

That is that a person can have \$45 a month additional income, as defined in the legislation, without affecting the amount of their maximum blindness allowance.

Mr. BENIDICKSON: Would you compare that with old age assistance?

Dr. DAVIDSON: This is precisely the same, so far as the amount of pension is concerned, I am sorry; the maximum amount of income under the Blind Persons Act is \$240 greater than the maximum amount of income permissible, including the assistance, under the Old Age Assistance Act.

Mr. HALPENNY: What about married persons?

Dr. DAVIDSON: A married couple, where one person is blind and has a sighted spouse—the maximum income for that family, including any allowance they may receive, is \$1,980 a year; and where both the man and wife are blind, they may have an annual income, including allowances payable to both of them, of \$2,100 a year.

Mr. BENIDICKSON: What is the equivalent for a married couple on old age assistance?

Dr. DAVIDSON: We would have to check on that. My impression is that it is \$1,660—no, \$1,680, I should say.

Mr. CARTER: For the married?

The CHAIRMAN: You wish to ask some questions, Mr. Carter? Have you finished, Mr. Halpenny?

Mr. HALPENNY: No. I am not going to make a statement, so do not get frightened—

The CHAIRMAN: Oh, I would not get frightened by your statement, Mr. Halpenny.

Mr. HALPENNY: It seems to me that this is a terrific handicap for a person with any incentive, whatsoever. I was wondering how much it would cost to eliminate the means test entirely in respect of these 8,400 people in Canada. Can you find that out for me?

Dr. DAVIDSON: I can give it to you roughly, if you would accept that. Are you assuming, on the basis of that question, that the ratio of the share of cost between federal and provincial governments remains the same?

Mr. HALPENNY: Yes.

Dr. DAVIDSON: Then, if that is the case, I think you can assume that the cost of paying 8,400 additional, or approximately 8,000 additional pensions, would be about the same as the cost of paying to 8,300 or 8,400 persons under blindness allowances.

Mr. HALPENNY: And how much is that?

Dr. DAVIDSON: That amounts to \$4,500,000 or \$4,250,000 a year.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): Our share.

Mr. HALPENNY: \$4,250,000 for the federal?

Dr. DAVIDSON: I would point out that a great many of these 8,400 persons who are at present receiving neither old age security benefits nor blindness allowances may be receiving some other form of social welfare benefits.

Mr. HALPENNY: From whom would they receive that?

Dr. DAVIDSON: They could be receiving unemployment assistance from the provincial and municipal authorities, which is shared 50 per cent by us. They could be receiving military pensions. They could be receiving workmen's compensation. They could be receiving provincial mothers' allowances.

There is a very considerable variety of kinds of assistance that are available to this group.