

Family Income Security Plan

political point of view, to speak about duties and obligations, I believe we should nevertheless do so.

As a matter of fact, life in society was a source of great benefits to us. It enabled scientists to make research on the possibility of helping workers, through the use of machinery, in order to enable people to produce more, to make greater use of resources so as to transform them, in order that everyone may have a better lot, not only three people out of five, as we are being told in the report of the Senate Committee on Poverty, but five people out of five. So we do not really live in a just society, if two Canadians out of five cannot be assured of a vital minimum.

• (1540)

We have really accomplished something, with this association of people, on the economic level. We have managed to develop our production system to an extraordinary extent—and this, in all sectors. In the agricultural and industrial sectors we have accomplished things which would have been unthinkable 20 years ago. Statistics Canada provides us with exact figures. I, for one, believe them. In a newsletter sent by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in September 1971, we find figures which speak for themselves.

There is a table showing the gross national product for the year 1961 and subsequent years up to 1970. By looking at this table we can see that in 1961, Canada's gross national product was about \$39 billion, which means \$2,143 per worker.

Through all the means to which I referred a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, we increased our production and processing capability to the extent that in 1970, national production was in the vicinity of \$84 billion, which means that the production capability that is supposed to bring benefits to all Canadians has more than doubled in 10 years.

But unfortunately, during the same period, the gap between the gross national product and national income has widened through the years, so that in 1961, the total income of Canadians was roughly \$29 billion. Hence there was in 1961 a gap of some \$10 billion between the national income of Canadians—that is, their purchasing power—and their production to meet their own needs.

This gap, as I say, has widened through the years, so much so that in 1970, the total income of Canadians stood at \$66 billion, compared with a production of \$84 billion.

According to my information, the figures for 1971 will prove even more revealing. The gross national product for 1971 should reach \$95 billion while about 200,000 fewer workers will have contributed. That means that despite higher unemployment, we have nevertheless succeeded in increasing the volume of production.

Experts anticipate that the GNP for 1972 will be even greater, which means that it is possible in Canada to increase the various benefits in the area of social security without disrupting the economy. Why? Because I think that it would certainly be dangerous if the purchasing power were greater than the gross national product. The government would then do a great disservice to society.

On the other hand, it rests with the manager in the society to which I have just referred to do some bookkeep-

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

ing, in order to maintain as closely as possible a balance between production and purchasing power, in order to enable all its members and all Canadians to enjoy a purchasing power as fair as possible to meet their needs and to accept more readily life in society.

I stated, Mr. Speaker, a moment ago, that the family is the most important factor throughout our life. I have in hand a picture which I received a few days ago from a couple from Saint-Anselme, a municipality situated in my constituency. That aged couple lacking a sufficient income told me their financial problems. They have 18 children and they sent me a picture. That couple who has given Canada such fine wealth, priceless human capital, should get more from society, so that we may encourage not those who are through raising their children, but their descendants to do their duty in society and participate in the normal development of Canada, in order to ensure a higher standard of living, corresponding to our physical and material possibilities.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-170 is certainly bringing something new compared to the old act. First, it must be noted that, in this legislation, the guaranteed family income would include the incomes of both parents, which would mean that if both parents are working to bring home the bacon, and their combined incomes exceed the provisions of the act, automatically, they must do without the allowances, or else, one of the parents must stay home. I think that there would be something to correct there.

The benefits will be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for every child aged from 0 to 18, dependent of a citizen residing in Canada. But if a province pays benefits to the young of 16 to 18, as Quebec now does, no benefits will be paid to them by the government of Canada if it already grants tax rebates to that province.

I read and reread carefully the letter of the right hon. Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) to the Quebec premier, which must have been similar to the one he sent to all the other premiers. I noted that that long letter contained valuable suggestions. On reading the bill, I wondered whether the Quebec government, which fought for years for the jurisdiction over family allowances to be exclusively provincial, is really willing to accept the whole bill as now drafted or whether the government will ask that it be amended.

• (1550)

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I would like to try and look at the rates which will be used to determine entitlement to family allowances, so it will be realized that the selected income levels in the report of the Senate committee on poverty were not high enough. I think we must go higher to achieve better results. According to the report, you must add the allowable basic income of \$4,500 to the amount of \$500 per child, on top of the first one, to get the basic figure.

If the family income is \$6,000 and that family has only one child, the income of \$6,000 less the allowable income of \$4,500 gives you a difference of \$1,500. But since the rate is reduced by 33 cents for every \$100, there is a reduction of \$4.95. For a child in the 0-to-12 age bracket, the maximum amount will be \$15 and the deduction will be \$4.95, so the actual allowance for that child will be \$10.05;