

the libraries, the hospitals, the mails in this country to know that there are literally millions of jobs that are necessary and are dignified and, at the same time, provide service to the rest of the people. I see no reason why we cannot move substantially in that direction, and I hope the thought would be given by this committee to the use of welfare payments to subsidize people for this. I see nothing philosophically objectionable in any way, other than that we have not done it up to now.

With public social services set up as Mr. Carter has suggested, not supplied to people, but available to them when they need them, not forced on people simply because they need money, this is the package I suggest: a revised and residual public assistance system; a children's allowance system; social security for the aged, the blind, and the disabled; guaranteed employment through subsidy of industry in the private sector and through the employment of the Government as an employer of last resort; and a public social service system available to people as they need it. Whether you like this package or another package is not, it seems to me, the fundamental point. But you do have to recognize that this situation, this system we have, has continually gone downhill. In my judgment, it will continue to go downhill unless we do the two things that are absolutely essential: one, begin to reform our existing system, and, second, go to another system.

Thank you.

(The complete statement of Mr. Ginsberg follows:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MITCHELL I. GINSBERG

I am Mitchell I. Ginsberg, formerly Commissioner of the New York City Department of Welfare (now called the Department of Social Services) and presently administrator of the New York City Human Resources Administration, a "super" agency that comprises the public assistance program and its social services; the Federally and locally supported anti-poverty, community development, job and training programs; services for children, youth, alcoholics, narcotics addicts and homeless men, women and children.

The timing of these public hearings, to which I was honored to be invited, is particularly fortuitous. In my judgment, we have arrived at a crucial moment at which general agreement about the ills of the present income maintenance system threatens to disintegrate once again into dissension about remedies. We cannot afford further dissension at this time. We know well what new directions must be taken.

Areas of agreement

First, let me review the areas of agreement—agreement that has been expressed over the past several years in numerous individual statements and committee reports, only the most recent of which is the very excellent report of the Steering Committee of the Arden House Conference on Public Welfare convened last fall by Governor Rockefeller. (Reproduced in the appendix to these hearings.)

Agreement on the following points seems to have been reached by all those who are knowledgeable about our present income maintenance system, including those who define it as punitive and demeaning, and even some of those who define it as a giveaway that betrays the efforts of the taxpaying working man:

That a system designed for a fluid poverty population in temporary difficulty in the 1930's cannot properly confront the problems of a more solidified, permanent under-class in the 1960's, and that changing this system by compounding its basic flaws—as in the Social Security Amendments of 1967—can lead toward nothing but disaster for poor persons and for the economy as a whole;

That while public assistance has offered a means of survival for millions of persons since 1935, it continues to fail to meet its primary objectives of