

*The Address—Mrs. G. MacInnis*

of this spreading cancer but we must face the prospect of this expense becoming greater and greater. Thank heaven we have reached a stage of civilization in which we no longer take these people out and shoot them. Thank goodness the conscience of this country is being aroused to the point where little by little reluctant governments are being pushed to provide more civilized standards of living for these people. This is a slow process but it works.

When I heard an hon. member opposite say that we desperately need to increase the assistance to \$100 a month for old age pensioners I began to think of a statement by the Toronto Metropolitan Planning Council to the effect that the minimum on which an elderly man could hope to exist was \$126.47 per month. Prices have gone up since then and already the proposed \$100 per month looks small when measured against that figure.

We are wasting our human resources because we need these people in our production efforts. Let us not forget these people. We often worry about our democratic process. Let me remind hon. members that when these people are cut off in increasing numbers for long periods of time they begin to lose faith in our democratic process. They lose faith in government, they are non-participating, and it will be exceedingly difficult to get them back again to using the organs of democracy and getting their children to use them as well.

● (3:50 p.m.)

There is another layer of these people with whom I am also greatly concerned because there are a great many of these people in my riding and, I imagine, in the riding of most hon. members. I refer to the layer of people who are all right as long as they have a job but who are on the edge of insecurity. They worry about their jobs; they have job insecurity. They worry about their fitness and training for the job. They worry about the education of their children. They worry about their health and what will happen if a major illness overtakes them. They also worry about the cost of living and how it is rising. It may not seem to us that it is high but that steady, stealthy rise of a few cents here and a few cents there is very bad indeed for these insecure families.

Remember, too, that most of them are in debt up to their ears. From pay cheque to pay cheque is how they live, and if anything happens to the pay cheque it does not take long to pull them down. These people, too,

[Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway).]

have in very large numbers family insecurity. The mother is trying to get out to work to supplement the family income, and that brings with it a whole train of difficulties for the family and for the children.

This brings me, Mr. Speaker, to the question of working mothers. I want to say right at the outset that I am the first to declare that women have the right to say whether or not they shall work in the home or outside it. Women have the right to work outside the home in this day and age and a great many of them are doing so. In fact, one out of every four last year did so and, according to the Department of Labour, by 1971 one married woman in every two, half the married women in Canada, will work at paying jobs outside the home. I feel that for these women we should be doing something to make sure that their children will be adequately cared for. We should be building nursery schools for the children of these working mothers. These nursery schools should be located in some cases right in or near the place of work of these women who are working in large factories, and their children should be adequately looked after while they are working.

Second, Mr. Speaker, we should provide much more elasticity in the hours of work for mothers. Part time employment should be made available wherever possible so that women who wish to do so may spend a part of the time with their children at home. I also wish to say that in my view women have the right to stay at home if they want to do so. The house may be surprised to know that in my riding a great many women do not have that right. If they are to maintain a decent standard of living they must get out to work and supplement the family pay cheque in order to pay for some of the modern aids to housekeeping and living around the home. Far too often while I was visiting homes in my riding this fall I would come across little children with or without the door key, who would inform me that Mom would be home in time to get the supper and Dad was away working too. That sort of thing does not build the homes of this country in the way in which they should be built.

I should like to suggest that with regard to women who desire to make a full time, good career of motherhood—and I think that for many women no career would be considered as fine as that—the time is coming, if it has not already arrived, when we should consider providing suitable and adequate wages for