

THE SENATE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
EVIDENCE

OTTAWA, Thursday December 12, 1963.

The Special Committee of the Senate on Aging, appointed to examine the problem involved in the promotion of the welfare of the aged and aging persons, met this day at 10 a.m.

Hon. DAVID A. CROLL (*Chairman*) in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Honourable senators, I see a quorum. Our witness today is Mr. Charles E. Odell. You have his brief before you. He is director of the Older and Retired Workers Department of the United Automobile Workers International Union in Detroit, Michigan, responsible for the development and implementation of a program of services for approximately 150,000 retired workers of the UAW.

Prior to his employment with the UAW, which began in August 1957, he was special assistant to the Secretary of Labour in Washington, and directed the Department of Labour program for older workers. He also served on the Federal Council on Aging, the National Committee on Aging, and on the planning committees of numerous state and federal conferences and study groups which explored the employment and retirement problems of older workers. In 1955 through 1957, Mr. Odell planned and co-ordinated a \$750,000 research and demonstration program, conducted by the Department of Labour in co-operation with seven state employment security agencies. This program was designed to develop the facts concerning the performance of older workers on the job and the dimensions of age discriminatory hiring practices in community labour markets, ranging in size from Worcester, Massachusetts, which is a very small community, to Los Angeles, California.

We are very pleased to have Mr. Odell with us today. The floor is now yours, Mr. Odell.

Senator ROEBUCK: Well, Mr. Chairman, he certainly is no retired worker.

Mr. Charles E. Odell, Director of the Older and Retired Workers Department of the United Automobile Workers International Union in Detroit, Michigan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In response to the comment about my age I would like to say that I think one of the great challenges we face in doing something about the problems of retirement and about making retirement living in the later years of life worth while is to get more young people interested in this problem and particularly people who are willing to dedicate themselves to both professional and active participation in this kind of work. One of the great difficulties we find in the United States in developing services for older people is lack of qualified personnel from fields such as social work, vocational guidance and even in the health services. I think the problem is that most of these professionals have been trained to believe that there is not much you can do for old people and that it is much better and much more profitable in the long run to work with youth because you can help youth significantly but with old people traditionally the belief is that they cannot be helped.