

jections with regard to machinery and other items. Contrary to the belief that statistics serve only the purposes of government, statistics are increasingly benefiting the business community. The greatest pressure for increasing statistical information is from the business community. They require this information in order to make better and more farsighted decisions.

No indication is given as to the actual cost of goods. Figures are quoted for labour, overhead and equipment. Very little is said about the pollution caused by the production of goods, the cost to the public and the utility standard. I recognized the fact that it may be difficult to provide this information to the public, but that does not make it less desirable. It certainly would not be impossible. The gross national product is no longer a sure indicator of the progress being made by a society. What do we gain if the gross national product increases but in the process we create an unequal distribution of income, disparities between one part of the country and another and if the air and rivers of our environment are polluted? If this happens, is it necessary to increase the gross national product? These figures are no longer adequate for today's society. In addition to the gross national product, there must be other indicators.

I am not suggesting that the statistics presently being collected should be discontinued. They are useful. However, they must be read in conjunction with another statistical index which at the present time is not available. When the Statistics Act is being changed after 15 years, such a provision should have been included. The bill does not deal with this matter.

Statistics do not tell the whole story. One of the great shortcomings is that they do not consider the great contribution of women who choose to work at home instead of in the business world. For all practical purposes, these women just do not count from a statistical point of view. The contribution which they make to their families and the welfare of their children is not reflected in any index because they do not contribute to the gross national product. Although there may not be a practical need for this kind of statistical information, there is a great emotional and psychological need for this information in our society. It should not be argued that only those women engaged in a commercial undertaking are contributing to the family or to society. For many years women's organizations have spoken most eloquently of the need for including in a statistical index the contribution made by homemakers to the national economy.

Many statistics at our disposal are inadequate and unrelated to political decision making, both from the point of view of the politicians and the voters of this country. During the discussions on the white paper on taxation, many arguments were made regarding the comparison between taxes in the United States and Canada. To my knowledge, the only figures used in making this comparison were the tax rates and base tax at certain levels. This was very misleading. It did not take into account the improved social benefits in Canada which are provided through our tax system. Nor did it take into account the fact that Canadians have greater security

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and more safety. In order to provide these benefits, we have had to spend more money to improve our environment. We have shown a greater concern with regard to redistributing income in order to deal with the core problems of poverty and discontent.

However, as we have pointed out on many occasions, not enough is being done. At least Canada has made more of an attempt to do this than other countries. The result is a safer and happier environment than in other countries. This situation is not reflected in the statistics. All that is shown is a cold calculation of one rate of tax against another rate of tax. This is a totally inadequate comparison. Instead of stark taxation tables, Canadians are more interested in their quality of life, the amenities and securities which society provides. That is one area.

• (3:40 p.m.)

Again, when we deal with the question of unemployment, the unemployment figures, aside from whether they are measured directly or on a seasonally adjusted basis, are misleading because they understate the number of those at work, thus minimizing the seriousness of the problem. This is perhaps not a matter of so much concern to us when there is full employment, but it is certainly a matter of concern when a serious degree of unemployment is understated in the statistics. This situation comes about in many ways. It arises because some people leave the labour market. Others become marginal or part-time workers and their activities are not reflected in the statistics. Many work shorter time, and though this factor does appear in the DBS figures to some extent, the statistics are not co-ordinated so as to give an exact picture of the horror of the unemployment situation. The statistics should be sufficiently accurate to give clear guidance both to governments which are making decisions and to those who are influencing decisions in the House of Commons and elsewhere.

I should like to refer, also, to the situation which arose while the committee on consumer prices was holding its hearings in 1966, and the merry chase which was given to us by people in possession of statistics, officials of the Department of Agriculture and so on. I had a feeling they would have been able to save us six months' work had they been able to produce the figures we requested. On many occasions we asked representatives of a department: "What is happening to prices?", and they would tell us with a high degree of accuracy what the situation was: We would then ask how these compared with prices to the consumer, and they replied "We do not know." This was the responsibility of another department. It may be, indeed, that all they knew was the narrow picture they got in their own departments. But if they did not know, then, surely, someone else knew. It was not until we had spent many months of searching that we began to receive statistical tables showing the relationship between these things. I feel that if someone in the DBS had possessed the authority or the willingness to provide us with this information it would have been most valuable. The Bureau, in turn, might say that politicians did not have the wit to ask for it. It may be there were occasions on which we did not have the wit to ask, but