

*Family Allowances*

The current birthrate, especially in Quebec, is one of the lowest for the entire western world—

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** May we have order, please. I again bring to the attention of hon. members that when we call orders of the day it is extremely difficult to proceed with the business before us when members carry on discussions, interviews and consultations, sometimes standing in the House which is highly irregular. I suggest to hon. members that these discussions take place sotto-voce or behind the curtains.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Rimouski (Mr. Allard) is trying to make himself heard and perhaps we should have the courtesy of listening to him.

**Mr. Allard:** Mr. Speaker, I am most grateful for your intervention because it is quite difficult to make a speech when there is so much noise in the House. I was saying that the current birth rate, especially in Quebec, is one of the lowest in the western world while a few years back it was among the highest.

Faced with all those facts we should respond as soon as possible. This is why we suggest that, to be at the level of the present situation, family allowances should be depending on the number of dependents and increased to \$30, \$60 and \$90 a month.

And yet all hope is not lost. This progressive society should do its utmost to increase its population through generous incentives which would encourage married couples to bring their contribution to the demographic needs of a comparatively young country so as to give it the population required to meet its objectives.

We are all aware that the birth rate is intimately connected to the economic conditions. Let us take the necessary steps to settle this thorny problem and ensure an adequate well-being to all families.

Since the aim of the production of consumer goods and services is to meet peoples' needs, work and capital are the means to reach this goal. Profit is an incentive aimed at facilitating the work of grown-ups but it should not take too much importance in the life of our society.

This is the origin of all our economic troubles. Although good in itself, profit becomes bad and even harmful when reaching excessive proportions. In our affluent country the richest are becoming richer and richer and the number of poor is increasing daily. This economic unbalance is prejudicial to children, students, the unemployed and the small wage-earners who do not have sufficient income to enjoy our resources comparatively to the prices asked. What makes it so difficult to adjust family allowances to the cost of living and the rise of the gross national product is precisely the fact that we never consider our economy as the activities of the people as a whole, in order to meet their needs. For many years, the members of the Social Credit have been advocating the payment of a stable and guaranteed salary to each Canadian. I am sure that such a step would cope with most social problems of our country.

I support the bill although I would have liked the government to do much more for the welfare of young Canadians.

[Mr. Allard.]

[English]

**Mr. J.-J. Blais (Nipissing):** Mr. Speaker, it is with considerable pride that I participate in this debate. I wish to point out that I have had occasion to participate in debates on other legislation presented to this House, all of which has been most progressive indeed. There has been a considerable amount of discussion on this bill. The position adopted by the Progressive Conservatives in this instance ought to be given very little attention, primarily because it is very difficult to ascertain exactly the position of that party although it is easy to determine what the conservative position might be.

We have heard the contribution of the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie). I will have more to say about that later. We also heard the contribution of the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall). I commend that hon. member on a very excellent contribution. It was one which might well be classified as being a liberal contribution. I also wish to refer to the contribution of the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner). It appears that his association with the Liberal party in the past has put him in good standing with regard to this bill.

From reading the contribution made by the hon. member for Hillsborough which appears at page 6871 of *Hansard* for October 15, it appears that the position of the Conservative Party is indeed expressed in his words as follows:

● (1530)

However, I am a little unhappy—indeed, I am profoundly disturbed—that at a time when the country faces an economic crisis of pressing gravity the response of the government time after time is to throw out another welfare measure. In the emergency session in August and September it was the minister who came through with measures. There was a little change to old age security, an alteration here, another there—

It appears that the legislation introduced by the government in respect of family allowances is considered by the hon. member for Hillsborough, the lead-off speaker for his party, to be a welfare measure. It is little wonder that there is no Tory record of social legislation in this country. It is distinctly repugnant to them to adopt anything which smells of social security because they define it as welfare and use that term as meaning a hand-out.

We saw this attitude recently in the Ontario edition of the Conservative Party. They attached very little importance to the bill presently being debated. It has been noted that they might consider reducing the amount of the welfare payments which would otherwise be payable to welfare recipients in proportion to the amount by which their revenue might be increased as a result of this particular legislation. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is this penury of social legislation coming from the Conservative Party. Someone might ask: Why, then, are they supporting this particular piece of legislation? The reason, I suggest, is that this legislation is demanded by the Canadian people and is an expression of the Canadian wish. The expression of that wish has been received by a party which has been accustomed to presenting social legislation of this type and calibre.

When I turn now to the NDP my heart is glad. I am encouraged by the fact that the NDP have chosen to