

this time. I refer to the order which appeared on last Wednesday's Order Paper as Order No. 7 and which read as follows:

Resuming the debate on the consideration of the Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science entitled: "Child at Risk"—

At that time the order stood in the name of Senator Croll, who had thought that he would speak tomorrow. However, I understand that he is ready to speak this evening. I therefore ask that that order be brought forward.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I am sure that we would be delighted to hear Senator Croll now.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AS CAUSES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

REPORT OF HEALTH, WELFARE AND SCIENCE COMMITTEE—
DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Wednesday, February 10, the debate on the consideration of the report of the Standing Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science entitled: "Child at Risk", tabled in the Senate on 16th October, 1980.

Hon. David A. Croll: Honourable senators, I was preparing myself to speak on the report entitled "Child at Risk", but on getting into it I realized that there was more to it than I had supposed. I have now divided my speech into three sections: "Child at Risk"; poverty as related to it—and, particularly, how to bring people at least up to the poverty line; and then a further idea I developed, that despite the fact that the government says it does not have any money, it does, in fact, have the money to do what needs to be done—which I believe will interest honourable senators more than a little.

Let me begin by saying that the committee's report entitled "Child at Risk", a study on early childhood experiences as causes of criminal behaviour, conducted by the Standing Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science, has made a valuable contribution to a little understood and neglected field.

My first words of congratulation must go to Senator McGrand for his interest, assistance and work on the committee, and for his lifelong concern for his fellow man. Congratulations are also due to Senator Bonnell who was most helpful and did a great deal of work in connection with that study.

The committee's report has opened the door, but it has just touched the perimeter of the problem in the hope that concerned citizens will recognize its scope and the need. We recognize the cost of maintaining people in correctional institutions. We know that a pattern of crime begins early in life. We know what effect poverty has on a woman and on a child.

The alarming increase in juvenile delinquency has been placed on record, as have the enlightened efforts to reform

offenders and to re-integrate them into society rather than merely to punish them.

The 28 recommendations are thorough and far-reaching. They tell the story. There are recommendations for changes in the Family Allowance, the Unemployment Insurance Act, the National Housing Act, and the Criminal Code. They all have to do with poor people.

I hope that we shall do more than just receive the report and allow it to gather dust on the shelves of the archives or libraries. There is ample opportunity for positive action. Since it originated in the Senate, it is our duty to follow it up, just as we have followed up our recommendations on social measures and in many other committee reports.

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Having completed the report, we now have enough experience to follow it up with action and to involve the government in examining the recommendations. In that respect, Senator Godfrey's suggestion, that we should bring the departmental people before us six months after the presentation of our report and ask them what they have done, if anything, about the report, would at least put them on notice so that they would do some work on it. We would simply write to the departmental people involved, ask them to appear before the committee at a mutually agreeable time, and then listen to what they have to say.

However, more than this is necessary. For us to get serious consideration in the House of Commons, it is necessary for one of our friends over there to place a resolution in the same terms on their Order Paper. When they go into their song and dance and decide what will be spoken to, it is quite possible that the resolution will be debated. To get any results at all it is essential that the matter be debated in the other place.

That brings me to one of the points I wish to make on the report, that in reading it one notices that poverty comes up over and over again. It seems that we have difficulty defining poverty. The poverty line has been developed as the main methodology for assessing income insufficiency. It suffers, however, from several limitations. First, it relies exclusively on money income. Resources such as net assets, home ownership, and health and education benefits are not taken into account. The poverty line presents a static view of income. It cannot tell us from year to year whether the same people have remained poor. The data used to compute the poverty line do not include Indians on reserves, people in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, or persons in institutions.

There are two principal approaches to establishing the poverty line: there is the absolute approach; and there is the relative approach. The absolute poverty line is established by determining the amount of money necessary for the minimum food, clothing and shelter requirements. The Statistics Canada low-income cut-off line is an example of the absolute approach. The Statistics Canada line is used by the federal government, though it is not an official poverty line. This line establishes a low-income cut-off where family units spend 62 per cent or more of their income on the basic necessities of