

28. The Minister of National Health and Welfare pointed out that the Department of Finance had suggested such a provision because the Debts Due to the Crown Act could not be made to apply to payments made by the provinces under the Old Age Assistance Act. On the other hand, the total value of actual recoveries would be relatively modest and, for this reason alone, it might be argued that there would be very little advantage in writing such a provision into the old age security legislation. Furthermore, if recoveries of this nature were sanctioned by statute, it might tend to encourage carelessness on the part of provincial administrations to effect recovery of over-payments before recipients became eligible for the universal pension.

29. The Minister of National Defence felt the inclusion of such a provision would have the disadvantage of introducing into the new legislation an element foreign to the general tenor of the measure without having the compensating advantage of being effective.

30. Mr. St-Laurent suggested that further consideration be given to the problem when the Minister of Finance could be present.

31. The Cabinet, after discussion, deferred decision on the proposal that a section be included in the Old Age Security bill respecting recovery of over-payments made under the Old Age Assistance Act, pending discussion at a subsequent meeting when the Minister of Finance could be present.

St. Lawrence development project; establishment of federal agency; clarification of legal position in the United States

32. The Prime Minister, referring to discussion at the meeting of October 3rd, 1951, suggested it would be desirable to introduce in Parliament, as soon as possible, the legislation announced in the Speech from the Throne to provide for establishment of an appropriate federal agency to deal with the St. Lawrence seaway, either on an international or purely Canadian basis. This matter might be considered and reported upon at an early meeting by the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the Minister of Transport.

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