

*Social and Economic Security*

70 per cent standard established by the Economic Council of Canada.

On the other hand, the Montreal Diet Dispensary established at \$3,990 the cost of meeting certain minimum basic needs for a family of two adults and two children. This amount is only enough to keep a family from starving altogether. We can add another \$2,000 if all minimum basic needs are to be met, which sets the poverty—or deprivation—level at approximately \$6,000.

This amount only allows a family to make both ends meet, without enabling them to make any plans or to meet urgent needs such as illness, and so on.

Now, in Montreal 33.1 per cent of families earn less than \$6,000 a year.

Which means, to put it bluntly, that one third of Montreal's population lives in a state of poverty.

These 33.1 per cent of poor people are divided into several categories. There are poor people, poorer people and very poor people. The "poorer people" would include, for example, the bachelor earning \$40 or \$50 a week or the family man earning \$70 or \$75 a week.

In my riding, there are family heads who work every day for a weekly salary of \$65 to \$70. This means that these families are deprived of the bare necessities and that they live in dire poverty.

I proceed with my quotation from *Le Petit Journal*:

The "very poor people" are those whose sole income consists of social welfare benefits. In Montreal and within the municipal boundaries only, there are 85,000 persons who can be labelled "very poor"; they include 40,000 ongoing cases in the social welfare files to which should be added 45,000 dependants.

Such a situation, Mr. Speaker, indicates beyond any shadow of doubt that there are among us typical instances of extreme poverty and it is about time that the government should set their minds on correcting this state of affairs. This situation actually exists and I think that it is most important that federal members who are sitting comfortably in the House, well-heated and well-paid, should become aware of the situation.

If I may be allowed to do so, I would call the attention of the House on an article published by *Le Petit Journal* and which, in a nutshell, would be summed up thus: the geographical distribution of poverty requires that one should know which region of Canada is involved.

In concluding my remarks, I hope that I have convinced hon. members that poverty does exist and that it is urgent to solve the problem.

The Social Credit Party of Canada has a solution to offer which I think would be ideal in helping to solve this problem. In my opinion, this solution is precisely that mentioned by my leader, the hon. member for Témiscamingue, and namely to guarantee to each and every Canadian, whatever his situation, provided his income is under \$15,000, a guaranteed income, depending on his personal commitments and the size of his family.

**Mr. Rosaire Gendron (Témiscouata):** Mr. Speaker, first I wish to commend my colleagues from the Social Credit party for presenting this motion to the House and drawing the attention of hon. members to the serious problem of poverty and want.

However, I think this problem should be considered under two aspects, namely that of local poverty and that of unequal opportunities in certain areas and for certain individuals.

[Mr. Beaudoin.]

Not enough can ever be said about the need to adopt measures that will correct these social inequalities. We agree on the diagnostic stated by the movers of this motion even though we sometimes find it difficult to agree on the required remedies.

It would be dangerous to increase the frustration of the poor by deceiving them with inefficient remedies. There is a tendency sometimes to propose quite simplistic solutions which do not truly take into account the complexity of the problem. I mean, if solving this problem were only a question of financial measures and advances from the Bank of Canada it would be really too simple and we could very easily cure our local problems.

• (4:40 p.m.)

We could then have export products for the underdeveloped countries which would be happy to accept our proposal to solve their problems. But everyone can see that it is much more complicated and even those who put a strong emphasis on those problems are often opposed to taxation.

One must agree that if we are to declare war on poverty the participation of each and everyone is necessary, and so are sacrifices. To say that we have found money to wage war and that we have not found any to solve the urgent problem of poverty would be simplifying the problem. It is a demagogic way of bringing about a solution.

One must remember that during the war the national debt was multiplied by five and the income tax increased in the same proportion. If the Canadian population wanted to go through the same sacrifices we might have part of the solution to those problems. But it is obvious that the emergency of the times of war, just like fire burning a property, calls for solutions that are not in time of peace acceptable to the population as a whole.

Does that mean that the program is not urgent, that we will not have to pay the price and make sacrifices to find the right solution? We must really want it but it must also be recognized that the problem is very complicated and very difficult to solve and that there will be no magic formula. It will be the end result of the co-operation of the entire Canadian population.

To level out regional disparities it will be necessary to give a new dimension to the problem, and that is participation. I believe we are going the wrong way sometimes about that problem because we do not give enough consideration to the solutions brought forward by people who are the first concerned in that matter, namely the poor people of the underdeveloped areas. We try too hard perhaps to design solutions conceived only at the higher government levels instead of pooling the desires of the people concerned and the means, for the poor people, of considering a solution to their own problems as well as the solutions advocated by high authorities.

I am thinking here of the problems faced by the Eastern Quebec Planning Bureau as to the pilot area, and let us not forget that only \$70 million out of the \$271 million voted for the five-year plan were spent while so many needs existed.

The big problem that was faced there was that it was difficult to secure the local participation and it consisted also perhaps in the special way technocrats and senior