

ing is not directed against the honest workers now heavily taxed to ensure the livelihood of certain citizens whose only work is to deceive overworked social welfare agencies which are poorly equipped to separate legitimate claims from others.

We advocate the implementation of a minimum guaranteed income plan which would permit the government to set the tax exemptions at the appropriate level, which would permit the individual to keep his dignity, the unaided woman to take care of her child, and each unemployed to maintain his essential standard of living as long as he is jobless. Finally, we are advocating the implementation of a guaranteed minimum income plan which would keep our senior citizens and many other individuals from having to beg to live.

This plan would first fill the gap between the individual's income and the poverty line. It could be improved as our society goes forward. Obviously, the guaranteed minimum income concept is neither new nor original. It seems that most Canadians are in favour of it. All the opposition parties in the House have indicated they were in favour of this policy as well as several government members and some ministers.

Outside the House, other groups have advocated the concept of minimum guaranteed income. Almost all provincial governments have asked the federal government to establish it. Recently, the Castonguay-Nepveu Commission in Quebec has recommended a minimum guaranteed income of \$2,000 for each individual, \$3,400 for a couple and \$405 for each child.

In January 1969, the Canadian Welfare Council stated that a program aimed at providing an adequate guaranteed income for all Canadians should be established as soon as possible. It has been noted that there is no right more important than an adequate income. We must introduce immediately that socio-economic objective in our system of values.

Likewise, the American committee for economic development has supported the setting up of a minimum guaranteed income based on need alone with concrete incentives for those who could work.

Colin Hindle in a study for the National Bureau of Economic Research has noted that a minimum guaranteed income system would be from 30 to 40 per cent more efficient than the present system which is aimed at fighting against poverty through various programs.

The hon. senator Croll, Chairman of the Senate committee on poverty, has been asserting for a long time that we should do away with this system and replace it by the guaranteed minimum income plan.

To these individuals and groups can be added several others, but because the government is opposed to it, we can only rely on grass-roots support.

In November 1970, delegates to the Liberal convention voted 659 to 187, and 117 abstentions, in favour of an income maintenance program to replace the present social security schemes. Furthermore, they asked through a vote of 594 to 250 that such a program be implemented before January 1, 1971 for all those whose income is

#### *Guaranteed Minimum Income*

below the poverty level as established by the Economic Council of Canada.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) replied that a guaranteed minimum income plan would be too complex and too expensive to administer.

Since the National Council of the Social Credit Party of Canada gave almost unanimous support to this proposal at its convention two weeks ago, and notwithstanding the right hon. Prime Minister's analysis of this plan, I now wish to seek hon. members' support so that the motion I have introduced be accepted, since it is also the right of the people of Canada.

The implementation of this measure can be considered in several ways. Since this government has many bright minds in its employ, I would let it up to them to take a stand and to select the most efficient way to allow Canadians to have a share in the consumption of goods and services which, for fiscal 1970-71, will exceed \$80 billion.

• (5:10 p.m.)

[English]

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** The motion before the House this afternoon, as put by the hon. member for Portneuf (Mr. Godin), refers to the desirability of a guaranteed minimum income for all people in this country. The interesting part of this proposal is that he suggests this should be done without increasing taxes, causing inflation, or any change in the cost of goods and services. A few moments ago he referred to the ability of government technicians and people in the civil service, who have all the facilities to study this problem and come up with a solution. I respect the ability of our civil service, and I am sure that they are very capable, but whether they can pull this off and provide a guaranteed minimum income without increasing taxes is a large question.

The hon. member also suggested in the motion that this plan could replace our whole system of social security, including our old age security system and many other plans, including the Canada Pension Plan. Motion No. 31 calls for the establishment of a government program to provide a guaranteed minimum income to every Canadian citizen who is without work or other source of income as a way of recognizing the dignity, the value and the economic rights of the human being, in the context of the economic life of the nation. The motion also indicates that the funds required to finance such a guaranteed minimum income should be derived from the national product in a way which would not increase taxes or the cost of living or the price of goods and services, and that the proposed scheme should replace the wide range of government measures which provide income security payments to individuals and families in Canada.

In speaking on this motion, I would like to talk about the concept of the guaranteed minimum income first, and then say something about the suggested means of financing this proposal, followed by a discussion of the general proposition advanced in this motion that a guaranteed income program could replace certain of the existing income security programs such as the unemployment insurance and the Canada and Quebec pension plans. The