

*Family Allowances*

of Toronto, the working poor vastly outnumber the people on welfare. It is a matter of choice for them. They would rather receive less than go on welfare. They would rather work and earn their own way. It is a natural, human desire. So there are now proposals in the wind which will have the effect of supplementing the incomes of the working poor.

We will figure out how much they get from their employers. We will find out how much they need in order to survive, and then we will supplement their incomes. But call it what we will, it will be another form of welfare. It will not be welfare for the employee; it will be welfare for the employer. Rather than having to carry the burden, what the employer is going to do is hand the can over to the government and, while he is at it, complain about high taxes.

We should never get involved in such programs. This is the worst kind of thinking which has come out of the administration of President Nixon in the United States. I remember seeing the U.S. President proposing his new welfare package two or three years ago. I remember a lot of people nodding and saying, "Yes, we should do more to help people who are working because they deserve it, whereas people who don't work and receive social benefits should be viewed rather sternly. We should build incentives into the system so that we can give the chap who is working an extra number of dollars a month."

But Mr. Speaker, what we will be doing with that is subsidizing the cheap rate employer. The governments of this country will have to tax more in order to do that, and as they tax more the attack on government activity, on government participation in the welfare and well-being of our population, will be given more and more support. I do not buy that idea at all.

If we want to help the man who is working, let us do something about the minimum wage. It is disgraceful in most sectors of this country. At the very least, Mr. Speaker, the minimum wage should be sufficient to bring a man and his family above the poverty threshold. And while we are at it, I do not want to hear the old canard that if we raise the minimum wage some industries will have to close down. I say that if they are going to live on the backs of their workers, then let them close down. We do not need the goods and services that they produce. However, if we do need them, let us to be ready to pay more directly through the market place for these goods and services.

There are other ways of seeing to it that income is more fairly distributed in this country. I am sure the minister has the figures. I am sure if he goes back to the 1920's, the 30's, 40's and 50's and watches the progress in the distribution of income he will find that the only time in which there was a significant shift in the distribution of income in Canada was the period between 1935 and 1944. Why was that? Yes, there was an increase in transfer payments. I will grant you that. There was a considerable increase in them around that time. But more important than that, this was the period when there was a vast and significant increase in the amount of union organization in Canada. When the CIO moved into Ontario in particular, there was a very real shift in the way that the goods and services that we produced were distributed among our people. We owe that not to government activity but to the activity of

[Mr. Harney.]

the people themselves, who organized to take what was their due.

In this society and under this type of government, I do not think the poor or the working poor can ever hope to be granted their just due. Their only hope is to organize themselves to take it. Power is never granted; it is only taken. Many people in this society are beginning to realize that. One of my colleagues points out that this is what the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) says. In fact, he said it the other day. I am quite sure he understands it. He may not pay much attention to it now, but he certainly understands it.

If the government were really interested in doing something about the distribution of income, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) would cosy up to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro) one day and say, "Look, my honourable colleague, this is a real problem here in Canada. Lots of people are not getting enough, and the reason they are not getting enough is that they are working for lousy pay. One of the reasons they are working for lousy pay is not because they are working for the railroads and we ordered them back to work for lousy pay, but because they are working in all kinds of industries which are not only not organized, not unionized, but cannot be organized and unionized for two reasons. One reason is our laws. We make it almost impossible for these people to get organized. The second reason is that the costs of organization are so enormous the union movement cannot carry them."

Let us not forget, Mr. Speaker, that the union movement, which is supposed to be rolling in money, has to carry out all further organization of workers out of the dues it receives from those it has already organized, and in many cases these are people who do not earn all that much. "So couldn't you," he could suggest to his colleague, the Minister of Labour, "think of redesigning your department so that rather than having a Department of Labour which really only polices the industrial situation in our society,—it just sees to it that there are no outbreaks, riots or great crises—have a positively oriented Department of Labour like the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, which goes out to help businessmen, or at least tries to help them? That department takes businessmen over to Europe to look for new contracts and new business. It holds seminars for businessmen. It goes further than that. We have many programs in this country to aid small businesses. They may not be terribly effective but at least they try. And we have lots of programs to aid big business—"

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

**Some hon. Members:** Continue.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** He may continue if there is unanimous consent of the House. Is this agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Harney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Colleagues to my right who wish to speak today suggest that I take another two minutes. The parallel, the analogy was not finished. In the same way the Department of Agriculture tries to help