

Family Income Security Plan

By that time so many questions will have been asked that he will probably be able to devote his entire speech on third reading to answering valid questions.

Mr. Munro: Okay, never mind.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in self-defence against my friends to the right may I point out that I was pleased to support the first two amendments put forward by the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall), but in this case I ask my friends to the right to take another look at the matter and consider the possibility they have misunderstood the legislation. I realize they have many distinguished legal counsel in that group who are used to looking at the law and are anxious to practise equity.

Mr. Baldwin: And we give free advice.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I think it is on that basis that the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe suggests we make this legislation the same right through the piece, applying the same terms to children as are applied to persons in clause 3(1) of the bill. I would ask him to look again at clause 3(1)(a), which is the standard provision for paying what we have called family allowances to parents across the years. We have not policed it over the last 25 or 27 years. Where there has been wrongdoing it may have been caught, but we have not policed every mother to see how she was spending that money.

Clause 3(1)(b) is a special provision that was put in to cover payments to agencies and institutions that may be caring for children. Incidentally, this was related to a point we discussed on second reading as to whether full payments would be made in such cases, and in the committee the government agreed that all the payments should be made in full. As a matter of fact, the original bill provided for only half payment on a certain basis, but that has been struck out. Now, where children are in institutions, the full amount of the allowance is paid on their behalf.

Surely it has become necessary, since we are going to make payments to institutions looking after children, to provide how those institutions shall use that money. It was also pointed out to us in the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs that this has some relation to the funds these institutions receive under the Canada Assistance Plan.

At any rate, what 3(1)(b) refers to is simply the case of persons or children, if you will, who are in the care of institutions. I think it is appropriate for us to lay down in law that, where institutions receive this money, they shall use it exclusively for the maintenance, care, training, education or advancement of the children. They must not use it to offset some other cost and they must not use it in juggling their accounts under the Canada Assistance Plan. It must be used for the purpose suggested there. I think that to provide a requirement as to what must be done when the money gets into the hands of institutions is all right, but the laying down of a requirement that every mother in Canada who gets this money must meet certain conditions or be subject to policing is going a little too far.

[Mr. Baldwin.]

I find myself uncomfortable in being on the minister's side on this point because he is making a big mistake with the bill as a whole.

Mr. Baldwin: I don't blame you.

Mr. Munro: You have made that speech ten times.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Is that all? The minister says I have made the speech about the whole bill being a mistake ten times. There is no quota on this so there may be more to come. In all seriousness I ask my hon. friends in the Progressive Conservative party not to press this amendment.

Mr. Baldwin: Will the hon. member accept a question? In view of the reactionary speech he has made I should like to ask him this question. I am pinning a lot of my argument on the word "advancement". As a result of many legal decisions and judicial interpretations the word "advancement" has the very widest meaning, and almost any expenditure would fall within it. I do not want to make a speech so I will ask the question.

Some hon. Members: Thank God for that.

Mr. Baldwin: Would the hon. member not agree that almost any type of expenditure in respect of the household, the home or the benefits of the same is and must be covered by the word "advancement"? So there is quite a bit of flexibility there which should answer the objection of my hon. friend. I would ask him if he would not accept that the use of the word "advancement" would get rid of his objection?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): If my hon. friend is saying that the word "advancement" is so broad it has no meaning, then why bother?

Mr. Baldwin: It has a wide meaning, but not too wide.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I think I would rather trust the mothers of Canada than the lawyers in the Tory party.

• (1210)

Mr. W. M. Howe (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take up too much time on this motion, but I was prompted to rise by the use by the minister of the words "common sense" a couple of times in respect of this legislation. Anyone who can look at this legislation and say it has been created by the use of common sense has much to answer for because here we are speaking of an amendment to the bill which seeks to do something that has been done before. The minister says it would involve the necessity of policing the mothers of Canada. This is not a new proposal which is being suggested. It was contained in the old act. I cannot remember a single situation of a mother being harassed because she did not use the family allowance cheque in the proper manner. We all know there are probably cases in which a check should be made or in which some organization should be involved in the directing of the spending of the money so that the children involved will receive the benefit. I say that here is an arrangement for the protec-