

*Family Allowances*

**Mr. Knowles:** The guillotine again.

On motion of Mr. Harris the debate was adjourned.

**FAMILY ALLOWANCES****PROPOSAL TO AMEND LEGISLATION TO INCREASE AMOUNTS PAID**

**Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should give consideration to the advisability of introducing legislation to provide an increase in the family allowance.

**Mr. Philpott:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker; are we taking motion No. 3 in conjunction with motion No. 10, according to the precedent of last year? No. 10 is practically a duplicate of No. 3.

**Mr. Speaker:** For the information of the hon. member I may say that now that we have considered this resolution the other one will have to wait and be dealt with when we get to it.

**Mr. Argue:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** If the hon. member speaks now, he will close the debate.

**Mr. Argue:** No; this motion was allowed to stand the other day.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sorry. I thought this was a resumption of the debate. I understand we are taking it now for the first time, and the hon. member is moving the motion. Perhaps what got me into difficulty was the fact that the other day we thought we were on this motion when we were not.

**Mr. Argue:** I am pleased to have the opportunity of once again moving a motion requesting an increase in the family allowance. I believe the family allowance legislation, enacted back in 1944, is one of the most important acts ever placed on the statute books of this country. It is an important part of our social security legislation. Because I believe family allowances are a good thing, because I believe the legislation is worth while, I view with alarm the gradual deterioration in the purchasing power of the family allowance cheque. It is not sufficient at any time for a government to merely provide legislation which is good. In my opinion the government should be prepared to protect the value of that legislation. Year by year almost consistently since 1945, inflation has been allowed to eat away a good part of the value of the family allowance cheque.

There is only three-quarters of an hour left for this debate, and because time is limited and I should like to see other members take part in the debate I shall endeavour to make my remarks rather brief. The latest

or big hospital in the United States, or to get them into the Victoria hospital in Halifax or the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. There is where you are hitting real expense and real hardship. There is not any insurance for most of those people. You borrow from your neighbour.

In the community in which I live, as in many other sections, there is not a day in the month when an appeal does not appear in the paper on behalf of someone who requires a serious operation such as a heart operation, a brain operation, treatment for cancer or a diagnosis in these expert centres. It costs hundreds of dollars for transportation plus the cost of the treatment. In many cases appeals are made in the newspapers to borrow the money in order to make that kind of thing possible.

It is true that the big centres are well provided for and that the expert attention is there. I do not think it is necessary to send any of our people to the United States. We now have the centres established in Canada, but they are not available to 75 per cent of the population in this country, and they never will be available to them until such time as the government has the courage to enact the necessary legislation. I refer to legislation which will place upon the citizen of this country who has the income the obligation to contribute by way of taxation to making medical science available to the hundreds of thousands of people in this country to whom it will otherwise never be available.

As far as I am concerned, I cannot support this resolution. I would make this suggestion to the Minister of Finance. Before his next budget comes down I would suggest that he give serious consideration to the abolition of that 3 per cent floor on medical expenses, and that he join with his colleagues in the cabinet in working out a comprehensive medical plan that will really give to the people the hospitalization and the medical science that is available in this country today.

**Mr. Harris:** Mr. Speaker, one appreciates the remarks made by the hon. member for Cape Breton South but, if I may say so with respect, we have launched into a different field from that in which we started. We have heard expressions of opinion from, I think, all the opposition groups and from the government side. I have made an engagement to give serious consideration to the amended resolution or motion. Of course I fully appreciate the fact that hon. members expect us on all occasions to consider the 3 per cent floor or ceiling, as you will.

Having that fact in mind, Mr. Speaker, I feel that we could usefully adjourn the debate and I therefore so move.