

returned him to England and his mother was delighted. Obviously the mother was afraid that he might be dead but the fact that he had been presumed dead did not make her sad.

I am somewhat amazed by the arguments from some members of the New Democratic Party. They say that a boy or girl should not be presumed dead even though they have disappeared and all the circumstances indicate they may be dead. They say that the registrar in the provinces or territories, rather than the Minister, should sign the death certificate declaring a child dead. I suggest that they are adding fuel to the fire because they want the child declared officially dead for all intents and purposes. The Minister is simply attempting to assume the child dead for the purposes of this Act only. The New Democratic Party wants the child declared officially dead with a death certificate from the registrar.

I suspect that Hon. Members opposite really support this Bill because their amendments are futile. They simply change small words here and there and argue against the Minister being given authority to sign a death certificate. They want the registrar to do so in order that the child will be declared dead for all intents and purposes.

Liberal Members want the courts to decide when a child is dead. How ridiculous can their arguments get? The purpose of the Act is to help the child and the parents. We do not want to presume a child dead for all purposes. We do not want the child dead at all. However, it is better to deal with it in this way.

The Bill stipulates that if a child is found alive all of those payments which have been withheld will go back to the parents. The purpose of this Bill is not to save money but to save the child and help the parents. The Minister is showing compassion by introducing this Bill.

It is the position of the New Democratic Party that the registrar should declare a child dead. However, this means the child would be dead for the purpose of a will and insurance. We are simply saying that a child would be presumed dead for the convenience of this Bill. At the same time we can keep searching and hoping that the child is alive. That is the purpose of this Bill.

It is nonsense to say that we will stop searching for the child. We will accentuate the search if necessary because we want to find children alive. However, we are faced with a situation in the country today where children are abused and killed. In my opinion, the only fitting punishment for murderers of children is the hangman. There are too many bleeding hearts today who say we should feel sorry for the man who rapes a six year old girl perhaps three or four times and then kills her. That indeed happens today. We intend to continue searching for the child in the hopes of finding him or her alive. Any money that has been withheld from the parents will be paid once the child is found alive.

I suggest the Liberals' amendment would put the parents in a terrible position. They want the payments to continue to the parents for five years even though the child is dead.

Ms. Copps: No.

Family Allowances Act, 1973

Mr. Taylor: After making such a payment for five years the Liberals would come to the House and accuse the Minister of sending cheques to the parents of a deceased boy or girl. I believe the public is becoming well aware of the Opposition's tricks to foil and destroy good legislation. Let me make another point concerning the Liberal amendment. According to their amendment, the Minister would have to continue payments for as long as five years. However, the purpose of family allowance is to enable parents to look after their children. Therefore, what becomes of those payments if the child is not with the family?

The presumption of death does not have any effect on whether the child is dead or alive. It simply sets out a mechanism in the Act to deal with certain cases. The child is still presumed alive according to all other Acts so that the rights of the child are not affected in other ways. We have assured the parents that we will search for the child and, if found, any payments owing will be made.

The Hon. Member said that 120,000 people signed that petition. How many would have signed if they were aware of these facts? The statement by some Members that we will stop searching for children when they are presumed dead is nonsense. You are indicating that I am almost out of time, Mr. Speaker. I have many other points I would like to bring to the attention of Canadians so that I could correct some of the innuendoes contained in the speeches of the New Democrat and Liberal opposition in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The question is on Motion No. 4 standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Ms. Mitchell). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Standing Order 81(11), the recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred.