

of social welfare projects in developing countries, provides advisers for services abroad, and arranges for training for students and government officials when recommended by their governments.

A Convention on Social Security between Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany became effective May 1, 1972. The general purpose of the convention is to ensure that rights acquired under certain social security programs in one country are not lost by persons who migrate to and perhaps become citizens of the other country. Discussions concerning bilateral agreements on social security have been held with the United Kingdom, Italy and the United States. Australia has proposed an agreement with Canada. A number of other countries have expressed interest in possible agreements.

Canadian officials engaged in the social security field participate in the work of the International Social Security Association and the social security program of the International Labour Organization. For some years, Canada has had observer status at meetings of the Inter-American Social Security Association.

6.6 Federal-provincial welfare programs

6.6.1 Canada Assistance Plan

The Canada Assistance Plan was enacted in 1966 as a comprehensive public assistance measure to complement other income security measures. It provides, under agreements with the provinces, for federal contributions of 50% of the costs of assistance to persons in need and of the costs of certain welfare services. The Plan has largely replaced the Unemployment Assistance Act, 1956, although the latter continues in effect in the Northwest Territories and in some provinces for an interim period with respect to certain programs using a means test that are being phased out but that are not covered under the Canada Assistance Plan. The arrangements for contracting out of certain shared-cost programs introduced in 1965 under the Established Programs (Interim Arrangements) Act are applied to Quebec's agreement. The Plan authorizes the provinces to discontinue their programs of blind persons allowances and disabled persons allowances and instead give aid under their general programs with costs shared under the Plan. The sharing of costs of work activity projects to prepare persons for employment and the extension of provincial welfare services to Indians on reserves, on Crown lands or in unorganized territory are governed by special agreements. Statistics on the number of beneficiaries of assistance under the Plan as well as on the amounts of allowances paid and the cost to the federal government are shown in Tables 6.9 - 6.10.

The only eligibility requirement specified is that of need, which is determined through an assessment of budgetary requirements as well as of income and resources but rates of assistance and other eligibility requirements are set by the province so that they may be adjusted to local conditions and the needs of special groups. A province may not, however, require previous residence as a condition of eligibility for assistance or for continued assistance, and the provinces must establish procedures for appeal from decisions that relate to the provision of assistance.

"Assistance" for purposes of federal contributions includes any form of aid to or on behalf of persons in need for the purpose of providing basic requirements such as food, shelter and clothing; items necessary for the safety, well-being or rehabilitation of a person in need, or for a handicapped person; care in homes for special care such as a home for the aged, a nursing home or a welfare institution for children; travel and transportation; funerals and burials; health care services; welfare services purchased by or at the request of provincially approved agencies; and comfort allowances for inmates of institutions.

The federal share of costs under the Unemployment Assistance Act amounted to \$1.7 million during the year ended March 31, 1972. This includes payments to Quebec under the Established Programs (Interim Arrangements) Act.

6.6.2 Blind and disabled persons allowances

Federal reimbursement to the provinces for assistance to blind persons and persons permanently and totally disabled, aged 18 or over, is provided for under the Blind Persons Act, 1951, as amended, and the Disabled Persons Act, 1954, as amended. To be eligible for an allowance under either of these Acts, an applicant must meet the ten-year residence requirement and the income requirements. Total income, including the allowance, may not exceed \$1,260 a year for an unmarried person, \$2,220 a year for a married couple or \$2,580 a