

that we must do first the things that are necessary and that we can afford, and not be continually expending large sums of money on programs of a temporary nature which are entered into for the sake of expediency.

From that report we learn that one of the first priorities is to make definite preparations for seeing to it that all people have an opportunity of living decent lives. This is most important, and it was mentioned by the mover of the motion yesterday. The report points out that more than one million Canadians are functionally illiterate. That is a great phrase, one which I do not remember hearing before. It means that more than one million Canadians are not prepared for good jobs. They can do only menial work. These people can read and write, but not well enough to enable them to obtain good employment. Lack of sufficient education confines them to the most menial type of work.

This report points out also that this is not the fault of these people. They are usually young men who come from overcrowded homes, urban slums, and farms where there are many children and small homes. It is impossible for them to get the education they should have.

A special secretariat set up by the federal Government has put these conditions in graphic form, and it outlines the causes which begin, naturally, in the school days. The report of the secretariat reads:

There is no point in expecting adequate homework from a student who must do homework in a small, poorly lit room where the rest of the family live, eat and sleep.

Thousands of them have to do this.

Similarly, it is not reasonable to expect attention in class from a student who has been kept awake most of the night because he was hungry or for other interfering reasons.

Honourable senators will of course understand that there are many children in some small homes.

A satisfactory education for the poor, the secretariat concludes, cannot be provided by the free public school system when some children are unable to take full advantage of it. The result is that they leave school in the early grades.

Honourable senators will recall that in the recent conference of the eleven provincial

and territorial governments the experts divided poverty into three categories. This government, and the Government of the United States, is waging a war on poverty. One group of poor people, we are told, are those who cannot work because of age or physical disability. We know this. Senator Croll's committee has been digging into this problem for some time. The second group comprises those who can work but who cannot find jobs. I am happy to say that that is now a small fraction of the labour force, and it is usually found in a few depressed areas.

The third group includes employed workers who cannot earn a reasonable income. These are the people I was talking about a short time ago. Some are farmers—and I do not mean the farmers of Saskatchewan. I listened to the remarks of my honourable friend the mover (Hon. Mr. McDonald), yesterday when he gave the average income of farmers in Saskatchewan. I could not help but think how happy the farmers of New Brunswick, of Nova Scotia, or any of the four Atlantic provinces would be if they earned anywhere near that much. The honourable mover of the motion did say that there were certain of them who did not make more than \$1,000 a year. Well, I understand that in Saskatchewan there is an area where even a rabbit would starve, but that is only a very small part of that province. The fishermen and farmers of the Atlantic provinces would be very happy if they could earn the sums he mentioned, such as an average net income of \$6,936 in the higher brackets and \$4,300 in the lower brackets.

The older people, say the experts, must be protected by state assistance—that is not news—adequate for support and self-respect. There have been votes in the other place during the past few days on motions by which the Opposition tried to increase the amount of the pension these people receive. I do not know whether the mail of other honourable senators contains correspondence referring to our older people, but I know mine does. It seems to be increasing as time goes on. The letters I receive point out that with the cost of living soaring as it is, these old people cannot pay their bills or live decent lives on the \$75 pension they receive from this Government.

The two groups, the unemployed and the underpaid workers, require a manpower policy for high employment and a high productivity economy. This policy must involve increased mobility of labour, intensive training