

*Government Orders*

The poor and those who are less well off than others are the ones who are hurt directly by Bill C-32. My friend has pointed out a number of areas that I did not hit on that will be directly affected by the cap on the Canada Assistance Plan. The argument has been that it is only a 5 per cent cap, but the fact is that there is the migration that I talked about coming in, and the inflationary rate itself eats up almost 5 per cent. Add to it the migration of those coming from other provinces who have to go on social assistance and turn to some of the benefits provided by the protection services that my friend spoke about, and you have a terrible prospect for these people. You must agree that we are going to end up having to give up some of those services that are so desperately needed in these tough times.

**Mr. Karpoff:** Last fall the government announced, with a great deal of ballyhoo, a program aimed at family violence in which it was going to spend \$1.37 million over five years. At the same time it has taken \$1.2 billion away from British Columbia and something like \$5 billion away from Ontario. What is the reaction that you are getting in the community to a government that on the one hand says it is going to extend services to the tune of \$1.3 million, but then takes several billion dollars away from that same program. The reaction I got was that it was hypocritical, deceitful and a sham. What was the reaction in your part of British Columbia at this kind of shim-shamming on programs?

**Mr. Whittaker:** Mr. Speaker, I think the member for Surrey North has hit on one of the problems that all politicians end up running into because of what this government has been doing over the last little while. On the one hand it says it believes in something and is going to do a set thing, while on the other hand it picks the pockets of the very people it said it would help originally. He spoke of hypocrisy. Canada signed the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The convention itself states that "parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development". At the same time, Canada's social assistance rates are being eroded by Bill C-32. We look at Canada, one of the wealthiest nations in the world, with over one million children living in poverty. We are only second to the United States in the level of child poverty in the industrialized world. It is no wonder people are looking at the government in disbelief.

• (1730)

Where is the reality? What is happening? On the one hand the government picks our pockets, and on the other hand it says it is going to put something back in our pockets. Well if it put anything in, it makes sure there is a hole in that pocket so it dribbles back out again.

People have become very sceptical of what this government has to say. The government members continue to say that as politicians they are trying to do the best thing. It is this government's policies, both monetary and fiscal, that have eroded the respect that politicians have had in the past. It is this government's inability to hear the shouts and the cries of the people of Canada that has eroded the respect that politicians have had in the past. It is this government's total attitude toward the people of Canada that has eroded that respect that politicians have traditionally had in the past.

Frankly, with what I have seen here since 1988, I have some difficulty respecting the group over there as a whole. Yet I still recognize that individually each and every one of them cares as dearly as I do for their constituents. They get together in this herd mentality and do things that can only hurt the people of Canada. I ask them to reconsider Bill C-32 and stop it now.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** Resuming debate. The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-32 is quite straightforward. It has only one clause, whose purpose is to amend the Canada Assistance Plan. This bill proposes extending, from two years to five, the 5 per cent cap on increases in transfer payments under the Canada Assistance Plan. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the cap applies only to provinces that do not receive equalization payments, and I am referring to Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta.

This is a very important bill, Mr. Speaker. Since it affects the very source of our social programs, it will raise a great national debate on the whole subject of social charters, social rights and social services. This worries me, Mr. Speaker, because in the past few years, we have seen a great economic debate on government proposals aimed at restoring the objectives of the political right, in other words, at making the economy less subject to government intervention and more dependent on the private sector.