

*Mothers Allowances*

looking after their families we would not be in the serious trouble we are today, so far as unemployment is concerned? Does the hon. lady not think that in that situation we would not have the unemployment that we have today?

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think you can turn the clock back. Women are going to work outside the home, whether we like it or not.

**Mr. J. A. Byrne (Kootenay East):** Mr. Speaker, in opening my observations I should like to read the motion which the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. MacInnis) has put before the house. It is as follows:

That, in the opinion of this house, as a measure to promote the development of family life in Canada and to prevent its erosion, where a mother chooses to make a full time career of motherhood by remaining at home instead of taking gainful employment outside, the government should consider the advisability of providing such a mother with an allowance to enable her to fulfil this service to Canada.

That is certainly a laudable expression. However, I find it difficult to believe that the hon. member who made that statement is the same hon. member who is reported to have said in committee, in defence of her bill which would provide for legalized abortion:

I think it is time we began to work toward quality population.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway also said at that time:

We are beginning to hear about the need for improving population.

In answer to a question from an hon. member, the hon. lady said:

The community, in my view, has an interest in normal human beings and getting the best quality and kind of people it can.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Byrne:** I note that hon. members are applauding that statement. If we are beginning a breeding line, perhaps this motion is the one best suited to fulfil that role. I cannot agree with the hon. member that it is administratively possible and practical to establish an income for a woman in the home based upon whether the husband has a suitable income. This would of course require a means test, and it would unquestionably be administratively impractical, if not impossible.

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I did not propose that this allowance should be

[Mr. Webb.]

set up on the income of the husband. I proposed that it be set up if the mother decided to stay at home and look after the family instead of going out and earning a salary.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif):** Order, please. That is not a question of privilege.

**Mr. Byrne:** If a mother decided to stay at home and look after her family, is it not conceivable that she would have made this decision based upon the amount of money the state was prepared to pay her for staying at home? Where would we draw the line in this respect? If we are going to pay only a token allowance, of course it makes no difference; but if we are going to pay an allowance to a mother to stay at home, surely it would have to be in the order of \$50, \$60 or \$100 a month. Surely it is impractical to talk of working—

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, the French figure was \$78 for a family with four children.

**Mr. Byrne:** The hon. member has said that in France payments are made in the amount of 390 francs, or something like \$68—

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** It is \$78.

**Mr. Byrne:** The hon. member said that these payments are made to mothers who remain at home to look after their families. She did not say whether the payment is made in the case of a widow looking after her family.

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** It is paid to any woman.

**Mr. Byrne:** The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway has corrected me and says that the allowance is paid to any woman who is prepared to remain at home and look after her family. I am sure it would require considerable investigation to determine whether such a measure is practical and workable. In any event, we have in Canada made provision for assisting the married couple. Assistance is provided under a number of federal measures with a view to improving the quality of home life. I ask the hon. member to take note of that word "quality". But this assistance is provided to improve the quality of home life in Canada, and not that of the population at large. Under the personal income tax system there is a provision for an exemption of \$1,000 on behalf of a married woman whose annual income does not exceed \$250.