

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

activity in every sphere of the national economy.

After having realized how little compensation tax exemptions and family allowances represent on the income of the family heads, in comparison to the single people, when they earn an average salary of \$80 a week, or \$4,200 a year, what should we think now of wage earners who earn less than \$80 a week; many wage earners earn only \$40 a week, or \$2,000 a year?

How about the small wage earner who does not earn enough to have his name appear on the roll of income taxpayers?

How about the people who earn less than \$1,000 a year, for themselves and their wives, less than \$550 a year for their children aged 16 years or over, and less than \$300 a year for their children under 16 years old?

Do you think that these are just a few unfortunate people who should be ignored when we consider the population as a whole? There again, we fail to envisage reality if we do not pay attention to this.

Whether or not this surprises you, there are two million taxpayers whose names do not appear on the list of income taxpayers, out of seven million citizens who compose our labour force. Five million only appear on the list of personal income taxpayers, as there are about 80,000 companies appearing on the list of profit-earning corporations.

You may consult your Canada Year Book 1963-64, page 991—and you will have an idea of the distribution of income between Canadian citizens taking part in production and the income derived from their work or their capital. You can take from it the following details which put the situation in a nutshell:

First, 20 per cent, that is, 1.5 million persons, earn \$6,000 or more a year, or \$120 a week; second, 50 per cent, that is, 3.5 million persons, earn from \$1,000 to \$6,000 a year, or from \$20 to \$120 a week; third, nearly 30 per cent, that is, two million Canadians, earn less than the income tax exemption which would apply to them and their families.

Those are statistics given by the government in Ottawa. Now, am I the only one to come to those conclusions? Professor O. J. Firestone, a well-known figure in administrative circles in Ottawa, a member of the royal commission on health services, a professor and vice dean of social sciences at the University of Ottawa, made the following statement during the masterful speech he just

[Mr. Latulippe.]

made in Manitoba before business and labour leaders:

Canadians pay a great deal of attention to the 300,000 unemployed, while ignoring almost entirely the 3,800,000 Canadians who live in poverty, whether they are unemployed or not.

And this, even though Canada ranks second in the world for the highest per capita income and alternates with Sweden between second and third place for the highest standard of living.

Those 3,800,000 Canadians, one out of five, 20 per cent of the population, have an income lower than the minimum necessary to buy the necessities of life.

This statement adds nothing new to the reality of economic imbalance, of the iniquitous distribution of income and burdens of society in our prosperous and progressive Canada. This statement adds nothing new, but confirms once again an unfortunate situation which must be corrected as soon as possible.

That statement was made by a university authority acknowledged and appreciated by our Ottawa authorities, by our political leaders, since Mr. O. J. Firestone was a member of the royal commission on health services in Canada, whose report was submitted to the governor general in council in Ottawa in April 1964.

Do those statistics and reports not suggest that we do not live any better in Canada than in underdeveloped countries? Not any better than in South Africa? Not any better than in India, where there are 300 people per square mile, against six people per square mile here in Canada?

I feel it is high time to put an end to this unbearable situation which most members of this house deplore, even if the 26 powerful ministers go on ignoring it and pretending not to admit the real facts.

What did Mr. Mackenzie King, prime minister of Canada, say in 1944, during the debates in the House of Commons which preceded the passing of the Family Allowances Act? Our ministers might still in 1964 hear the words of that former Liberal prime minister, who can reproach them for having misunderstood his lesson and the spirit of the legislation sponsored on that occasion. Here is this statement which has been considered so important that it is reported in a work published by the International Labour Review, Vol. LXXV, No. 3, March 1957:

Out of the citizens forming the labour force, 48 per cent are bachelors, 39 per cent of those who are married or widowers have no children under 16, and 40 per cent of those who have children under 16 have only one child.