

difficult times, pensioners are entitled to more than the meagre twenty dollars a month which they are allowed.

I have already indicated, when speaking on the debate in reply to the speech from the throne, that if social security legislation is to function properly, the British North America Act should be amended. If that is not done, the dominion and the provinces must get together and agree on certain matters—which to date they have not done. In the programme of the Progressive Conservative party as laid down in Winnipeg last December we recognized the obligation of government to make available to every citizen adequate medical, dental, nursing, hospital and prenatal care, and to further advance public health and nutritional principles so that health may be safeguarded and preserved throughout this country; this programme to be financed under a contributory system supplemented by government assistance.

It has been pointed out that Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt are not only two great figures of our democratic world today but are great leaders in social reform. We may very well at this time take a leaf out of their book.

In closing, I should like to associate myself with the appeal of the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) this afternoon, in advocating the appointment of a minister of social security and reconstruction, to be charged with the administration of social security and health measures in this country. This measure is advocated in our platform which is now before the public.

Mr. W. F. KUHL (Jasper-Edson): The necessity or otherwise of the social legislation envisaged in the resolution before us is, I believe, entirely dependent upon the nature of the economic order which we wish to obtain in the post-war period. Personally I can conceive of an economic order in which the necessity of such legislation is entirely eliminated. My colleague the hon. member for Camrose (Mr. Marshall), in speaking this afternoon, stated that if the proper economic adjustments were made, much of this social legislation would be unnecessary. I agree entirely with his statement. I believe that many of these special problems which we are considering, including insufficient old age pensions, the need of pensions for the blind, and inadequate health facilities, are part of a major and fundamental problem affecting the whole economic body, and that if the disease which is common to that whole economic body is eliminated, many of these problems which are regarded as special will take care of themselves.

It seems to me that our approach to this whole post-war question is analogous to that of the construction of a house. It would be foolish, of course, for a builder to consider where he was going to put the chimney, or to begin to place the chimney, or to arrange the walls or any part of the superstructure, before he built the foundation. We are proposing to erect the national edifice which is to be a fit habitation for our nation's heroes. In listening to most of the debate which took place on the resolution pertaining to post-war rehabilitation, as well as to what has already been said in the present debate, I had the impression that for the most part it has centred round the superstructure, whereas I believe that the first duty of the membership of this house as well as of the committees which have been set up is to determine the fundamentals which are to operate in our economic system. We must first fix our objectives and then govern ourselves accordingly. I do not believe that thus far this has been done. There has been very little discussion of the objectives which we are to pursue in the post-war world. But discussion of these objectives is extremely appropriate and pertinent at this time.

I wish to occupy a few minutes this evening in endeavouring to indicate what I consider are the objectives toward which we ought to strive in our economic life. The only fundamental objective which I have been able to discover in any of the addresses made thus far by hon. members is that of full employment. I cannot agree or disagree with that objective unless I know what meaning hon. members attach to it. From every side we have heard the words "full employment" as expressing an objective. But what constitutes full employment? What do those who have used the term have in their minds as to what it means? We ought to have a clear definition of the terms we use. One writer tells us that definition is the breath of science and that fruitful discussion in any field presupposes and begins with a common definition. I cannot see that we can make any progress with any discussion we undertake unless, to begin with, we define our terms.

If hon. members who have thus far employed the expression "full employment" agree with my definition of it, perhaps I can concede that full employment is a fundamental and legitimate objective. I shall endeavour if I can to clear the air a little with respect to this question of full employment and work. Generally speaking, all work may be divided into two classes. There is forced labour, and there is voluntary, self-chosen, self-initiated activity. Forced labour in turn may be