

Old Age Security Act (No. 2)

Now, I listened with some interest to the Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands (Mr. Manly) when he commented disparagingly upon the part our Party has played with respect to this legislation. I say that our Party has been very straightforward in its condemnation of what must be regarded as special treatment for special people by the Government. That special treatment should be accorded to those most deserving in society, that group I have just identified.

I find it rather interesting that the NDP has consistently adopted a policy of spending money, indexing everything, without regard to the source of funds. Their lack of recognition of the need to take that into account is clearly best demonstrated by the public recognition of that failure and their regard among the general public as most recently displayed in the public opinion polls. If I could pass on advice to Members of that Party who wish to in any way enhance the public's view of their performance, let me suggest they be more reasonable and sensible and account for the fact that they are constantly deciding to spend and index without paying any attention to the consequences of their actions. I believe that once you spend a dollar, the dollar cannot be spent again unless you borrow it and pay interest on it. That is a policy which has, unfortunately, been adopted by the Government.

Now, last month there were two Bills before this House, Bill C-129 and Bill C-130, dealing with rather substantial amounts of money. The first Bill dealt with the advancing of no less than \$1.7 billion to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and I heard not one whisper from Members to my left as to how that money might well have been redirected to helping the very people whom they are now complaining are not receiving these funds. Members of this Party spoke about that, about how this money was leaving Canada for international financial institutions without any hope of control by this Parliament or the Government over how the money was to be spent. How that money was to be spent was beyond our control. I could not conceive for one moment why Members of the NDP were not jumping up and down in their place demanding that that substantial sum be directed to the payment of the indexing of pensions plans for senior citizens.

Immediately following that Bill's passage, we were confronted with Bill C-130 which provided for the incurring of an obligation in the aggregate amount of \$117 million. In this case the funds were to be paid at the discretion of the Government to a number of international banks. Once again, there was not one whimper of objection from the NDP. The policy that that Party has regretfully followed is best illustrated by the fact that when money is being spent, regardless of for what, they favour it. However, when there is a curtailment in expenditures with a view to controlling the deficit and reducing the cost of financing the national debt, the Members of that Party consistently clamour against the legislation. It makes it extremely difficult for a prudent public to be able to distinguish between what actions they adopt as correct and what actions they adopt as incorrect.

I favour the position of opposing legislation which has the effect, unreasonably, of extracting funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund which will not benefit Canadians. I favour legislation where we have a good moral or business reason for favouring the expenditure. In this case, Mr. Speaker, I certainly favour the position of opposing this specific piece of legislation encompassed within the confines of Bill C-131, for the reasons I have given.

• (1720)

In opposing this legislation I am perfectly consistent with the views I have expressed about helping Canadians first. Among those Canadians we should help are those who have served their country long, who are no longer in a position to contribute in the same fashion as others to their welfare and have become entitled to special protection from this place and other Canadians.

Mr. Paul E. McRae (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I have been sitting here for several weeks listening to this debate and it behooves me to try to respond a little to some of the things that have been said. When we keep hearing people from both sides talking about how much of a Grinch we are, how we are so tight and cruel and so on, I have to respond because I think the facts are just not in that order. That is not the situation. This Government, one that I have been involved with for ten years, has been very, very supportive of Canadians in general, and particularly those Canadians who need more support than other Canadians. To say this is untrue is, to my mind, totally false and quite hypocritical.

I particularly find hypocrisy in the Tory Party very difficult to accept. I have heard Members from the other side rant and rave about Government spending and talk about their great model. I remember one of the Members from British Columbia and also the Opposition critic for finance preach that Reaganomics is the answer. They said that this was the approach that we should all take, that we should get Governments off our backs, and they talked about the great economic views of the President of the United States, views that we have come to know as Reaganomics.

I would just like to refer to a couple of articles dealing with Reaganomics, because this is the argument that has been made about this Government and its spending. It is an argument that, if the Tory Party believes in it, means they are really hypocritical in dealing with this Bill.

The first piece was from Houston dated June 15 and appeared in the *New York Times*. It says:

President Reagan returned to the Oval Office today for the first time since the start of his European trip two weeks ago but then flew here this afternoon for a rousing defence of his economic policies and some partisan blasts at his critics.

The occasion for Mr. Reagan's rally was a \$1,000-a-plate dinner for 3,500 cheering, applauding Texans.

The next article is dated a few weeks later, July 19, from *Newsweek*, as follows:

Last April the Texas Department of Human Resources issued a pamphlet entitled "Dead Broke in Texas?" warning newcomers not to expect much in the way of public assistance. It points out that the average welfare and food-stamp