

hardship resulting from temporary loss of earnings.

I am delighted when I read the report of the interview of the minister who says that they intend to raise the unemployment benefits and extend the time of benefits as well as the coverage, and to transfer the system to a more broadly based income maintenance program. Those are not my words. Those are the words of the minister, and they really raise one's hopes. This could mean that there will be a new tax on the rich for the benefit of the poor. I have already told you there has been no redistribution since 1952; maybe we will now have some sort of redistribution.

Here we are with a plague, the plague of poverty, and we have all got to get into it and fight it until we win. We have to establish an income floor for the working poor. It has to be done, and you can see what it can lead to. I think it will lead to a self-funding scheme which will not cost the Government a penny except for administration. The Government of tomorrow may not only take responsibility for income maintenance, but also for employment. There are a great many possibilities and once the Government enters this field they will not want to build up a group of lotus-eaters, but will make it their business to find employment for these people or give them income maintenance.

I am nearly to the end. I do want to say just this: administration is the great problem bothering us. What we need is a scheme that is an easily understood administrative system that must be national in scope, with maintenance from the federal Government and services from the provincial governments. At least that is our thinking at the present time. I know there are people around the country playing with figures, telling you how much they surmise the guaranteed income will cost. I can add too and I can subtract; that is not beyond me. They do not know how these things are done. Sure, if you put it into effect tomorrow it would cost those fantastic sums of money, but that is not the way we do things in this country, as I have indicated. We who were in politics longer ago than yesterday know that we have our priorities.

I said a few minutes ago that there are three disadvantaged groups who are totally in the hands of the Canadian people. For the moment that might have a priority, and it is not so expensive. In so far as the working poor are concerned—and these present the deep problem—there are ways to help them without putting a heavy cost on the Treasury.

[Hon. Mr. Croll.]

Canada is one of the few countries in the world which has the means to tackle poverty, its slums and its ignorance. I am satisfied that Canada has the will. Welfarism started in this country in 1929. It is now 1969. For forty years we have been wandering in the wilderness of welfarism. I think I can see the Promised Land.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is moved by honourable Senator Croll, seconded by honourable Senator Roebuck, that a special committee of the Senate be set up ...

Some Hon. Senators: Dispense.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Mr. Grosart: On a point of order. I ask that the motion be read, that its reading not be dispensed with.

The Hon. the Speaker: When I ask if I may dispense with reading, it means that I am asking if there is unanimous consent. If there is not consent, I will read the motion. It is:

That a Special Committee of the Senate be appointed to investigate and report upon all aspects of poverty in Canada, whether urban, rural, regional or otherwise, to define and elucidate the problem of poverty in Canada, and to recommend appropriate action to ensure the establishment of a more effective structure of remedial measures;

That the Committee have power to engage the services of such counsel, staff and technical advisors as may be necessary for the purpose of the inquiry;

That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to examine witnesses, and to report from time to time;

That the Committee be authorized to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the Committee, to sit during sittings and adjournments of the Senate, and to adjourn from place to place;

That the evidence taken on the subject during the preceding session be referred to the Committee; and

That the Committee be composed of the Honourable Senators Belisle, Carter, Cook, Croll, Eudes, Everett, Fergusson,