

myself and I get these things confused—precisely what difference there is between a program based on need and one based on a means test?

Mr. Haidasz: I am unable to explain that to the hon. member. I know, however, that negotiations are being carried on between officials of the welfare departments of the provincial governments and officials of the federal government. We are awaiting the outcome of these negotiations and the special federal-provincial conference on welfare that is to take place at the end of this month. I am sure every one of us will be able to learn at that time, I hope, what the difference is.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my first words in this house must be words of appreciation and thanks to the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) and to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) who paid such moving tributes the other day to the memory of two men, former members of this house, with whom I was so long and intimately associated. I thank them for these tributes to two men who gave of their best in the service of this house and the country.

• (3:30 p.m.)

I speak as a member of the group in this corner who believe that the proper job of government is to help a community of people do for themselves collectively what they need to have done and what they are not able to do for themselves as individuals. In case anyone should think that is a radical definition of the job of government, let me hasten to assure them it is one given by Abraham Lincoln about 100 years ago. The only thing is that it was rather farsighted then and we have not caught up with it just yet. We are beginning to realize its necessity but we are not there just yet.

From this angle, in the light of this definition, I am afraid that the Speech from the Throne, the government's projected legislative program for this session, leaves a great deal to be desired. It is full of a number of good things. It is full of bits and pieces for building various sectors of the economy but where it seems to me to be lacking is in the end for which the economy is to be built. I know it is very desirable and necessary to build our economy, but why are we trying to build it?

Some of us feel that the purpose of building the economy is to develop the people of a country, to see we have the conditions under which people, individuals, can develop to

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their full capacities in the surroundings where their development will be best promoted, as has been said by that American sociologist, Lewis Mumford, who puts it very much better than I can:

The final test of an economic system . . . is not the tons of iron, the tanks of oil or the miles of textiles that it produces; the final test lies in its ultimate products . . . the sort of men and women it nurtures, and the order and beauty and sanity of their communities.

Seen from this angle the Speech from the Throne is woefully inadequate. There is no attempt to make a survey of the Canadian people as a whole and to see how we are getting on toward providing a rounded program for the development of the Canadian people as a whole. I do not equate the Canadian people with the Canadian economy. The two things are not necessarily connected in that the welfare of one does not always automatically bring about the welfare of the other. The Speech from the Throne makes this statement:

Our country is enjoying an unprecedented period of prosperity and growth.

That is indeed true of the economy and of the condition of some of the people in the economy, but there is no attempt made in the Throne Speech to find, in any far-reaching way, the weak spots so far as the people are concerned and to provide any far-reaching measures for correcting these weak spots. Indeed, until I heard the speech of the hon. member who spoke just before me I felt there had been no reference made to the sector of the people with which I am most concerned this afternoon.

I wish this afternoon to refer to other sections, sections of the people of this country that live in poverty and insecurity, and I do so not because those are the only sections of people that live in my constituency or in Canada as a whole. I do so for two reasons. First of all, they are people who very badly need spokesmen, many spokesmen, and in the second place I believe that the conditions of poverty and insecurity which we have in this country will spread like a cancer to other sectors of the community unless we take very definite and far-reaching measures to remove these conditions of poverty and insecurity now.

There are no facts lacking to document poverty in Canada. Facts and surveys are coming to light on every hand, and I shall remind hon. member of just a few of the more recent surveys.