

• (1310)

This pious nincompoop Government tells the religious communities that they are to feed the poor. Even the religious communities have turned against that kind of selfish, avaricious Government. The Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops issued a statement to the Liberal Government on the same issue. The Liberal Government did not pay attention, to its peril. The situation has now been compounded. The Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops has made very clear what it thinks of Governments that are as amoral as this Government and former Liberal Governments have been, Governments that do not give a fig for ordinary, poor people in Canada.

The people of Canada are restive. They are hearing claptrap from that Hon. Member, a Member I like very much. He is a nice Member in normal circumstances. When I hear that kind of claptrap from him, I realize that he too has missed the message.

We are a lucky people. We are here in Ottawa, well-fed, well-tended to and isolated in Ottawa, but I pointed out to the Hon. Member what is going on in Newfoundland. In the regions, the same poverty exists. The Government has done nothing about poverty. It does not care. It never has cared.

Mr. Soetens: Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the answer to the question that was just asked of the Hon. Member, and the Hon. Member was able to blabber on making all kinds of comments, none of which related to the question. I will try to keep my question rather simple so that the Hon. Member can understand it and perhaps answer it in the same fashion.

The Hon. Member has attacked our Party because we supposedly took all these donations from some businesses that like to support our cause. I would like to ask him about his views on certain issues. Mr. White, a well-known member of the Party of which the Hon. Member is supposedly a member as well, had supplied to him by the CAW a lovely country estate in the Province of Ontario. Mr. White also takes full salary while the union in the province in which he is active is on strike. Most important, in my riding, the local NDP candidate received a donation 12 times greater than that given by any private corporate donor to any Party in my constituency. I would like to know if the Hon. Member really believes that a donation of the magnitude which the

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CAW contributes to its Party should simply go unannounced and unaudited, or should the CAW go back to its membership to confirm that its members like the political donations it has been making and that its leadership should get all the freebies it gets from the union?

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I, by the grace of God, am not a poor person. I benefited from parents who worked their way through the depression to provide their children with a good education. I am not embarrassed by the fact that I am successful and modestly wealthy, but I do have a moral commitment to those who are not as lucky as I, and to use that analogy is sheer stupidity. However, I will embark upon some explanation of the Hon. Member's stupidity.

The trade union movement has made a commitment to talk to its members about donations. When was the last time a bank called a meeting of its shareholders to ask if it should give money to politicians? When was the last time Inco sent letters to its shareholders asking permission to give money to the Liberals or the Conservatives? If there is one shareholder in Canada who got such a letter, I would like to see that letter. No such permission is received. The deals are made in the boardrooms of Canada.

In closing, I would like to repeat what has happened to working people by using the Government's own statistics. Over a 13 year period, growth in wages and salaries did not keep pace with inflation. Average wages and salaries fell 1 per cent between 1975 and 1987. After adjusting the consumer price index, seven of the 12 annual gains in wages and salaries became losses. I urge the trade union movement to give more money to the New Democratic Party in order to get rid of this inequity that exists.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to call it one o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock, I do not leave the Chair until two o'clock.

At 1.15 the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.