

other. One of our notorious lacks of success at the congressional level has been in facing up to problems that involve a cost-of-living differential.

For example, if we applied national minimum standards that made some sense now in New York City, we could cause a rather remarkable set of circumstances in a given area which I shall not mention. I wonder what the answer is to that. Are you talking about national minimum standards in terms of the end take in goods and services, or are we talking in money terms, or what thought has been given to it?

Mr. CARTER. I think the principal differential in cost of living is in housing. Food costs, of course, are fairly consistent. There was a time, and I do not, any more than you, want to talk about any particular area, but there was a time when in one particular area there were differentials in welfare payments because certain people were said to be only meant to live on certain kinds of food, and, therefore, there was not the need for as much money for them as for the majority group in that State.

That kind of condition has changed. But if we are talking of eating in a decent fashion in any particular State, the food costs are not going to be too different; clothing costs are not going to be too different. If you are talking about housing, it seems to me that differentials could be worked out about that. There has been some talk of modifications in terms of regional differentials, particularly on climate, which enters very much into the cost of living, evidently. So there are ways in which, it seems to me, you can generalize this enough that would forestall individual States from having standards radically different from others, and, therefore, forestall any incentive for differential treatments or migration patterns that might be attributable to these differences and, at the same time, have an adequate national standard.

Representative BOLLING. I would like to reverse the situation. Would you like to comment, Mr. Ginsberg?

Mr. GINSBERG. Yes; I would like to say while it would be interesting to see what would happen in those situations you mention, I think we could move toward a differential. What we could start with is a base that would be applicable across the board and then a differential that could be related perhaps geographically, and certainly that dealt with housing. We have that now in New York City. We find the single factor that makes the most difference is the cost of housing. So even with presumably a welfare system that pays the same amount, we do differentiate quite substantially among families on the basis of housing costs.

Representative BOLLING. I hope you understand that I raise this not as a person who in any way is opposed to the idea, but as one who already favors it and who is interested in being able to answer some of the arguments that occasionally occur in allegedly enlightened circles.

One other question I would like to ask, Mr. Ginsberg.

You quite properly indicate that normally, at least, the Congress does not pass a program as a total program. We usually do as the conservatives complain; we get the camel's nose under the tent and then, as rapidly as possible, get the rest of the camel into the tent.