

*The Canadian Economy***PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES OF  
MOTIONS****THE CANADIAN ECONOMY****REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE LIVING STANDARDS IN CANADA AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD**

**Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should give immediate consideration to the introduction of legislation to abolish poverty by redistributing income and planning productive resources so that the wealth created by modern technology may provide a much more equal standard of living for Canadians, regardless of who or where they may be, and may also be used to enable Canada to contribute a fair share of this country's wealth toward greater equality of living standards throughout the world.

• (5:00 p.m.)

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that this resolution should come up for discussion at the beginning of the new year. Never before has the Christmas season held such a poignant mixture of warm festivity and chilling concern about the future, not only of our country but of the earth itself. Like the rest of you, I had been enjoying myself in my constituency in many happy groups when suddenly the shadow fell across us. We began to worry about the increasing numbers of people, men and women like ourselves, for whom Canada has no place. I spent Christmas Eve as the guest of an organization of unemployed people who had begged the wherewithal for their Christmas dinner from those who had means. On welfare themselves, these people and their families opened wide the doors to those with even less hope, the men and women on Skid Road. There was food and music and friendship for a night. But for all these people there was no prospect of a future where they could earn an income and share in the life and responsibility of the community. They felt it deeply, and I felt ashamed and indignant that Canada's future had no place for them and their children and the other half-million Canadians who are unemployed.

And that is not all: there are the old, the handicapped, the sick, the blind, the single parents and many other groups. One Canadian in five—perhaps the latest figures would show even more—is deep in poverty now and doomed to sink even deeper if this government continues its present policy of selectivity, that is selecting the poor and making their small incomes go to finance the destitute. Oh, yes! I know we have had a Senate committee to study poverty. And I know that the government has just given a grant of \$50,000 to finance in part the recent Poor People's Conference whose members, according to one of them, "are all poor and are all working to solve the problems of poverty." Such a conference has undoubtedly been valuable to those who participated, but I think it is time now that the government stopped stringing people along. It is time we stopped sobbing over poverty and took the first steps to get rid of it. The responsibility for taking those first steps is here in this House. If this government will turn its resources to pro-

viding a workable plan for a guaranteed income for Canadians in every part of this country, it will have left its mark for all time, not only on a grateful Canada but on a world that sorely needs such an example.

I say a "workable plan". We all know it will not be easy. We all know it bristles with difficulties. There is the difficulty of providing incentives to work for those who are able to work. But I noticed the other day at the poverty conference that there were those among the delegates who said that even more important than the right to a guaranteed income is the right to guaranteed work. There are a great many who are looking for an opportunity to support themselves and to earn their own way. There is the much greater difficulty for this government to open up the opportunities for socially-needed jobs that private business will not and cannot provide. There is the supreme difficulty for this government to muster up courage to tax people according to their ability, regardless.

But we do know that the idea of a guaranteed income is no longer regarded as impracticable. Why, half the members of the cabinet have spoken in favour of it. It has been urged by provincial leaders and social workers. Indeed, at one time the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) gave the distinct impression that it was just around the corner so far as he was concerned. It has been a rapidly receding corner lately. Indeed, at this point I know I will be told that nothing, but nothing, can be done about a guaranteed income until we can get greater economic growth. Indeed, the white paper on social security is quite explicit about this. But to my mind, the need for greater economic growth is no excuse whatever for failing to redistribute fairly the very great wealth that we can and do produce now. That will not stop us planning for the economic growth we need.

Indeed, until we have proper planning for economic growth we have no hope of achieving the goal of guaranteed work which delegates to the Poor People's Conference have demanded as fundamental. A radical departure is required from our past and present attitudes toward economic and industrial growth. As a matter of fact Kenneth Galbraith is one of the few thoroughly sane economists I can think of at the present time. He is one of those who at present has been saying, for goodness' sake forget the book lore of the nineteenth century and look at the facts of the twentieth century which are staring us in the face. The idea that the faster you run the more economic growth you will provide and the more prosperity you will provide is a myth of the first order. You will provide the prosperity all right, but it will go to the top little group of people who have the control of the economic growth. It will not be redistributed or siphoned off to the people who need it.

We simply cannot go on with the suicidal procedure of seeking more markets for more products in order that industrial corporations can continue to make increasing profit while the gap widens between the haves and the have-nots at home and throughout the world. Some people have always known that this was immoral. Now a growing number of people are realizing that it is

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]