

political parties. This fact demonstrates very clearly that the leadership of the political movements in this country today, certainly those on the national field, is in favour of this or similar, legislation, and of further steps forward.

I have read statements made by the Premier of Alberta from time to time. He heads up what is probably, on an income per capita basis, the wealthiest province in Canada. I suppose he can afford to take the position he does. He seems to say that the country has gone far enough, that all governments are becoming spendthrift, and there should be halt called to social security legislation. But then he spreads his arms wide and invites representatives of all the free enterprise parties to come in with him to beat the N.D.P. on the question, as he puts it, of halting social security and other progressive legislation. This is a short-sighted attitude, in my opinion, and it is a mistaken attitude. It is mistaken in its initial judgment about the legislation itself. I am certain it is mistaken as a piece of political strategy, because if anything would help bolster the N.D.P. in this country it would be an amalgamation of the other political parties because that would leave the N.D.P. alone to promote in their own way social security measures and the like.

So, I think the Parliament of this country has given a decided answer to those who might be accused of being the radical right by saying that it is going forward with schemes to provide social security legislation.

I hope I am not taking a reactionary point of view, however, when I say that I am very much in favour of the principle of this bill which states there shall be a guaranteed annual income, and that we shall not ask the treasury of this country and the taxpayers to pay a \$25 general supplement to a lot of people who do not need it.

In Saskatchewan I live in a very small community. It is a hamlet. It is not even big enough to be incorporated as a village. I know that in election campaigns—and I say this with respect to the individuals involved—some of the strongest advocates among the older people of a higher across-the-board and without-means-test increase in the old age pension have been people who do not need it. If they got an increase, they would not spend it; it would go into a bank account and merely increase the size of their estate when they passed on. I say at once that this is a minority, but it is an important minority. I have asked these people individually, as I ask here, why

should this country adopt measures to tax the public generally, including a lot of poor people, as well as young people, in order to give money that is really not necessary to increase the bank accounts of those who already have adequate money? I do not know if I can be called young or old. We all like to think we are young. However, looking back over my experience in raising certain members of our family, and still in the process of raising others, and in trying to look at the experience of older and young people—

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Which makes you young.

Hon. Mr. Argue: Thank you very much. Well, the Senate is getting younger all the time, but I am a long way from being the youngest.

One cannot make general statements, but it is the young people who are the poor people. When a young person gets married and starts to raise a small family, he often has great difficulty in making ends meet. When I hear about fires in Ottawa, and of people living in the second or third storey of an old house, and when the temperature gets so low they have to turn on all the burners of the stove to keep warm—those are the people with whom I am especially concerned. I do not see why the country should undertake to tax people with low incomes, young people with small families, in order to pay more money to a certain group of people who do not need it.

I hasten to say that I am all in favour of paying to our older people the assistance they require, and I think that is a step in the right direction.

I have been reading what the N.D.P. have been saying about this. In the past they have been in favour of removing the means test. Later they were in favour of a guaranteed annual income, but as soon as it was put forward they called it all the rough and mean names they could find, and applied the same terms to the Government and anybody associated with the committee. They used such names as "Scrooge," "callous" and "indifferent," and they said that the measure now before us means, not \$260 million, but a few more cents. It seemed to me rather a strange role for them to play.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: May I ask how long ago that was?

Hon. Mr. Argue: Yesterday, or the day before. Even right now that is what they are saying.