

Only about 10 or 15 per cent of our aged people are directly receiving welfare payments, old age assistance or other type of welfare payment. I, therefore, do not think you are going to get good leadership and co-operation and support from the whole community for a national, state, or local program on aging if you subordinate the project to the concept of public welfare. I have advocated as long as I have been with the UAW, and before that when I was with the federal Government, that we need a United States' type commission on aging with three commissioners and a representative advisory council which could function as an overall co-ordinating and planning body and an attention-getting body so that the agencies which have a responsibility in this field, for example the unemployment security agency, the welfare department, health department and education department, would get public support, understanding, and co-operation to go ahead and do their job.

This does not mean that anybody sacrifices his independence or principal function, but it does mean they have a place to turn to for getting proper public attention and support and leadership in the understanding of their activities. If structure is an important consideration in Canada, I would strongly recommend to go in this direction rather than find a convenient cubbyhole in some existing department of a federal or provincial Government in which to file it away.

The CHAIRMAN: If you think you have problems in the United States, I can assure you we have problems also.

Senator McGRAND: I agree with the S.I.D. A great deal of this stuff should be initiated at low levels, right in the community itself. Then we should have some place to go, some responsible group or government group to get help in doing these things. I think it is a very good idea to start at the bottom rather than the top.

Senator HAIG: May I ask a question? On page 5 where reference is made to housing, the speaker indicated that this problem of adequate housing can best be achieved through suitably designed apartments and homes, etc. In other words you would think that the aged or the aging would be better suited in separate housing or smaller groups of housing instead of these great big 20, 30 or 40-storey buildings?

Mr. ODELL: I am really addressing myself to the concept of housing for the aged successfully implemented in Sweden. I am not now talking exclusively about the method by which the housing is financed and built, but more about the fact that their concept has been to make a place for older people in the existing plans for housing and for community life in their society. So that instead of having a whole village or whole section of a city or a monolithic skyscraper in a large community, or a retirement village in Florida, their concept has been to try and find a place to keep old people identified with and functioning in the community. They have almost reached that. This may make a change in their living alone. They may be moving out of a private house and into a more modest and from the point of view of size and so forth quarters, but it is to integrate them into our society rather than to segregate them and here I think is the great danger. I think the great danger we face is the danger of feeling that the best way to solve this problem in the housing field is to put all the old people together somewhere and let them live out their lives by themselves.

Now, one or more of you may well say that this does not sound very consistent with what you say about the structure and the whole concept of centres. I think it is consistent because it seems to me that there is a difference between setting up a whole monolithic structure for dealing with the problems of older people and for calling attention to their problems and seeing to it that the existing structure of Government and community life do their fair share