

Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)

Repeated reference has been made to the Joyal-Davey report on the six and five program. It is the most expensive Liberal householder which has been put out in Canadian history. It is just propaganda and is not required. It is costing hundreds of thousands of dollars and is simply not needed. We receive the Auditor General's report every year, but the only difference between last year's and this year's report is that this one is worse than last year's. They never get any better.

The Liberals have been in office since 1968, and they have no intention of eliminating waste, mismanagement and duplication. They have proven that time and time again. One must simply read the Auditor General's document to find that out, because it gets thicker every year, not thinner, and the horror stories mount up.

The Auditor General pointed out that about \$16 billion is missing some place. An article in the *Ottawa Citizen* dated November 2, 1982, stated:

Auditor General Kenneth Dye has again proved that his federal Government is at worst not competent to manage money, and at best reluctant to let us know how they handle it.

This is the understatement of the year.

So what are we doing? We are debating a Bill to cut pensions and retirement benefits. The Government is starting at the wrong end. It is very easy to cut pensions. Anyone can go out and cut pensions. However, why does it not implement the recommendations in the Auditor General's report? I have not heard any Liberals discussing that during the debate.

I have in my hand a research paper which is full of horror stories within the Liberal Government. I would simply like to read a couple of examples for the record. One states:

Spending "cut" by juggling the book. In order to present the illusion of slower spending growth, the Government has changed its accounting system by netting out petroleum taxes against petroleum compensation payments. Thus, through a wave of an accountant's magic wand, spending on a public accounts basis is "cut" by \$2.7 billion in the current (1982-83) fiscal year.

That is an example of the type of bookkeeping of the Liberal Government. I guess that in order to account for the \$2.7 billion, the Government will reduce old age pensions. The item continues:

Perhaps the next accounting trip of the Government will be to say that "Income taxes are really a public debt tax, and as such interest on the debt does not cost the Government anything". The logic of this is the same as the logic used by the Government in saying that it does not cost anything to subsidize imported oil.

This is another example of juggling the books. I say: Never mind juggling the books; start balancing the books and start spending the money properly. In this respect the federal Government could well look at the Province of Manitoba and how it pays for its indexing. The Roblin Government set up a plan some years ago whereby pension money is invested to cover the indexing of civil servants in Manitoba. All the indexing comes from the investment of their funds, not from taxes or from general revenues. It is one of the best pension plans in Canada and it is unfortunate that the federal Government did not implement a similar plan. There is no question that the federal pension plans could stand some improvement in the way they are handled. The indexing in Manitoba is not a

drain on the taxpayers of Manitoba; it is a sound, well-administered pension plan and it is most unfortunate that the Liberal Government did not study this plan. If it had, we would not be in the mess we are in today.

• (1120)

I want to point out at this time that I am voting against this amendment.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some brief comments on the amendment which is before us and the Bill we are dealing with. I do not think it is possible to deal with this Bill without thinking out the implications of four pieces of legislation. I remember well in August, when Bill C-124 was brought forward, the Bill to implement the six and five program, the indecent haste with which the Conservative Party dashed across the floor to embrace the Liberals in their efforts to cut the incomes of civil servants.

How well I remember the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) as he rose and said they were prepared to pass the Bill post haste, without debate if necessary. I remember the Leader of the Opposition saying: "It is too little, too late, but it is a step in the right direction". Now we have the hypocrisy.

However, we are now dealing with the fall-out, the consequences of the Tories' inability to see the Liberal duplicity. That is the difficulty we are now facing in this country, the difficulty with which many seniors and all mothers of children are now being faced. I say to the Conservatives that they should be ashamed of themselves.

Let us look at the legislative program. We have before us three Bills. The Bill we are now discussing will limit the entitlement of civil service retirees for the rest of their natural lives. This is not a minor thing; this is a major thrust by the Government. It could not have happened if the Tories had not supported the Government originally; nevertheless now we have it. The Bill ought to be withdrawn. If there was ever a time for this legislation, if it could have been justified—and I say quite bluntly on behalf of myself and my colleagues that we do not believe it was ever justified—but if there was ever a time when it could be said that this kind of measure was appropriate, the time has passed. The mood in the country is now quite different. The sense among those who are most affected is one of outrage. The belief of the majority of Canadian citizens that this is not the kind of legislative action that is necessary has become evident from every single statement by those who support both the Conservatives and Liberals, and it is now becoming a clear violation of what the majority of economists believe is necessary for this country.

I point out that not only did the Catholic Bishops quite justifiably say that a social conscience was desperately needed in dealing with the income capacities and purchasing power of those who were less advantaged than others, for example, seniors, those who are raising families, those who are on extremely low incomes. Not only did they say we needed to take a new look at this legislative program, but Ian Sinclair, the chairman of the six and five committee, has said—and he