

Mr. KASS. Therefore, getting back to my earlier question about regional ombudsman, this would have application to the regional idea of ombudsman so that everybody in the State could call his local VA office, but they also could call their ombudsman wherever he would be located so there would be instant access or easy access to the ombudsman as well as to the Federal agencies?

Mr. GUY WILLIAMS. Yes, sir.

Mr. KASS. As it is being programed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LONG. Mr. Williams, I saw a letter just the other day where an application had been made for a substantial refund from the Internal Revenue. It was just a blank form which was filled out which says he didn't get it filed on time or words to that effect. No signature or anything else to it. Very cold, very impersonal. Whether it was put out by a typewriter or computer, I don't know. But your mail that goes out is signed by an individual who has personal contact with your contact man or ombudsman who is handling the veteran's case?

Mr. GUY WILLIAMS. To a large degree; yes, sir. We do have some computerized letters. For the most part, computerized letters in the Veterans' Administration are used to advise of decisions of entitlement or awards made. For example, when a veteran applies for educational benefits, he will receive a letter which is a mechanized type of thing saying, "You have so many months of entitlement and are approved to go to George Washington University." The contact program, however, does not use any computerized letters. With the exception of a few form letters which we issue for use by veterans in securing Civil Service preference or commissary privilege ID cards, all contact program correspondence is individually composed, typed, and, we feel, completely responsive to incoming inquiries.

Senator LONG. But when he has a complaint you just don't get a computerized letter saying "we are not going to allow it," and that is it?

Mr. GUY WILLIAMS. No, sir. Any complaint is pounced on immediately by the VA administrative procedure.

Senator LONG. By a live human being and not a computer?

Mr. GUY WILLIAMS. That is correct.

Senator LONG. Yes. You are dealing with humans.

Mr. GUY WILLIAMS. Right.

Senator LONG. And it certainly has much more effect. People have much more confidence, I am sure, with an agency that handles its business on a more personal basis.

Mr. Waters?

Mr. WATERS. No questions.

Senator LONG. Thank you, Mr. Williams.

Mr. GUY WILLIAMS. Thank you sir.

Senator LONG. Our next and concluding witness this morning is Dr. Myrl E. Alexander, Director of the Bureau of Prisons. The chairman has quite a little interest in this Bureau. The chairman is also chairman of the National Penitentiary Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee, and it is our pleasure to work with Dr. Alexander quite often on a personal, cordial relationship.

Doctor, we are glad you can be here this morning. If you will introduce us to your assistant, we will be happy to hear him and we will be happy to have your statement.