

wonder that we have an unemployment problem when people work to age 65 and over and are forced to begin work while still attending school. One would hope that the Canadian people could look forward to the day when a person who has given as many as 35 productive years of service to his country would be given the right to retire with full benefits, whatever his age.

There are many other social and economic problems mentioned in the Speech from the Throne on which I could touch, but let me refer directly to this phrase from the speech: "The social security system must contain incentives to work". In that one phrase, the government has hit directly at a basic problem that confronts so many Canadians who have lost the desire to contribute their efforts toward any government whose sole concern appears to be to worship at the shrine of corporate profits and the great god, gross national product.

The best incentive that this government can display is a basic concern for people, an honest attempt to remove the stigma attached to those who are forced to accept welfare, unemployment insurance and other forms of assistance. Canada is a rich and productive nation, but as rich and productive as it is, it simply cannot afford to support the continuing burden of costs that have resulted from past Tweedledum and Tweedledee administrations.

The Speech from the Throne is couched in vague generalities, but it does at least provide some room for the government to manoeuvre within the confines of its outmoded philosophy to provide some redress of the grievances expressed by the Canadian people on October 30. No one expects Valhalla overnight. I do not expect a complete levelling-off of incomes in Canada, nor do my colleagues. Neither do I expect a complete reversal from the haves to the have-nots, as was lightly suggested by the hon. member for Témiscamigue (Mr. Caouette) yesterday. But I do expect, and my colleagues expect—and I believe the people of Canada expect—a fairer distribution of the wealth of this country. In a democratic country such as ours, surely the word "democracy" embodies, besides the freedoms usually associated with it, the freedom from want. The staggering costs of maintaining poverty are surely no greater than the costs of eliminating it, and I urge that the government operate from this premise when and if it considers amendments to the tax structure and the economic and social reforms hinted at in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. John Campbell (LaSalle): Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour for me as a junior member to have the opportunity to address such a distinguished group of men and women. May I take this opportunity to congratulate you, sir, and your associates on your election, as well as all those who have been appointed or elected to various posts. I certainly want to congratulate the hon. member for North Bay (Mr. Blais) and the hon. member for Lachine (Mr. Blaker) for a job well done.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I should like at this time to pay homage to my predecessor, Mr. H. Pit Lessard, a man totally devoted to his constituents, well liked and respected by all. Hon. members who have been sitting in the House for some time will remember him. Unfortunately, for reasons of

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health, Mr. Lessard had to retire and take a well deserved rest. I am sure that for a long time, all those who have known and worked with him will keep a fond memory of him.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, the county of LaSalle is relatively new. It has been in existence since 1968. It comprises LaSalle, Ville Emard and Côte St. Paul. The city of LaSalle forms the largest part. LaSalle has a population of 75,000, 90 miles of city roads, and ranks as the sixth largest industrial city in the province of Quebec. This is the first time a resident of LaSalle has represented the city.

The hon. member for Burin-Burgeo (Mr. Jamieson) in his words a short time ago said that one is better off to shut up, sit back and listen so that when he does get up to speak he can speak factually and intelligently. That is exactly what I intend to do. At this time I should like to express my most sincere thanks to all the people of LaSalle, Ville Emard and Côte St. Paul who gave me their support and confidence during the last election campaign. I shall do my utmost to work ardently for their benefit and for the benefit of all Canadians.

• (2150)

PROCEEDING ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS—TIME OF SETTING UP OF JOINT SENATE-COMMONS COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE INTO FOOD PRICES

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, among the promises set forth in the Speech from the Throne, one which has most interested us in this group is the one promising that a committee will be set up very shortly to go into the matter of rising food prices. We feel that this measure is long overdue. As a matter of fact, on June 1 last year I had the honour to make such a demand in the House on behalf of this group. I said that because of the way in which food prices were spiralling such an investigation should be set up. At that time we were told by the government that such an inquiry was unnecessary and that Canadian food prices were in line with food prices in other countries.

We were also told by the then minister of consumer and corporate affairs that this might be a temporary phenomenon and that we should watch what happened before anything was done. Later, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) and other ministers indicated that the rise in food prices was due to poor weather conditions. All this was a postponement, but as late as September the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) had not been converted to any change in ideas. In my own city of Vancouver, on an open-line program a woman caller asked him how he could justify his negative and apparently callous attitude