

Old Age Security Act (No. 2)

Mr. Schroder: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know my hon. friend would not like to mislead the House, but this Bill does not have anything to do with cuts or saving money. It has to do with reducing inflation to six and five.

Mr. Lambert: By reducing Government expenditures.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Schroder) is debating; he is not rising on a point of order. The Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour).

Mr. Kilgour: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member opposite is a distant cousin of mine, it turns out. Our families' roots began in the region of Guelph. With respect to him and to you, Mr. Speaker, he does not have the slightest comprehension of what causes inflation.

I respectfully submit that one of the causes of inflation is spending about 25 per cent more in a year than is taken in by way of revenue. The Government has been doing that now for some years and in large measure has been printing the difference. If the Minister who is heckling from the other side went down to his basement and printed as much new money on fresh new bills as the Government has done over the last ten years, he would be put in jail for printing counterfeit money.

I suggest Hon. Members look at what happened in Germany in the 1920s and at what is happening in Argentina today. A government that prints money as fast as this Government has done can only create inflation. For the Hon. Member to get up and say that cutting back on Old Age Security payments will fight inflation is absolute nonsense.

The point I was trying to make, which was made by the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain, is that if you are going to cut payments to people, then cut those being paid to the working population, not those paid to people on pension. Cut anything, cut MPs' salaries, but for Heaven's sake, do not cut money from the thousands and thousands of Canadians across the land—

[Translation]

—all those in every part of the country who count on the OAS.

[English]

This is clearly a stop-gap, an ill thought out, crisis-coping measure that we are dealing with today. It is the measure of a Government that has lost the confidence of the people across Canada. With respect, Mr. Speaker, Canada is a ship without a rudder with a captain who no longer cares in which direction we are going. He is like Captain Queeg who was down in the engine room playing with his beads and took his ship on to the rocks. This country is being taken on to the rocks by this Government.

I would urge Hon. Members opposite to vote against this Bill in the interests of all their constituents.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Is the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary rising on a point of order?

Mr. Maltais: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the Hon. Member.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): This can be done only with unanimous consent because the time allotted to the Hon. Member has now expired.

[English]

Is there unanimous consent for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Maltais) to put a question to the Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Maltais: Mr. Speaker, I should like to know what means other than those proposed by this government would the Hon. Member advocate to bring down the inflation rate.

Mr. Kilgour: There are a number of steps the government could take to fight inflation. I have already mentioned reducing the budgetary deficit. That is one measure. We might also follow the example of Japan, West Germany and Switzerland. Obviously, the governments of those three countries have been much more successful than ours and those of all other countries in their fight against inflation. Those three governments have implemented a series of policies especially aimed at fighting inflation. For instance, the government of West Germany has lowered the so-called trade barriers to alleviate price competition. A government can promote investments. For instance, the government of West Germany grants a tax exemption to every resident who invests in housing. This keeps the manufacturing industry going. There is less unemployment. There are more people paying taxes and, therefore, providing the government with more revenues. In short, there are a number of steps the government could take to fight inflation. Also, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that a careful study of the policies of these three countries would help us determine what anti-inflation measures Canada should implement. I can say that such anti-inflation measures have been very successful in those three countries.

Mr. Maltais: Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Hon. Member.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): I repeat that the unanimous consent of the House would again be required.