

Family Allowances

were no inhibitions otherwise, I decided not to pursue that course. I might have known that was the right decision, because we do not have the \$20 as yet and I would have been misled by the lure, shall we say.

Let me say, as well, that we are happy to have reached this stage. As the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) has said, the size of the bill is not what counts. Neither does the length of speeches count. Because we have not spoken very much this afternoon or at any great length is not an indication that we are not interested in this bill as much as anyone else. We generally feel, in our party, that once we have spoken on a matter, that is it and we do not have to continue repeating.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Macquarrie: I should like to be helpful to the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Knight), the whip of the NDP, in respect of his reference to the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens). I do not know what his party caucus is like, as I have never attended, but in our caucus we have no gags or guillotines. I might also suggest to him that he might be very well advised to listen to the hon. member for York-Simcoe who has much understanding of the great economic problems facing this country, problems which have not been dealt with adequately by certain parties here.

● (1700)

I am glad that we are passing this bill without amendment because I agree with the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre that it is a well drafted bill. One of my professors used to say there is a great difference between good English and legal English, and there is an even greater difference between good English and bureaucratic English. I am glad that from a bureau sometimes a bill in good English can emerge. We are not pursuing the debate on third reading. However, I wish to say with candour and without rancour—I have not brought rancour into my discussions in this House in these many years—that if this bill achieves speedy passage, it is not because of the pilotage of the minister but despite it. He opened discussion on this bill with an extremely partisan prelude. It was unwelcome, it was unprovoked, it was unnecessary, it was unhelpful, it was unworthy, and it was also undocumented. I heard it. That is even worse. I was here.

I want the minister to know that when we give a commitment to support a measure, we do so, and that when we want to oppose it, we will jolly well oppose it. I do not take kindly to a suggestion, when we make a commitment on the part of our party, as the minister implied in his smart aleck manner to the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander), that we then change our mind. We indicated our intention. We said we were supporting the bill. If the government ever again is able to produce something with some grain of good in it, we will take the same attitude. It is my hope—I do not wish him personal ill—that he will not be around all that long and that in the days to come we will have better bills and better ministers.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I simply say that we welcome the opportunity to give this bill third reading. We look forward to the

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

House being given the opportunity to proceed with Bill C-211 in plenty of time so that its provision for a family allowance of \$20 a month can be in effect in January.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I are very pleased to see that we are now at the final stage of the legislation.

I would like merely to comment on some observations that we heard and I think that if there is unanimity among federal members, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) will be in a better position to influence his provincial counterparts so that the welfare rates now in force in the provinces—and, as far as I am concerned, in the province of Quebec—will not be reduced to destroy the efforts made at the national level to enable families, particularly those with low or middle incomes, to earn more. I hope that the media will play their part before the consultations between the minister and his provincial counterparts; they should know in advance the position adopted in this House and that should make it easier for the minister.

In fact, as pointed out by the hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles de la Madeleine (Mr. Béchard) a moment ago, that happened in the past and resulted in frictions, jealousy and disagreement which were detrimental to our families.

Because it is an important matter and in view of the goodwill of all parties, I hope the families will indeed get the entire allowance and that there will not be any fishing excursions in the meantime so that they could say: Well we will give the increase within a month, after having reduced it. This should not happen, in view of the emergency of the situation, and I do hope that, as soon as the bill will come into force, we will not read in the press that the allowances have decreased in this or that province.

[*English*]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I shall not embark at this stage on an argument or a sermon.

An hon. Member: Just apologize.

Mr. Lalonde: Any citizens who bother to read *Hansard*, are capable of making up their own minds. I wish to thank all members for their support of and contribution to this bill. I am sure Canadian citizens will be grateful to parliament for having given them this measure and for whatever help it will bring to so many Canadian families in the difficult times they are going through. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Perhaps I should draw to the attention of the House that there are other speakers who would be entitled to take part in the third reading debate if they felt they should. I gather there are none.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.