

told them that because they had such a high family income they did not qualify for the day care supplements that were provided by the provincial government or for the capital grants that the provincial government at that time provided.

They told me in no uncertain terms that while their family income was high, they as spouses, as women, were poor and that the only income on which they could rely was the family allowance cheque that they got once a month, a cheque that was addressed to the women themselves, but was inadequate really to provide a decent standard of living for the family apart from what the men were earning in the pulp and paper or in the forest industry.

My argument is that we should be raising family incomes in this country, raising family allowance income in this country, raising old age pensions and then increasing the tax on the wealthiest people so that the amount of increase can be paid for directly from income tax. There should be a balancing not only between rich and poor but also within families so that the women in that family have the same amount of income as the breadwinner. There should be a distribution of income in the family as well as between the rich and the poor people in our society.

What this legislation does is precisely the opposite. It focuses on a type of income. It makes that income liable to a different kind of tax than the way the rest of the income is taxed. It is going to create pressure in this country, especially from higher income earners, to do away with this universal system of pensions and family allowances altogether.

It is bad legislation. It violates the promise that the Prime Minister made when he said that he would not touch universal programs, that universal programs were a sacred trust. It is a subtle—and as the chairman of the finance committee said—a sneaky way of getting around that promise and actually destroying universal social programs by this system that we see in this legislation. It is dirty, it is underhanded, and if the members on the other side had an ounce of conviction, if the members on the other side supported and believed and campaigned on the basis of the promise that the Prime Minister made back in 1984, they would be on their feet in this House, in caucus, and in cabinet demanding that the Prime Minister

live up to his promise and that he withdraw this legislation and respect his promise to maintain the universality of social programs rather than bringing in sneaky, underhanded legislation such as this which is designed to destroy the universality of those social programs, but in a very underhanded way.

We have seen countless studies and countless statistics showing that since the Tories took office in 1984 the rich have actually been excused from paying taxes in this country. They have paid less since the Tories came into office, and the poor have been frozen, ghettoized in poor income levels. The middle-income people and the people who pay income taxes based on salaries and hourly rates of earnings have seen a tremendous growth in the amount of tax they have to pay. The rich are getting away with murder as a result of Tory policy, the poor are frozen in a ghetto of poverty as a result of inadequate Tory policies, and the people who are at the lower end of the income scale and the middle income scale end up paying a heck of a lot more as a result of the Tory policy which supports the rich and ghettoizes the poor and leaves the rest of us paying far more than we should.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): It being five o'clock p.m. the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS — MOTIONS

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of amending the Access to Information Act to ensure that all Canadians have right of access to all environmental information gathered or held by the government.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak on an issue that I know is of pressing interest and concern to Canadians from coast to coast. This government, much like its Liberal predecessor, was proven to be among the most if not the most indifferent in the western world when it comes to