

Procedure of Legislative Program

We now live in a time when strikes are a daily occurrence, when people find it hard to remain composed in the face of such a rising tide of work stoppages occurring every day and the government introduced a bill to revamp the labour legislation, especially in the industrial relations sector. The government wanted to establish legislative measures and mechanisms to help employers and unions better settle their disputes. They tried to adapt their legislative measures to the needs of the 70's.

I believe we can say that people would like the relations between employers and employees to be stable. That is the aim of the bill and that is why we can say that that measure is part of the continuous efforts of the government to promote free collective bargaining and constructive settlements of disputes.

I should like also to point out all the government's efforts to improve housing in Canada. I believe it can be said that most Canadians are now enjoying decent housing. Unfortunately, a few Canadians do live under unacceptable conditions. That is why the government introduced during this session new programs to supplement the ones already in force, to meet in a better way the housing needs in the various population areas, and also to establish new research mechanisms in the planning and housing fields.

Therefore, housing has priority with the government. They intend to meet the needs not only of young people who wish to have a house of their own at the beginning of their married life but also of retired older people, so that they may have appropriate housing at a moderate cost. The government also intend to meet the needs of middle-income Canadians who work hard in order to provide their family with a small house within their means. It seeks also to satisfy the low income citizens who want something else than public subsidized accommodation where only disadvantaged people live.

In the field of social security, I believe that the government has made extraordinary efforts to fight poverty. Through its proposed bill on family allowances, it wants to implement the principle of selectivity, according to which a fairer redistribution of resources will allow some 2 million low or middle income families to improve substantially their economic situation.

We know that about 75 per cent of Canadian taxpayers earn \$7,500 or less a year. It is those people that the government had in mind when it decided to double—or in some cases to almost treble—family allowances. In order to implement that project without increasing taxes, the government suggests a new vertical attribution of the \$820 millions earmarked for family allowances. This is surely an extremely improved piece of legislation which will enable about 35 per cent of Canadian families to receive \$15 a month per child under 12 and \$20 a month per child between the ages of 12 and 17.

Such legislation, Mr. Speaker, is the basis of a guaranteed income plan in Canada. It is the corner stone of the required policy and, I think, the best legislation of the whole administration of the present government for achieving a just society in Canada.

[Mr. Ouellet.]

Finally I would like to say a few words about the very wise policy of the Canadian government regarding foreign investments.

Such investments have been most important in the development of Canada and no doubt they can remain so. It does not mean that we should turn it down, but we should make sure that, in the long run, foreign investment will be beneficial to our country, and that all these take-overs by foreign companies will help Canada.

I think that the policies introduced in the House during this session are meant to help our country develop as fast as possible, taking into account the needs and aspirations of our people, in order that their vital interests are protected.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to mention again, in closing, that the motion before us today, which states that the government failed to do what it should, is unfounded.

The world we live in is troubled, agitated and in full swing. Problems are plentiful.

It is in the light of that complex and challenging reality that we should consider and appreciate the leadership of this government. It can be said that, in these particularly troubled times, the government of Canada remains alert and active. It has succeeded in dealing with problems, with crises, and is more than ever trying to improve the living conditions of every Canadian.

[English]

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I am excited and happy to be able to say a few words to you and to this hushed, crowded and expectant audience as we finish the discussion on this very important motion. I would not for the world have missed the performance of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen). I enjoyed it immensely. It was one of the finest performances he has put forward in all the years that I have known him.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Macquarrie: I am reminded, though, of what a French marshal said of the charge of the Light Brigade: It was magnificent, but of course it was not war. It was a fine performance, but it was not exactly what I would call a reasoned argument in defence of that which is indefensible. I was impressed that he found it necessary to level so much attack on the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). I was impressed by it, but not at all offended, hurt or worried; because, as Sir John A. Macdonald once said, when you look in the orchard and see sticks and stones under a tree, that is the tree that bears the good fruit. As Sir John A. Macdonald also said, strong winds blow against high hills. It strikes me that the minister, who is a Nova Scotian, has just come to realize that there is an immense threat posed to the Liberal party by the Leader of the Opposition.

• (1730)

It is very fitting that one of the debates zeroing in on the conduct of this House and the country should be moved by the Leader of the Opposition who, in the discharge of his duties, has proven time after time that he, and not the minister of finance—no matter who he may be—has an