Family Allowances Act, 1973

• (1540)

If that is not bad enough, Dr. Lyall Black, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health and Welfare, the Minister responsible for this retrogressive legislation, was given a one year posting at the Canadian embassy in Paris. Working as a medical officer, Dr. Black was allowed to keep his own salary even though the medical officer at the Canadian embassy is usually paid as much as $20,000 per year less. In other words, Mr. Black was receiving the same pay in Paris while performing a lesser job. That was reported in the Ottawa *Citizen* on September 29, 1982.

Consider the horrendous nightmare story of Janet Smith, an Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet, who was sent to Nice in southern France for four months to learn French. The cost to the taxpayer of this Riviera education was $12,000 plus Ms. Smith's salary which is in the range of $60,000 to $70,000 per year, as reported in the Toronto *Sun*, June 27, 1982.

Keeping in mind that Bill C-132 is a restraint Bill, it is interesting to note that the federal Government spent $1 million to promote its six and five program by setting up exhibits at the Canadian National Exhibition, the Pacific National Museum and Expo Quebec, as reported in *The Globe and Mail* on December 2, 1982.

While the Government spends $1 million to promote and advertise restraint, it is also reported that it continues to pay the salary of the former Deputy Minister of Finance who annually receives in excess of $100,000, although he does not work for the Government.

This seems to be an extremely contradictory restraint program. In fact, it is obviously based upon a double standard. It allows large sums of money to be paid to people who no longer work for the Government, while extracting much needed funds from individual taxpayers. This point was discussed in the *Hansard* issue of February 1, 1982 at page 22373.

The generosity of the Government does not end here. We are all aware of the Maislin Trucking bail-out and the selection of Mr. Erickson to design the embassy in Washington. These are all examples of the Government's misuse of resources, and they represent an offence to all Canadians and to most honest Members in this Chamber.

In February 1981, the CNR spent $64,244 to purchase advertising space to wish the CPR, its chief competitor, a happy birthday. The source of that is Question 2135 on the Order Paper presented by the late Tom Cossitt, and answered in that fashion by the Government—$64,244 to purchase advertising space by the CNR to compliment the CPR, its chief competitor, and wish it a happy birthday!

My final examples are in reference to that model of efficiency, the ideal Crown corporation, Canada Post. On the day that Canada Post became a Crown corporation, the Government helped employees celebrate by providing $300,000 worth of free coffee, donuts and souvenir envelopes, according to a CP wire story of October 16, 1981, Item 861. In July of 1982, the Post Office spent another $200,000 to run advertisements in 39 newspapers and publications to tell Canadians that postal service will improve in the future. One would think that improved service would speak for itself. The preceding examples of Government waste are deplorable and inexcusable by the standards of any normal responsible Government.

Over the past 15 years, Government spending has increased at an unprecedented rate. On a national accounts basis, where data is comparable over time, spending has climbed from $12.4 billion in 1968 to $90.6 billion this year, an increase of 630 per cent. In the current fiscal year, the Government will spend $18 billion more on a national accounts basis than the P.C. Government had planned to spend. The gross national debt last March 31 was $134 billion, the equivalent of $14,200 for every taxpayer in Canada. The cost of interest alone on this year's debt is expected to be approximately $16.7 billion, more than the entire budget of the federal Government just a few short years ago.

As a Member of Parliament, elected to serve the needs of my constituents, I cannot in good conscience accept Bill C-132 which reduces the increases in Family Allowances while having full knowledge of a Government that has allowed spending to increase uncontrollably. Poor financial management and lack of expertise in formulating their priorities is a poor excuse for Liberal social policy.

In conclusion, I want to say that the Government's six and five restraint program is, in the final analysis, an exercise in futility. I have attempted to illustrate that this policy has been of extremely limited value in the fight against inflation. What it has managed to do, and quite successfully I might add, is to attack those segments of society most dramatically affected by the recession, a recession which is largely the result of monetary and fiscal irresponsibility on the part of the Liberal Government.

Bill C-131, C-132 and C-133 are all similar in that they attack the members of our society who have been and will be the foundation of Canada's future. First, they seek to deprive pensioners and senior citizens from funds they have themselves contributed. They are divesting this important social group of the security and independence they have worked for and deserve. On the other hand, the Bill which is being voted on today seeks to undermine drastically the potential of our youth and the ability of the less fortunate to raise their families effectively.

There is no financial reason for restricting the increases in Family Allowances to 6 per cent in 1983 and 5 per cent in 1984. As we have seen, there are countless areas within the governmental bureaucracy which could be trimmed and redesigned to save money and reduce the debt.

Let us give one credit where credit is due. The present Liberal Government has finally seen the light and has given the Metric Commission their walking papers. It has advised the Metric Commission that they are through in two years. The Government is following the path of Reagan in the United States and Thatcher in Britain. That will be a saving to the Canadian taxpayers of over $25 million, which is their budget this year, as soon as they get rid of the Metric Commission. The budget of the Metric Commission this year is up 105 per