

other person has the care and control of that child, we can substitute that particular person for the other and make the cheques payable to that person.

The hon. member asked about the public trustee. It may well be that if there is an order of a court placing the care and control of the child in the hands of the public trustee, which I do not think is usual, the regulations would empower us to make payments to the public trustee. This is one of the reasons why I am arguing fairly strongly for the present wording and for the power to enable us to do this by regulation. In light of all the variations in circumstances that are possible, I submit that if we were to insert such provisions in the legislation there would be an inevitable tendency for a high degree of rigidity to result which otherwise would be unnecessary and which could cause hardship in some cases.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, in my comments I should like to return to an old argument I have raised in the House time after time. I accept the minister's view that a large degree of flexibility in the regulations is needed. However, I think the government has been lax in not taking the action it ought to have taken to establish the scrutiny committee under the Statutory Instruments Act. That committee could have dealt with this issue.

I agree that the power to act by regulation and by Order in Council is a very essential and flexible power which in most circumstances ought to be granted. However, the granting of such powers to this government ought to be approached with grave caution in view of the government's failure to do what it said it would do. The former Minister of Justice over and over again said that he would establish the committee to which I have referred and make it work. The committee is there, of course, but it is not working. It has not been called together. I do not blame the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) for this. I understand his position, but I urge him to use his influence with his colleagues to see that this committee comes to life and operates. If the minister were to do that, the argument he has presented in favour of such regulations would be far more acceptable than it is at present.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Motion No. 1 (Mr. Marshall) negatived.

Mr. Speaker: The next motion is No. 2, standing in the name of the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare) moved:

That Bill C-170, an act to provide for the payment of benefits in respect of children, be amended by striking out lines 7 to 10 on page 3 and substituting the following:

- (i) by a department or agency of the government of Canada or of a province that, by order of any court or by the consent of the parents of that person, has the custody and control of that person, or

Family Income Security Plan

Motion No. 2 (Mr. Munro) agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: The next motion is No. 3, standing in the name of the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe.

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe) moved:

That Bill C-170, an act to provide for the payment of benefits in respect of children, be amended by deleting subclause 3(4), lines 1 to 4 on page 4.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this amendment is to ensure that the statute comes into effect as soon as possible and, in conjunction with proposed amendment No. 5, that benefits may be paid back to May 1, 1972. The provision that this amendment proposes to repeal can delay the coming into effect of the act until the government, in its discretion, ceases to pay the present type of family allowance.

The government proposal for a new family income security plan was first made at the beginning of December, 1970, in the white paper on income security for Canadians. Public criticism of several aspects of the bill led to an announcement of changes the following June. On September 3, 1971, Bill C-264 on FISP was tabled in the House of Commons with a promise that the first payments under the new plan would be made in May, 1972. Bill C-264, as we know, died on the order paper.

Bill C-170, a slightly modified version of its predecessor, Bill C-264, was given first reading in the House of Commons on March 15, 1972. This time, no commitment was made for implementation of the plan. During the committee proceedings after second reading of the bill the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) first of all estimated, on May 24, 1972, a lapse of six or seven months before the beginning of the new FISP payments. This would mean implementation of the bill during the October-December 1972 period, assuming the bill was passed in June, 1972. However, by June 1, 1972, the picture had changed. The deputy minister testified before the committee and said, as reported at page 12:5 of the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs:

... since the previous bill was introduced and presented, we have carried out a number of further studies with a number of task forces on the administrative problems and we found that it will take longer than we had originally anticipated.

Actually, the deputy minister reported that the previous estimate of six or seven months had been doubled and that the new FISP cheques would not be out until the summer of 1973, if Bill C-170 were passed by the end of June. The four reasons he gave for the additional delay were, first, the need for eight months of computer time; second, the desire to co-ordinate the filling out of FISP application forms with income tax forms; third, the uncertainty with regard to possible provincial options; and fourth, the preference to have the peak FISP administrative load after the peak load for OAS and GIS has diminished and so to transfer trained staff from the OAS and GIS part to the FISP part of the operation.

None of these arguments offer very convincing reasons for the sudden revision in the time estimate for implementation of the FISP plan. Why did the deputy minister and