

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

**Mrs. Fairclough:** There is a matter, Mr. Chairman, that I should like to bring to the attention of the minister. It is really a three-cornered problem; that is, it concerns his department, the Department of National Revenue and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. I refer to those people who come into this country with children and who eventually qualify for family allowances. I have had cases brought to my attention where people came into the country and were given little or no information with reference to their status for income tax purposes with regard to their children. Subsequently they found out that by reason of one or two months' family allowance payments which they received, they were placed in an unfavourable classification in so far as their statutory exemptions were concerned.

One such case which came to my notice recently concerned a very intelligent individual who recognized the problem and who said that had he been given the information which he understood was now available to new entrants to this country, he would have been in a position to make a more intelligent survey of his income for the year. Once having filed a return, he was no longer in a position to benefit by reason of the deductions which would otherwise have been available to him.

I realize that in so far as the minister's department is concerned, they merely pay the allowances. However, since this matter does concern the three departments, will the minister consult with his colleagues and make sure that those persons who come into the country with children, with the obvious intention of staying in this country, are given all the information that is available with reference to their statutory exemptions for the purpose of taxable income, and the advantages which will accrue to them if they handle these allowances in a certain way. The minister knows what I mean; that is, turning them back to the department.

**Mr. Van Horne:** I have recently been in communication with the manager of a group of hospitals in the province of Quebec for a religious institution. Apparently in one hospital there are 90 children of unknown parents who are being denied the family allowance merely because their parents are not known. I feel sure the minister would be prepared to recognize that these children are just as much entitled to family allowances as any other children in Canada, and that he would be pleased to take the necessary steps to make sure these children get their family allowances. In many cases these hospitals, these convents or orphanages, care for

[Mr. Patterson.]

these children of unknown parents at a tremendous sacrifice to themselves because they have no other means of help apart from the charitable donations that are made to them. For these reasons I think it is most unjust that these children, through no fault of their own, are denied the family allowance.

While I am on my feet I should like to reiterate what I have often said before. If the cost of living in 1945 was taken as the basis for determining the amount of family allowances, then since the cost of living has almost doubled should not family allowances be increased accordingly? This applies not only to family allowances but to old age pensions and all the other pensions as well. When old age pensions came into effect at \$20 per month they were sufficient for that time. This principle was recognized in that case, because the pensions were increased to \$40, but they should now be over \$60 a month and that principle should be carried into effect all along the line. We have failed to recognize the tremendous burden under which our families, especially those in the poorer areas of this country, are attempting to carry on. I assure you that northern New Brunswick is no exception. We have families with numerous children, and the family allowances that are paid go a long way toward helping these families care for and educate their children.

In 1945 and 1946, when family allowances were first introduced, the amount paid went a long way further than it does today, because the cost of living had doubled in the meantime. I feel sure the minister will recognize this. I think he has indicated on previous occasions in the past his willingness and his determination to do everything possible in this regard. However, the fact still remains that nothing is being done, and there is no indication of anything being done along that line at this session.

There is another factor I should like to bring out in regard to the invalids' pension. My stand on that is well known to the minister as well as other members in this house. One fact emerges now which may not have been made clear before. Invalids' pensions are being paid to people who are, as I have often said, completely and permanently disabled or so near dead that nothing else matters. In my riding in particular we have people who are temporarily crippled. We have people with both legs severed. We have other people who are paralysed but who can still use their hands or can talk. In some cases these invalids are fathers with numerous children, and they are being denied the invalids' pension because they do not come within this stupid definition