

to lose ourselves in debate among various plans, but to get the American people to recognize the great need which exists and the requirement to commit substantial resources to eradicate the need. Yet the time is very, very short and we must find ways to convey effectively the urgency and extent of the need. I believe these hearings will serve as a most useful contribution to this end.

Representative GRIFFITHS. Thank you, Mr. Carter.

**STATEMENT OF MITCHELL GINSBERG, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION OF NEW YORK CITY, AND
FORMER COMMISSIONER OF THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT
OF WELFARE**

Mr. GINSBERG. I am Mitchell Ginsberg, until recently commissioner of the New York City Department of Welfare, and now administrator of the human resources administration in the city. I am speaking as an individual.

I particularly appreciate the chance to appear before this subcommittee at this time. I think the timing is excellent, because I do think we have reached the position where there is substantial agreement about what is wrong with the existing welfare system and that there is little, if any, more need to beat that dead horse. It is time now to do what can be done to improve the existing system and to move toward a new system.

I think you will find a striking similarity between what I will say and what Mr. Carter has just finished saying, not because we worked together on this in advance, but because I think you will find throughout these hearings that a substantial number of people who have been working in these programs have by and large reached consensus on the major directions that ought to be taken, although there remain some differences among us as to specifics. I would hope, however, that those differences would not be a reason for the failure to take action.

What are some of these areas of agreement?

First of all, I think there is a fair consensus that a welfare system designed for the 1930's, designed for a time when unemployment and poverty was pretty much across the board and even at those times was seen as a relatively temporary phenomenon, is simply not effective in the particular situations that we have now in the 1960's and that we face in the 1970's, when unemployment and poverty has become very much limited to particular groups in our population. So the system designed for the first simply cannot work, it seems to me, when you have these totally different conditions.

To oversimplify it somewhat, the public welfare system was set up with two objectives: to keep people alive at a minimum decent level and to keep people off welfare rolls and to help them become self-supporting. I would suggest to you that using those two objectives the system has by and large failed in both respects. This does not mean that the system does not have a useful service, and does not say that keeping people alive is not important, because without this system there are probably many who would not be alive today. But it continues to fail to meet its objectives.

I think you have to have some understanding of who is on welfare. By and large, the major part of the caseload is made up of the aged,