

Mr. Marchand:—I believe that the objective pursued by the hon. member for Sherbrooke will also be realized.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

FAMILY ALLOWANCES—REQUEST FOR
INCREASED PAYMENTS

Mr. Henri Latulippe (Compton-Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, I asked the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) why family allowances had not been raised since 1944. My question will be answered this evening as it has been slated for discussion at ten o'clock.

Mr. Speaker, family allowances are an important matter, although they are seldom debated and easily forgotten. I would say that the measure concerning family allowances is the most important, the greatest and the noblest piece of social legislation any government can give to a nation, since it deals with the family, the nucleus of society, parishes, provinces and federations.

Without families, we would not have any federal government and we would not need social legislation, or anything else for that matter. But the family is the basis of society, life and any economic development organization. We must sincerely and truly respect the family in all its rights, if we are to be equal to the task.

Mr. Speaker, society and parliament, those in charge of administration must come to the help of man, as is their duty and responsibility.

The family, under the present system, must be helped and protected because it is in trouble. The family is in real trouble; it finds it hard to grow, to live and be respected.

There are laws to protect animals but not to protect human beings in their greatest, proudest and most respectable attributes.

People know what they want. They want to live in dignity; they want their moral and vital needs to be respected and fulfilled; they want the family and other natural groups to be protected. They want each individual to be respected as a human being must be and not treated as an animal.

Mr. Speaker, man needs security, not so much for himself as for his family. As head of a family and breadwinner, man needs help. Men and women must be protected against expected and unexpected hardship and against insecurity, illness and I would even say against death.

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In certain countries, Mr. Speaker, this security exists; it is organized by the state. In a great many other countries, it does not exist, and each day brings many tragedies.

In the final analysis, the Family Allowances Act must be respectful of life, preservation of life, man and the human species.

Mr. Speaker, family allowances should be a major concern of governments and should be considered as the most important feature of a nation, since life and the very essence of society are at stake. The Canadian family is not respected. We can say, without fear of being mistaken, that it is exploited.

We have laws for the protection of many institutions, Mr. Speaker, financial institutions which, under state approval, are responsible for the rising cost of living, without regard for anything. The family is being hurt, society suffers by accepting these increases in the cost of living, all these tax increases, these increases in the rate of interest for the benefit of financiers, but to the prejudice of the family.

• (10:20 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, we ask for a balance of our national economy, and that is the business of the government and the minister, and especially the Minister of Finance and Receiver General (Mr. Sharp) because he alone is mainly responsible for all the organizations. He has all the information, all the necessary specialists to balance the budget, that of the families especially. And the family budget is the first he should balance. When the family budget is balanced, when everything goes well in the family, everything goes well everywhere else—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member in the middle of his very interesting speech, but I see that the parliamentary secretary to the minister is anxious to give an answer to the hon. member.

[*English*]

Mrs. Margaret Rideout (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Compton-Frontenac (Mr. Latulippe) and his concern about the family allowance. I would like to tell him, as I am sure he realizes, that the Liberal party has recognized his need and has in fact done more than any other party to assist families.

I should like to elaborate and explain that there have in fact been a number of changes