

comparable to this particular pension or so-called allowance? It is not necessary for me to explain to him that the war veterans' allowance was raised to \$105, and I gather it was raised on account of the work of this committee. But the ceiling under the war veterans' allowance, where there is also a means test, is \$1,740. Would my honourable friend not consider that it would have been consistent to have raised the general ceiling to \$1,740, so as to give them the possibility of getting \$25, \$35 or \$45 in addition to their pensions, because many of them are only getting part under this legislation?

**Hon. Mr. Croll:** I certainly share your view that it would be a good thing to do. However, they attempted to meet it, as I understand it, by allowing them a certain amount of their earnings, and in that way there was some differential. We have always made some difference between war veterans' allowances and other allowances for a very good reason, which I support. Now that we have started, I hope this too will be incorporated.

I have always been one of those people who believe that government expenditures on welfare are bound to grow, but to what limits I do not know. In all my years of political life I have found no inexpensive solutions. Certainly it will be cheaper in money and will do less damage than the heritage of poverty we have built up in this country in attempting to deal with it in piecemeal fashion. Our social welfare programs were basically designed to save money rather than to save people, but usually they did neither. However, we have not done too badly. We pioneered family allowances on the North American continent, in fact in the world, and now we introduce the concept of a guaranteed income. When we look about us we see that the United States is still talking about it, and the United Kingdom is talking about it, but here in Canada we are doing something about it. In my view this is a fine inaugural for our centennial years. It is something we will remember.

My good friend Senator Hugessen, if he carries out the decision he has made which will result in his not being with us next time we meet, will have as a remembrance the knowledge that before he left the Senate Chamber he supported a measure embodying a great new imaginative concept that will help many people in need of help.

In this country we have lost sight of something which I consider worthwhile talking

about for a moment. I have been associated with public welfare in this country for 30 years, first as the Mayor of Windsor, at the beginning of the depression, and then as Minister of Welfare in Ontario where one person in seven was on relief. Honourable senators will remember what a problem that was. My interest in this has been intimate and close. From time to time I have admitted to myself, but this is the first time I have said it in public, that our efforts have ended in failure. The work we have done did not achieve what it should have achieved. Why has it been a failure? Because our welfare programs did not adequately meet the needs of the people they were intended to serve; they did not cover all those in need. The administration was costly and burdensome, and it did not sufficiently emphasize social rehabilitation. It provided no incentives for people to get off relief, to go to work, or to live within a family unit because if they earned a dollar their relief was immediately reduced. We started this in the 1930's, but even today we see situations where we have had four generations on relief in this country. That is nothing to brag about. Anything we can do to change that condition is in the interests of all of us.

So, honourable senators, we find ourselves here today with this bill, and if this guaranteed income can dismantle our horse and buggy welfare system it will mean a great step forward. It will mean that this is a day of which Parliament can be proud. We are striking a new blow in a direction that will be in the interests of the people who need assistance. As I have said, I hope that arising out of this, greater help will be forthcoming for the disabled, the blind, the sick, the maimed and others who need help, to put them on a basis where they are not worried from week to week, where they can plan in the knowledge that they will have a guaranteed annual income, and where they will have a few dollars to jingle in their pockets. They will be able to look forward to a monthly cheque. If we can achieve this, it will be cheaper in money and it will be a genuine accomplishment from the point of view of the welfare of human beings.

Much as I regret the fact that this bill does not cover people aged 65 and over, I feel it has much to recommend it, and I support it.

**Hon. Edgar Fournier:** Honourable senators, first may I congratulate the Leader of the Government on the fine explanation he has given of the bill in his usual charming manner—even if at times there were moments of embarrassment.