

3,000 children that the standard of living which their forefathers had is good enough for them, and that they will be locked into it. Mr. Speaker, I have always been proud of the standard of living which my father was able to give me, but many of us today would not want to go back to the standard of living of our forefathers.

● (1620)

The question might well be asked as to how we are locking these children into an earlier standard of living by exempting them under the provisions of this bill. As an individual, I earn a salary and pay premiums to the Canada Pension Plan. If I become disabled, in theory I have security. If I reach pensionable age, I know I have a nest egg of some kind, although whether it would enable me to enjoy the standard of living to which I am accustomed could be debated. But these children as they grow up will not pay premiums to the Canada Pension Plan, and will not have that nest egg when they are old.

What happens if 20 or 30 years from now they want to leave the Old Order of Mennonites? All their security is represented in the toil they have put into their own sheltered communities. It could be argued that their religion binds them in this way, but it is strange that only 4 per cent of the Mennonites in Canada are applying to be exempted under this bill. What about the other 96 per cent? Are they less religious? Do they not believe in the Mennonite teachings? They believe in those teachings, Mr. Speaker. But as pointed out by the deputy minister before the committee, many of the Mennonites have asked that their missionaries abroad be allowed to make contributions to the Canada Pension Plan so that when they return to spend their retirement years in Canada they will have a nest egg in the Canada Pension Plan. This destroys the argument that contributing to the plan is against their religion.

If it is against their religion, I point out that they do not have to take out a social security number. I well remember the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) stating in this House that nobody would be forced to take out a social security number. If the Mennonites do not take out social security numbers, then their payments become welfare payments and not insurance premiums. Then, the minister would not have to make this severe judgment with regard to their standard of living, whether it be comparable with that of the rest of Canadians or not.

Many have argued that in the communal type of living carried on by Hutterites, the young are able to look after the elderly people and have done so since about 1500. But in Ontario the Mennonites farm and live as individual families, and looking after the elderly may not be so easy. Any piece of legislation that sets aside a certain group of Canadians and says that laws affecting all other Canadians will not be applied to that group should be examined very closely. If we allow 4 per cent of the Canadian Mennonites to be exempted under this bill, will the other 96 per cent come along at a later date and say, "You did this for the Old Order of Mennonites in Ontario, why not do it now for the Old Order of Mennonites in Alberta?" What answer will the Minister of National Health and Welfare give when confronted with that argument?

Canada Pension Plan

Perhaps the minister will stoutly maintain that they did not come forward at the right time, and therefore he will be heartless enough not to listen to them. I see him nodding his head in the affirmative. I would not think he would do that because I have always found him to be a gentle, kindly person, sympathetic to people's problems. If members of the Old Order of Mennonites in Crowfoot constituency approach him later on this question, I hope he will be sympathetic to them.

As I pointed out earlier, the report made under the Communal Properties Act in Alberta sets out the population and the land they farm. The extent of that land has grown since that report was published. It shows these people farm over one million acres in Alberta, and gives their number as 7,000. These are people only of the Hutterite faith. I think this bill is creating a ghetto, and some day a percentage of the young people in that society will regret that they have been excluded from the provisions of the Canada Pension Plan. As a matter of fact, some 20 per cent of the members are leaving that society right now and joining ours.

● (1630)

I should like the bill to be more specific about their standard of living and the Canadian standard of living as well as the "established tenets and teachings". When asked about these tenets and teachings the Minister of National Health and Welfare, who was before the committee, and the deputy minister, could not tell us what was meant. It is generally accepted that they look after the elderly members of the group, but one of the members of the Old Order of Mennonite community admitted that one of the senior gentlemen had applied under the Canada Pension Plan. This would suggest that he, at least, was not satisfied with their standard of living and wanted something better. Many of them do that and many apply for the family allowance. One does not have to reveal his religion on the application forms for these benefits, so neither the Minister of National Health and Welfare nor the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Stanbury) has any way of knowing who is applying. Many of these people do apply and thus are expressing dissatisfaction with the standard of living provided to them within the Order.

As is the case with our own young people, their children do not know what life holds for them and what road they should follow. They have to be guided by their parents, and if we pass this bill without amending that clause we are assisting their parents in holding their children to a narrow, old standard of living comparable to that of their grandfathers. We are not satisfied with that approach for them as we have not been satisfied with it for ourselves, nor for the Indians or Eskimos. We should not set up ghettos and reserves to shelter people.

I should like to read an excerpt from the judgment in a case which went before the tax review board concerning five Hutterian brethren. After quoting at length from the book "Confession of Faith" the judgment reads this way:

That is enough to conclude from the above texts that paying taxes is not against their religious beliefs and practice and neither against the teachings of their philosophers and theologians. Income tax is a necessity to make sure that the citizens of Canada will benefit from it. It is a necessity to make Canada a better