

province to show how widespread is this problem. British Columbia is not the worst off of the provinces, either; there are provinces whose spokesmen could make an even more desperate case.

In British Columbia today the total number of old age security recipients is 200,368. In British Columbia the only way in which to become eligible for a medical card allowing free prescription drugs is to be in receipt of a provincial supplement. Of the 200,368 people who receive old age security payments in the province, only 14,000 are in possession of a medical card entitling them to free prescription drugs. What about all the other people who are on a frozen \$80 basis? They saw the purchasing power of their incomes decline even before the changes of last December.

I have received letters from elderly people who simply cannot afford to buy the drugs they need. I have seen elderly people walk up to counters at which drugs are dispensed in our large stores, inquire about the cost of the drugs they need and then turn sadly away because they could not afford to pay for them.

Answering a question on February 11, the minister of welfare in British Columbia said there are 48,535 people in receipt of social assistance benefits who are classed as unemployed employables. These do not qualify to receive a medical card, and therefore they cannot get prescription drugs free. This is a large figure and behind it stands families who need drugs and who are unable to get them. I do not think Ottawa should be allowed to get from under when the Hall Commission, the Senate Committee on Aging and a great many other inquiries of both a public and private character have made recommendations on lines which would meet this problem.

I have no intention of talking out this resolution. I quarrel with it on only one aspect—the sliding scale. I think the time has come to include these prescriptions under medicare, and in the meantime to give special consideration to the needs of those in receipt of social assistance.

**Mr. Jack Cullen (Sarnia-Lambton):** Mr. Speaker, it appears to me the hon. lady has been preaching to the converted. Her speech might better have been made in the province of British Columbia, which seems to have been failing its people in the implementation of the Canada Assistance Plan.

We were all impressed by the amount of research which the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard) put into the making of his presentation. A lawyer who follows a couple of doctors is somewhat at a disadvantage. All lawyers hold doctors in awe. I was bound to note that both those hon. members seemed to agree that the need existed; the question was only how one could best set about meeting it. I do not think the federal government can be faulted. Notwithstanding the limitations placed upon it, it has been endeavouring to find ways and means of assisting the provinces to do the things they should be doing. I am sorry the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. MacInnis) made her stand as

#### *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*

she did. Her representations might have been better made in Vancouver so that the ears of Premier Bennett would have heard it.

In the course of my research I have found that most social assistance recipients are eligible for medical benefits under programs of the provincial or local governments, and these programs are supported by the federal government under the Canada Assistance Plan operating within the purview of the Constitution. Since 1966 the Canada Assistance Plan has provided for the sharing of health costs with the provinces.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** Order. The hour for the consideration of private members' business having expired, I do now leave the chair. The debate just completed shows once again that hon. members do care.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

#### AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

##### CONSUMER PACKAGING AND LABELLING ACT

###### PROVISIONS RESPECTING PROHIBITIONS, LABELS, STANDARDIZATION, INSPECTION, ETC.

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-180, respecting the packaging, labelling, sale, importation and advertising of prepackaged and certain other products, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

**Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway)** moved motion No. 2:

That Bill C-180, an act respecting the packaging, labelling, sale, importation and advertising of prepackaged and certain other products, be amended by adding immediately after clause 3 the following:

"4. Where the Governor in Council is of the opinion that practices or manner of marking price and quantity of a product on a container are likely to lead to deception of the consumer on the value of the product, on the recommendation of the minister, the Governor in Council may prohibit the sale of such products as may be prescribed unless such products are marked with the unit price in accordance with the regulations." and by renumbering the clauses following accordingly.

She said: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I spoke on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo (Mr. Howe) and pointed out there were certain phases of this legislation we would definitely support. Even though we might be worried about certain aspects, we felt the legislation was good and should be supported. However, there are other phases in regard to which we do not feel the legislation goes far enough to protect the consumer.

It should be borne in mind that the general purpose of this bill is to protect the consumer from deception in