

approaches in simulation with family expenditure survey data provided by Statistics Canada.

The report makes absorbing though technical reading. As I mentioned, it is available to the public as are copies of the studies completed by the three economists.

The Department of Justice has also contributed to a committee of two economists, an accountant and a legal anthropologist. That committee produced a report which gave an independent review of the literature and studied the suitability of various economic methods for estimating expenditures on children in Canada.

The results of the work of that group have not been included in the document released by the minister. The only reference to it states, and I quote from page 4 of the report: "The report contains two very different conclusions regarding economic modelling and the best way of measuring the cost of children. This came about because the participants brought to the project two fundamentally different views of how to approach the problem of estimating child expenditures."

The report also mentions that there were time constraints involved. It is clear that the primary reason for exclusion is the fundamentally different views brought to the project by this group. Were this an independent body or an independent inquiry responsible to the House of Commons and not an internal Department of Justice project we and the public would have access to that report. As it stands now, we do not.

It certainly would not cost more money if the report was to the House of Commons rather than the Department of Justice, would it? So as we are not saving money in this case, one might ask if we are going to save any money for example on the studies that the Department of Justice has assumed on behalf of the former Law Reform Commission of Canada.

I leave it to the members of this House to ponder yet again the question of why this government and this department is so eager to do this kind of work in the House as opposed to outside where we can all observe the findings, where we can learn from and engage in informed public discussions.

The members present might be interested to know that this other report, what I will call the fourth report, suggested an entirely different approach to the economic models proposed for examination after the non-econo-

mists on the team questioned the assumptions implicit in them and after they raised some points which got the economists working with them looking at the models under a new light, perhaps a more reality-based light.

The fourth report found that there were many limitations to the existing economic research. It was found that there had been statistically unreliable results from this research. Further, some results showed negative child-rearing costs. In the real world, it is not unusual for a mother to take maternity leave and then work fewer hours in the paid work force. Such a situation results in those economic models showing a negative cost in raising that baby. Perhaps the academics have missed something here.

What we are saying in this report is that while the mother may have earned a set amount of money, originally she made certain cutbacks in her expectations and therefore spent less money when the baby came along. By doing that, these studies have shown that in fact she is spending less money even though she has a child which is supposedly costing her more.

At the very least it would be most useful for us to have all of the information available to have a complete picture of what we are dealing with including all of the warts, false assumptions and mistakes that have been made if we are truly to have what the minister has identified as informed public discussion of child support guidelines.

In conclusion, I would like to say we are pleased to have the opportunity to work on these amendments to the Divorce Act and the Family Order and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act.

We want to encourage the minister to continue to move in a direction that will address child support guidelines. We also want to encourage the government to examine closely the taxation of child support payments, a situation which, to quote from one man who said to Mary McIver of *Homemaker's*: "Because my wife and I are living apart I get rewarded with a tax break and she gets screwed".

• (1940)

In a recent Statistics Canada study, it was shown that the per capita income of families receiving support payments was 41 per cent of the per capita income of the support payer's family. This issue needs to be looked at soon.