

making family allowance payments taxable even though the payments are increased.

Obviously, family allowance benefits will be reduced as family incomes increase. Following the April working paper on social security, federal-provincial conferences have been held. The most recent one was held in the first two weeks of this month. It is interesting to note that all the provinces agree on the broad principle that the minister presented. This means that many different governments agree, not only Liberal but NDP and Conservative as well. It was particularly acceptable to one or two provinces because the federal government has allowed for the differences in provinces and for planned flexibility. Ottawa has insisted mainly on the minimum allowance for every child being \$12 and on the average payment for every child being \$20. It is interesting to note that Ontario would pay the greatest amount to the fund, and Quebec would be next in line because of their large population. It is estimated that in 1972 the cost was over \$600 million. The cost will be tripled in 1974, but because of increasing taxes there will be a reduction of \$400,000 in the cost.

• (2150)

One should comment on the situation in Quebec. Many provinces criticized the family allowance program as a means of subsidizing Quebec's large families. This is completely untrue. The birthrate in all provinces has declined from 26.1 to 16.8 per 1,000, and Quebec's rate is now 14.8 per thousand; it has the second lowest birthrate in Canada. This, in turn, is due to increased government and private interest in family counselling and the growing determination of parents to limit families so that their children may enjoy a decent standard of living.

One might mention the fact that there is no correlation between the payment of family allowances and the birthrate. In the United States they pay no family allowances and their birthrate has declined, the same as that of Canada and the other 14 industrial nations who do pay family allowances. It is interesting to note that 40 to 50 countries, including those behind the iron curtain, pay some form of family allowance. Sometimes they are what we have in Canada, that is, universal payments, but in some countries they are oriented to an employment plan.

To summarize, all the provinces of Canada have social security programs which are correlated with the federal program. The recent federal-provincial conference has shown unanimous approval for the proposal of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde). The new family allowance plan will improve the lot of over 350,000 families or, in other words, it will materially assist seven million young Canadians. It will serve to spread prosperity downwards to the poverty segment and will even up the differences in economically depressed areas of Canada. I find it quite evident that this new legislation is non-partisan, is enlightened and should continue to keep Canada's social security program near the forefront of the nations of the world.

In closing, I should like to say that the minister has shown that we can afford the plan. In addition, he emphasizes that we cannot refuse ordinary humane treatment to those families which cannot achieve a decent standard of living. The universality feature will help to remove any

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trace of stigma to a poor but proud family. Thank God we have many poor and proud families who are very worthwhile people in Canada. In my opinion, the minister should be congratulated on his vision, and I would ask all members of this House to support the legislation which he has so ably presented in Bill C-211.

**Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have been given the opportunity to speak on Bill C-211 which finally, after three years of deliberation, has come about. Hopefully, by January 1, 1974, Canadians in our great nation will finally get the advantage of the social security program which they certainly deserve.

I want to relate my few words to the problem of poverty in our country, Mr. Speaker. If I can be forgiven for becoming a little insular in referring to the province of Newfoundland, I think it is high time the five million or so poverty-stricken Canadians who exist in this great nation—a good proportion of those unfortunately reside in my province—were given the advantage of the increases in family allowances on January 1 to an average of \$20 a month.

The Chairman of our caucus committee on family allowances and social security, the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie), indicated in his adequate and most inimitable manner the feelings of our party regarding Bill C-211. While I did not have the pleasure of listening to all of his speech, I did hear him say it was the duty and the wish of our party and our leader to support this bill, and that without further delay it should be referred to committee so that we can deal in detail with many of the inequities which still exist and the bill can come back for further passage and we can assure the mothers of our country who are living in poverty-stricken conditions that they will be granted the increases they certainly deserve.

I wonder if I can prevail upon you to call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

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### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Baker:** Mr. Speaker, before we get into the adjournment matters which are now coming forward, I see the government House leader coming in and I wonder if he could tell us whether it is the intention of the government to proceed tomorrow with the matter that is presently before the House.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will continue with this item tomorrow.

**Mr. Baker:** In the event that this item is finished some time during tomorrow for the purpose of second reading, could the government House leader inform us what item of business will be called next?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that I would meet with the other House leaders tomorrow and review what item it might be appropriate to call in any interim period before we begin the capital punishment debate.