

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

hon. member's party is now looking at modern ideas in this field, as the Liberals have been doing for many years.

I can recall many years ago one of my friends and colleagues elaborating a complete system involving a guaranteed minimum income for all Canadians from the time they enter the labour force until they die, combined with a related tax structure—the most ingenious and on the whole, I think, the best system of its kind I have ever seen. Needless to say, it was very revolutionary.

May I also point out to the hon. member that the idea of a negative income tax was in fact incorporated into the family allowance legislation introduced by a Liberal government quite some time ago. The family allowance payments are really payments in respect of their children to those who do not have a taxable income. After all, a provision along the lines of a family allowance had been in the Income Tax Act for many years before the family allowance was introduced. The family allowance is really an extension of a payment with respect to children going below taxable income levels. It was the first implementation of this principle of a negative income tax by the Liberal government many years ago. At first family allowances were a substitution for deductions in relation to children. Later it got a little fuzzy in administration but the fundamental principle is still there—that you pay a family allowance to those who do not have income tax liability as well as to those who do.

I do not intend to predict what will be incorporated in the budget, which I hope to bring down reasonably soon. But I should like to assure the hon. member that I personally, and, I think the present Liberal government, believe that all public policy in Canada should be directed toward providing all citizens, regardless of their means of livelihood, or their condition, with an adequate income. I have some doubt whether the negative income tax method of approaching this question is the best in all the circumstances, but as the hon. member has said himself there are many other things which could be done, all directed to that same goal.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS—REPORTED STATEMENT RESPECTING RETIREMENT AGE IN INDUSTRY**

**Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West):** As one of those old-fashioned New Democratic Party members I was shocked and surprised

[Mr. Sharp.]

when I received correspondence from trade unionists in Kootenay East who said they had listened to a radio report of an interview given by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport with respect to the age up to which a person could work. They were disturbed about this, as I was, and they asked me to put a question in the house to the minister in order to find out whether this statement represented government policy.

On that account I asked the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration the following question on February 24, as recorded at page 1705 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. My question is based on a radio report given to the people of Kootenay East by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. I am informed that the Parliamentary Secretary advocated that persons working in industry should have the opportunity to continue working until age 67. Would the minister inform the house if this represents government policy?

It was at that point that Your Honour intimated this would be a better subject at this hour.

I was really surprised at this report because the Parliamentary Secretary has had long experience as a trade union member and trade union official. I am sure he knows of the efforts of organized labour to reduce the retirement age from 65 to 60, in order to meet the just aspirations of working people generally, and under present circumstances to do something to meet changing conditions due to the rapid development of automation, and so on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I address this question to the minister. I am very pleased to see that the Parliamentary Secretary is in his seat this evening, and no doubt he will give us an explanation of this rather strange report to the people of Kootenay East.

**Mr. J. A. Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, since the designate minister of manpower found it impossible to be in the house at this late hour he has asked me to reply to the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge). Essentially, of course, I was speaking as a private member in an interview on a regular broadcast to the people of Kootenay East. Sometimes I have the pleasure and honour of addressing the people of West Kootenay. I believe the interview will also be carried into West Kootenay, and I make no apology for it.