

Guaranteed Minimum Income

seem—must accept; and not only accept, but maintain. Such is the Canadian future, as our Prime Minister sees it. Such are our new values, our new way of life. The prospect may well depress the middle class, the tired and worried people working the treadmill. Keep at it they must, no one's going to support them, they aren't even offered the alternative of the gas chamber.

That is the end of my dissertation on the comments of Mr. Needham.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps this might be an appropriate time to interrupt the hon. member. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: The hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave)—Veterans' Affairs—Suggested maintenance of Halifax Sailors' Monument by department.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, notices of motions and public bills.

• (5:00 p.m.)

[Translation]

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

PROPOSAL FOR GUARANTEED MINIMUM INCOME

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the possibility of passing a law under which every Canadian citizen, who is without work or other source of income, would receive a guaranteed minimum income as a way of recognizing, in a special fashion, the dignity, the value and the economic rights of the human being, in the context of the economic life of the nation, that the amount required for the payment of the guaranteed minimum income be derived from the national product so as to increase neither the taxes on individuals and companies, nor the cost of living, nor the price of any product or service; that this measure could, with advantage, replace the contributions and payments of all the systems of unemployment insurance, social welfare, family and personal allowances, Canada Pensions and Quebec Pensions, that the economic recognition of the guaranteed minimum income would be to the greatest advantage of all the citizens of Canada, and, at the same time, would be of great benefit to all the principal sectors of the national economy.

Mr. Speaker, I wish at the outset to quote statistics to show the importance of the problem we are dealing with.

According to poverty distribution in Canada in 1967, 18.6 per cent of Canadian families and 39 per cent of people without dependents had an income below the poverty level, namely \$1,740 in the case of person with-

[Mr. Alexander.]

out dependents and \$2,900, \$3,480, \$4,060 and \$4,640 respectively for families of 2, 3, 4 and 5 persons or more.

When considering special classes, more than 500,000 people over 65 years of age have an income below the above-mentioned levels. Moreover, there are about 180,000 disabled people who are in need, between the ages of 18 and 65, and nearly 200,000 mentally retarded youngsters under 18.

There is a total of about 150,000 mothers who bring up alone 330,000 young children and more than a third of those families have an income below the above-mentioned level. Almost 25 per cent of the 3,500,000 families with children under 18 are below the poverty level.

About 30 per cent of the unemployed people have a low annual income which classifies them as poor people. That becomes all the more serious at a time when there are more than 700,000 unemployed.

In face of such a problem, what is the solution offered by this government? The minimum salary was increased, but that does not concern unemployed people. They tried to increase family allowances in favour of the poor. However, that money was taken away from families whose income was in excess of a certain amount and that was done regardless of the taxable income and in making all family allowances taxable. We have seen an increase in the guaranteed income supplement to the old age security pension, but the basic pension has been the subject of no worthwhile change.

In fact, people who receive only this pension will find themselves worse off than before since only the supplement will be escalated.

Then the white paper on tax reform brings this messaging round to a climax through taxation of the income of those able to meet their own needs.

Under such a policy, this government takes away from one in order to give to the other. Accordingly we are witnessing, instead of an integrated income security system beneficial to everybody, an equalization of revenue prejudicial particularly to the middle classes. Considering the solutions resorted to by the governments up to now, one can readily see that no federal government ever dealt with the most important problem, that of guaranteed minimum income. This is the solution that we of the Ralliement créditiste have been advocating for a long time, that is a solution which would recognize the dignity, the value and the economic rights of the human being.

Although we are convinced that such a system would be easier to implement under a Créditiste government, we believe however that it could be done under our current outmoded financial system. One fact is obvious: the present income security and welfare system does not work too well. The temporary changes repeatedly made by the government can only lead to chaos with a multiplicity of programs solving no specific problem. Under such circumstances, administration costs and disorders created by various administrations are also multiplied. That is why we are proposing the consolidation of all programs against poverty into a guaranteed minimum income. The guaranteed minimum income we are propos-