

that is, the increase in the gross national product, which is the wealth of the nation. Updating ensures that all who receive a minimum income will also enjoy a portion of the improvement in the rising standard of living, so that as the poverty line or the standard of living is fixed it can be kept automatically current at all times. We will have a very heavy responsibility in attempting to fix that.

Hon. Mr. Choquette: May I ask a question? Will not the amount, the minimum amount as you put it, vary considerably with the farmer and the fisherman, the man who not only has a farm but grows his own vegetables and can eat the year round almost out of the produce he will be getting, the man who lives by the sea or in a place where he can do a lot of fishing, salt fish and put it away? How can you arrive at a minimum income when you consider all this?

Hon. Mr. Croll: All these studies have been made with this in mind.

Hon. Mr. Choquette: I know, but I am asking if you have reached a conclusion.

Hon. Mr. Croll: We have not reached any conclusion. I have not even told you what our report contained, but all these elements that you mention were considered in every one of these studies, which were carried out by very competent people. You would be surprised to find that there is less differential than would be expected. Sure, the man on the farm has some advantages, but when he leaves the farm to start buying things in the city he has some real disadvantages too. In any event, these matters were taken into consideration.

There are many things that I am not going to raise today, such as education, which is so important and on which we have not completed our study, and the vital subjects of housing, day care, manpower training.

I should like to say just this. The deputy chairman and I at noon today decided that we had the answer to the poverty problem. I asked him if it would be all right for me to mention it before he made his speech and he agreed. The answer is jobs, employment with living wages. That is the answer. We have never been able to achieve it. If we cannot, we must have some alternative. I leave you with this: we are politicians, and politics is the art of the possible. I am satisfied that there is a desire and an awakening in this country about the plight of the poor. If you had received the kind of letters that Senator Fergusson and Senator Inman received from women they met and from whom I also received letters, you would realize that these people are looking to us with hope. We owe it to them. We have got to do something. We can't sit this one out.

Immediately after the war I represented Spadina in the House of Commons. If there was a nationality, you could find it in Spadina. A great many of the people who came to that area had been war victims or in concentration camps. For various reasons they were on my neck all the time with regard to happenings here as they affect civil liberties or other things. I said, "Wait a minute, you are

in Canada. You are not in Europe—in Germany or Rumania. You are in Canada, and it cannot happen here." I am not so sure any more. I am just not so sure. So far as we are concerned, and I think I speak for all members of the committee, we are going to do everything we can to make sure that it cannot happen here.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Fournier (Madawaska-Restigouche), debate adjourned.

STATISTICS BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Hédard Robichaud moved the second reading of Bill S-2, respecting statistics of Canada.

He said: Honourable senators, it is my privilege this afternoon in moving second reading of this bill to open the debate on the first legislative measure of this Third Session of Canada's Twenty-eighth Parliament. The bill now before this house contains a number of important amendments to the Statistics Act. The fundamental purpose of the changes suggested therein is to improve the flow of information required for good decision-making by all levels of government, and by businesses, various other organizations and individuals. I am convinced that many of the figures quoted to us by the previous speakers, originated from D.B.S. reports.

As honourable senators know, the present Statistics Act is the act under which the Dominion Bureau of Statistics operates. The act itself dates back to 1913, and the amendments made to it over the years have been relatively minor. In the meantime, of course, the demand for statistical information has grown enormously, in line with the growing size and complexity of the Canadian economy and society. Sources of information have changed, new kinds of information now are being provided or should be provided, and generally a modernization of the legislation is called for if the bureau is to carry out the functions we all expect it to perform.

I should point out that extensive consultation has taken place between D.B.S. and federal and provincial government officials on the intent of the proposed changes to the act. In addition, some 20 major associations have been consulted in the private sector and their general approval secured before introduction of the amendments contained in the present bill.

Before reviewing the more important amendments proposed to the act, honourable senators would perhaps find it useful if I were to describe briefly the history and development of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

[Translation]

Statistics have been kept in Canada for more than three centuries. In 1666, to accede to the wish of Louis XIV, who wanted to know what was the extent of the development in New France and the number of its inhabitants, the administrator Jean Talon was instructed to take a census and he himself undertook the complete enumeration of the 3,215 inhabitants of New France. From then on, certain activities in connection with the

[Hon. Mr. Croll.]