

the department of welfare is that they spend an inordinate amount of time on paperwork and never put in sufficient time and talent, which they have, in counseling the families, working with them. So I think it is an advantage to take that area out of the concern of the social worker.

The social worker can and should help in terms of counseling people in consumer economics. These programs are being financed under OEO and should be expanded in order to help people get the maximum value for the dollar which they obtain through the income maintenance system.

Senator PROXMIRE. Let me ask you another part of the proposal you have. You would cover all the poor, including, as you say, the working poor. Presumably, this would cover the dairy farmers in Wisconsin, whose income is now 50 cents an hour. It would cover a lot of small businessmen whose incomes are very, very low. But this would be a nightmare to administer, it seems to me, because there are many, many arguments that if you could devote sufficient auditing talent, some of the farmers would be paying higher income taxes than they pay. You would have to devote a lot of auditing talent, presumably, to literally millions of farmers and millions of small businessmen all over the Nation if you are going to provide an income supplement to many of them who show on their income taxes an income far below \$2,000 a year. Can you work this out practically?

Representative RYAN. I think you can. I think this is just a matter of administration.

Senator PROXMIRE. It is a matter of administration, but—

Representative RYAN. We have a very complicated internal revenue system in this country. Through a spot check system, I think this can be accomplished without getting into the details of the dairy industry, with which I do not profess any particular familiarity.

Senator PROXMIRE. It is rather easy for a person who is not self-employed, who does not have a farm or small business or something of that kind. Certainly with the wage system we have and the requirement for reporting for big business and big employers, that would not be so difficult. But it seems to me that you might have quite a tough problem for many, many persons who are self-employed.

Representative RYAN. Is it really any different from the problem the Internal Revenue Service faces in checking and auditing returns in any event?

Senator PROXMIRE. Yes; because it is much bigger. A very substantial majority of our farmers pay no income taxes because their incomes are so low. All of them would have to be brought under it. A very large number—I do not know if it is half or not, but I would not be surprised if it were—of the small businessmen in this country, of the more than 4 million small businessmen, pay no taxes. Now, maybe some of them should. I am just wondering how big an administrative problem you have here.

Do you have a comment?

Representative RYAN. We are constantly improving the efficiency of our administrative setup. I should think with the use of a spot check system and a computerized system, we could reach this problem.

Senator PROXMIRE. Mrs. Burns, do you want to comment?