

ably we have as many people living off the backs of the workers as there are workers themselves. This is an odd situation.

It is interesting to note that we now pay a single, old age pensioner a GIS of almost \$2,000 a year. When he reaches the age of 65 he is eligible for that sum of money. If he is married, in many circumstances he can almost double that amount provided his wife is the same age as him. If he is married to a younger woman, they must survive on his GIS because the Liberal government believes in the theory that two can live as cheaply as one. This sounds like an advertisement of a matrimonial bureau. However, I have found that it is not possible for two to live as cheaply as one. It is a myth that Hollywood propagated many years ago and that most people have debunked. There is obviously a necessity to take into consideration the problem of younger wives and their total dependence on their husbands for a living, particularly when they have to survive on the \$2,000 that they are getting.

Over the years I have been involved in both municipal and provincial politics, not by design but by necessity. People bring to me their problems, as they do to all members of parliament, and one has to learn something about the proliferating programs, particularly at the provincial level. This afternoon we listened to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Cafik) in rare form outlining the orange document that was put out recently respecting the government's program. He said that this is the kind of program Ontario would accept. If this is so, then any member of the Liberal Party who considers himself to be a Liberal should look at himself in the mirror. The programs outlined in the orange booklet to which the parliamentary secretary referred today are typically Conservative and we find that the Conservatives are not only sitting on one side of the House. A true Conservative, according to a definition I heard many years ago, is a man who fights all his life to protect those things that his father fought all his life to prevent. How many Liberal members who are still in this House have stood up and said, "We cannot have a medicare plan; it is impossible" and "We cannot have a universal old age pension plan; it would cost too much"? I well remember the time when it was raised from \$50 to \$56 and then to \$60.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It was \$55, \$65, \$75.

Mr. Peters: My colleague knows all the grim details. There have been many machinations. Whenever we proposed an increase, Liberal members would say, "we must keep it at the present level because the country cannot afford any more". Then we find them doing what the Cr ditiste member suggested this afternoon, or we find that an election comes up and suddenly we can afford the increase.

I suggest that we must consider a guaranteed minimum annual income. I was not surprised when Ontario turned down a program to see what would be the effects of a guaranteed annual income in one of the communities in the province. I am sure that most civil servants in Ontario would be violently opposed to such a program being implemented and that it would scare the pants off many of them

Guaranteed Income

to even consider it. We have people looking after children's aid, the mother's and father's allowance, the dependent father's allowance, disability pensions, windows' pensions, guaranteed income supplements, compensation and family allowances. Sometimes there are five or six different people coming into one household telling the family how to make ends meet.

There is a great proliferation of such programs and if we were smart we would put them all into a guaranteed minimum annual income. I understand from the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway (Mrs. MacInnis) that under such a program a single person in British Columbia receives almost \$2,600. We have people in Ontario who are working at the minimum wage and trying to keep a family on \$4,000 a year. They do not have their hospital expenses paid. They do not have all the other advantages which accrue to elderly persons in British Columbia or Ontario. Out of that \$4,000 they must pay income tax, they must pay their medical plan contributions, their Canada Pension Plan contributions and all the other payments that are deducted from one's income. They end up probably earning less than the \$3,000 a year which has been suggested is the poverty line.

● (1750)

I have here a letter that I would like to read. It underlines some of the problems involved. It is from a man who offered to help a person who was in financial trouble. He started to look after this person's books. He discovered that the person's wife had died and a number of bills had to be paid. The individual involved has a daughter who is now 18 years of age. He was trying to figure out this man's income tax. The man earned \$6,707.55 and had already paid \$659.83 in income tax. The income tax people wanted an additional \$359.67. That was the problem. He decided to put this man and his daughter on a budget. The budget for two people per week includes \$25 for food, \$10 utilities, \$2 clothing, \$4 miscellaneous, \$3 savings account and \$25 rent. In addition, there are three loans outstanding—to Household Finance, Beneficial Finance and the Imperial Bank of Commerce, and \$25 a week is being paid on those three loans. This man has a car on which he pays \$8 a week. His car needs substantial repairs—it is a 1964 Chev—but it is doubtful if it can be repaired. The budget allows this man \$3 a week spending money. That totals \$105 a week, and there is no money available to pay the \$300 owed in income tax.

There is nothing extravagant in this budget. As a matter of fact, I do not know how you can feed two people on \$25 a week and I do not know where you can get accommodation for \$25 a week. But this man who was working every day, making \$6,700 a year and paying over \$1,000 in income tax, cannot make a deduction for his daughter because she made \$175 over the amount she is allowed to make while working after school in an IGA store. It is not only those on disability pension and other types of pension whom we must consider. We have a large number of working poor in this country. This leads me to the second part of the motion.

Despite what the previous speaker said, we have not done anything about the high cost of living. Yesterday I heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) quote statistics to the Canada Labour Congress showing that every-