

Family Allowances Act, 1973

OECD ranked Canada lower than the twentieth position in the world. This is shameful in light of the fact which demonstrates clearly that just 14 years ago when this Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) took office we were the second highest nation in the world in terms of standard of living.

For the first time in 15 years, after a tremendous record of decreasing poverty in this country, we have an increase. There are now more poor people in this country. The Liberal answer to that is to cap the Family Allowance. When inflation is going up, they put a lid on those people so that their power with respect to value is decreasing.

The Minister might say we are allowing it to go up some. If it does not go up equally with inflation, it is going down. There is no other direction. All indexing does is to index value. If the indexing is less than the value of inflation, the value goes down. They are giving to the people of Canada not only poverty, but more poverty; poverty upon poverty.

The Liberals do this in the same week that they tell poor Donald Macdonald he can have \$800 a day. Do you know that Donald Macdonald has to work ten days every year before he reaches the poverty level? That is how much that poor Liberal has to work. Poor Michael Pitfield in the Senate. He has to work another 15 or 20 days before he gets enough money to reach the poverty line. The Liberal answer for those families below the poverty line is to cap their Family Allowance, to hold them below the rate of inflation.

It would have been different if that were the policy for the richer people in Canada, those in the higher income levels. To put a cap on them would have been saleable to Canadians. However, universally to put a cap on those in all brackets, including the growing poverty group, is not acceptable.

I want to bring to the attention of Hon. Members the fact that of all families, 48 per cent are single-parent families headed by females. Let me assure those who somehow think this money is being spent foolishly that in the majority of cases, and the data proves this, the money is directed to food, clothing, shelter and other necessities.

The Hon. Member for Lincoln accused us of playing on fears. There is fear. It would be blind of us not to recognize it. There is the fear of the 1.5 million unemployed, which does not include the more than 500,000 who have given up looking for work. After months of looking, they have found no work.

It does not include the native Indians of this country, none of whom are listed in the Statistics Canada rating of unemployed people in Canada. We have an unemployment rate on the different reservations across the country ranging from 60 to 80 per cent. Native people are not included.

Miss Bégin: That is not true.

Mr. Malone: That is true. Let us have a little talk afterwards and I will show you.

Miss Bégin: It is not a fact. It is the opposite.

Mr. Malone: It is not the opposite. There is a nice debate across the floor of the House. It would be good to enlighten the

Liberals. It simply is not the fact at all. This is lovely. I have some support from the NDP, which sits to my left. That at least demonstrates that I have the support of both the Conservatives and the Liberals because I have the support of the Conservatives and the NDP.

On the one hand we have the situation where there is the capping of Family Allowances. That affects the poor and keeps them below the rate of inflation. On the other hand, we have to look at what is happening with respect to Government expenditures. The Member of my Party who spoke before me went through a number of issues. Interestingly enough, he dealt with many of the same ones on which I intended to comment.

Miss Campbell: You must have the same researcher.

Mr. Malone: It is important, when we talk about restrictions and Government spending, to recognize the onus upon us to talk about where the money will come from. That is not hard, thank goodness, because we have a Liberal Government.

Look at Mirabel Airport. I know that if Mirabel were not there, we still could not buy everything. We cannot use it as an excuse all the time. However, the truth is that hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland were destroyed and that it was built at a cost of \$600 million. Every year it has an operating deficit. The airlines do not want to use it, nor do the people of Montreal.

• (1640)

The newspapers in Boston advertise encouraging people to go to Boston to use their airlines to fly overseas because there is less fuss there for Canadians than in using the Mirabel Airport. That is just one \$600 million expenditure of the ones I have listed, Sir, which would have covered the cost which the Minister is talking about today dealing with food, clothing and shelter of children in those families that are under the poverty line.

There is also the fact that the Government spent over \$1 million to advertise its six and five program. The six and five program was intended, in part, to hold down the increase in Family Allowances. We certainly never supported any \$1 million advertising program telling us that the program was okay. This is the same Government which runs Canada Post where the stamps lick the people rather than the other way around. We are in a situation where the Canada Post deficit is running wild—

An Hon. Member: We have reduced the deficit.

Mr. Malone: What a brilliant piece of Liberal logic I heard from the other side, Mr. Speaker. The Hon. Member has told me that the Government has reduced the deficit. That must mean that if it can make the deficit high enough and then reduce it, it has cleared its conscience. That will not wash. As the Hon. Member for Lincoln was saying a few moments ago, Canadians are more sophisticated than that. He is right. And at the present time the polls indicate that.