

pension, because in October they will be getting \$341 a month.

So we have the ridiculous situation that those receiving social assistance will receive more money than those who work. Indeed, in make-work projects sponsored by this government, such as LIP, the wages are \$100 a week. This is considered a wage. But the working poor, the people who do some of the jobs in this country that are not all very pleasant, are treated, collectively, darned poorly.

It is a ridiculous situation when welfare payments made by provinces or welfare payments through various statutes and assistance programs sponsored by this government pay those on social assistance more than those who work. It may be said that the minimum wage does not apply to that many people in this country under federal jurisdiction, but it is up to the federal government to show leadership, and it is indeed a sad reflection on the leadership of this country when the province of British Columbia has a minimum wage of \$2.50 an hour, the province of Saskatchewan went up to \$2.50 an hour and the province of Ontario has the matter under active consideration while the province of Quebec is providing for a higher minimum wage. I even see that the Board of Trade in the province of New Brunswick is recommending considerably more than the minimum wage offered in this country. It is high time that we had leadership from the federal government, leadership which the nation requires. We cannot develop a work ethic and give people a sense of belonging to a society when we expect them to bend their efforts and their energies for less than we are prepared to pay people who are not required to work.

What we need in this country is a basic minimum pay for those who are working, and it must be in excess of that received by persons on social assistance. It may be that the basic minimum represents more than the productivity of some people in industry. But what is productivity? Who values productivity? In our society it is valued on a competition basis. If we raise the minimum wage across the

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board, then that is the minimum of competition because they cannot go below it and we destroy the competitive problem. As a result, those who hire labour must pay more than the minimum or at least the minimum.

The whole argument that you are going to go out of business, that you are going to go broke, that somebody will steal your customers, that you cannot make the restaurant go because you have to pay a minimum wage on which a man can live and raise a family, is utter drivel. What we need is leadership. We must have some action from the government. We must have the action that was promised by the minister in April, and promised in September. That action is a statement that something will be done "now".

**Mr. Charles Turner (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, a periodic revision of the minimum wage is provided for under section 35(1.1) of the Canada Labour Code, part III (Labour Standards) which provides as follows:

... the governor in council may from time to time, by order, increase the minimum hourly wage established by subsection (1), but no order made under the subsection is of any force or effect until a date is specified in the order that is at least three months after the date of publication thereof in the *Canada Gazette*.

Thus, the governor in council is empowered under the act to review and increase the minimum wage of workers in industries under federal jurisdiction. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro) has already indicated, in replying to a question from the hon. member for Peel South (Mr. Blenkarn), that a revision of the federal minimum wage, which is now \$1.90 per hour, is under consideration. A revision of the minimum wage must take account of various social and economic factors including, for example, changes in productivity and changes in the consumer price index. All these factors are now under review in the Department of Labour in consideration of possible revision of the existing federal minimum wage of \$1.90.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10:20 p.m.