1973.

Senator Argue: Hear, hear.

Senator Denis: I would like to know from the departmental officials if other provinces have similar legislation.

Mr. Cafik: If I could answer that first, it is that the department has publicly indicated, in cases where we have some control, in the CMHC-operated establishments, and so on, that we will not allow rents to be increased because of this increase in the old age security pension. There are other areas that are strictly under provincial jurisdiction. I know of the Quebec case, but I do not know of any other. Some of the officials may know something in respect to this. I have heard that in British Columbia, where there is a Landlord and Tenant Act, under it the landlord can increase rents only on the anniversary date of a lease, not before, and only once every 12 months—but that does not mean much to me.

Senator Denis: Not much.

Mr. Cafik: I do not know. Do the officials know of anything?

Miss O'Brien: No, sir.

Mr. Cafik: We know of none, senator.

Senator Denis: It would be a good thing for the next federal-provincial conference, that other provinces should know about it and recommend that such a step be taken. I have read, in the debates in the other place, that the minister said he had contacted the provinces to the effect that the increase in the old age pension should not be offset by a reduction in any other means or pensions received from the province. I think the minister said that. I would like you to say if that suggestion has been made to the provinces, regarding the increase we are giving now, not to deduct it from other sources—for instance, from assistance payments.

Mr. Cafik: Yes, senator. As far as I know, the department has communicated with all the provinces, to ask them to bear in mind that the primary purpose of this increase is to be helpful directly to old age pensioners, not to landlords, et cetera. We hope they will respond in a favourable way, to prohibit the confiscation of this money by other individuals.