

Family Allowances

and has said that this country should do more toward feeding the underprivileged people in other parts of the world. Many people say that if we are going to save the world from the dangers of communism that is something that should be done. But I suggest to you that if we want to feed hungry people we do not have to go outside of our Canada to find them. Our first duty as representatives of the people of Canada is to see that the national income is so distributed that all will have bread before some have bread and cake as well. That is what we are suggesting when we suggest that family allowances should be raised.

I have in my hand a bulletin prepared by the Vancouver housing association, which is a recognized organization in Vancouver coming under the red feather scheme. This bulletin contains a brief which was prepared for the Minister of Public Works in regard to housing. The association had a study made of housing conditions among social assistance families. Those were not old age pensioners; they were fathers and mothers, in most cases mothers, with growing children. The study was made by a man by the name of W. A. Wilson, and I should like to read some extracts from the study he made which appear in this brief. The first is as follows:

A family dependent on assistance has only about a 50-50 chance of finding shelter which will not jeopardize its physical and emotional well-being.

What does that mean? It means that in Vancouver, the city which the hon. gentleman and myself represent, families with children on social assistance are forced to give up proper food and clothing and other things that the ordinary child should expect in order to be able to obtain adequate shelter. Family allowances are one way of adding to the income of those children. The next extract is as follows:

It is a decidedly bleak outlook for the family attempting to find adequate shelter within the rental grant. A family without outside help is literally torn between two choices; paying an exorbitant proportion of their income in attempting to find satisfactory housing, or living in poor housing and having more of their income available for daily necessities.

We talk about juvenile delinquency, but what can be expected of children who are brought up hungry, who are brought up in homes that we would not want to live in? If we are going to combat juvenile delinquency successfully we must begin by improving the lives of young people in the community, not only with better food and clothing but with more of the social amenities and educational and recreational opportunities. Here again increased family allowances would help a great deal.

[Mr. MacInnis.]

I have before me an article which appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* of February 6 which was written for several papers by James S. Duncan, C.M.G., describing his experiences on a recent visit to Russia. Referring to the condition of the Russian people he says:

The small luxuries, the important non-essentials, the minor niceties which lend grace and charm to life are conspicuous by their absence from the Russian scene; and yet the great masses of the people who have no points of comparison with the way other peoples live, apparently accept their drab lives without complaint or unhappiness.

I read all of it because there was no period. I could have read the first half and left it at that, pointing out that Russia is not the only country where the small luxuries, the important non-essentials and the minor niceties which lend grace and charm to life are conspicuous by their absence. I can take my hon. friend to hundreds of homes in the city of Vancouver where these minor niceties which lend grace and charm to life are lacking and where there is a continual daily struggle to provide the essentials of bare living.

Yet my hon. friend says in this house that we cannot afford this. How quickly people become satisfied. Let us first look after the many people in every city, in every town, in every hamlet in this land who are not getting enough food to eat, who are not getting proper clothes to wear, who are not getting the proper educational opportunities. Let us look after these people first, even before we extend our bounty to the more unfortunate people in other parts of the world.

My hon. friend, as I have said, is now one of the satisfied people. He is continually drawing attention to what this government is doing. I remember the day when he did not think this government was doing so much. I have here a quotation from a speech made by someone:

Both parties are absolutely in the grip of financial interests. The real government of Canada is not at Ottawa but in St. James street, and the old parties are as closely linked as the Siamese twins.

An hon. Member: Who was that?

Mr. Studer: What have the socialists got to offer?

Mr. MacInnis: The speaker on that occasion was Captain Elmore Philpott at a meeting in Edmonton. I am just suggesting to this house that there is room for an increase in family allowances, and if some of the increase were to go to people who already have incomes you can take that away as it is taken away now. But we should make our family allowances such that every family in this country can be assured of a family income that will give it at least good physical health and good emotional health, and also allow the parents,