

Budget which ignores jobs and intensifies unfairness. Nothing more startling illustrates this unfairness than the shabby and mean-spirited way in which the Tories treat Canada's pensioners. Every senior citizen in Canada will be adversely affected by the Budget. The old age pension will decline by 3 per cent each year due to deindexation.

As I have said before, deindexation may sound mild enough. However, the impact of deindexation will devastate the living standards of Canada's elderly—our parents and grandparents. The annual cut to each and every Old Age Security cheque to each and every pensioner in Canada will be \$100 in 1986; \$205 in 1987; \$315 in 1988; \$431 in 1989; \$553 in 1990; and \$680 in 1991.

By the year 1991, the Conservative Government will be saving \$2 billion on the backs of Canada's elderly. The Government is taking money out of Canada's inadequate pension system—a system which already fails to provide the elderly men and women of this country with retirement in dignity. The Government is taking money out of the pockets of Canada's pensioners while some 1.8 million seniors live in poverty. The Government is condemning the poorest seniors to ever deepening poverty.

The deindexation of pensions means that the incomes of Canada's senior citizens will be subject to the ravages of inflation. It destroys the hopes and dreams of senior citizens for a decent retirement income. It is a shameful attack on the children of the depression—today's seniors who grew up in tough economic times, who came of age in the war years and who have contributed so much to Canadian society. Surely they have the right to retire in dignity.

I say to the Prime Minister that Canada's seniors have paid, and paid handsomely. He says that the Budget rewards those who get up half an hour earlier. That is a cruel joke to play on Canadians who have worked hard all their lives. Show some compassion, Mr. Prime Minister, and remove this contemptible deindexation measure from your Budget.

The Prime Minister has a double standard of fairness. He keeps his election promises for more money to the big oil companies and breaks his promises to Canada's seniors. During last summer's election campaign, when the Government was looking for votes, the Prime Minister promised full indexation of pensions. He promised full indexation would be restored on January 1, 1985. It is patently unfair for the Prime Minister to promise to restore the indexation of pensions for Canada's seniors during the election and then actually slash their benefits in the Budget.

I ask Hon. Members to consider the following. While this Government slashes old age pensions, it is giving \$2.4 billion to big oil companies. It is giving \$600 million to the rich through the capital gains giveaway. It is giving \$235 million to the richest Canadians by increasing and fully indexing the contribution limits for RRSPs. It is giving a further \$2.2 billion to corporations through reduced taxes.

I repeat, the Conservatives have two standards of fairness—one for the privileged few, the wealthy and large corporations,

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and another for Canada's elderly. The Minister of Finance is distressed that there are far too few rich people in Canada. In making that type of statement, I wish he would take a look at what he is doing to the seniors in the country and consider the plight they happen to be living in. It is out there. I know the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) knows and understands that completely. I just wish the rest of the Cabinet would fully understand it. I hope the Minister of National Health and Welfare takes up the suggestion I made to him earlier today in Question Period. I hope he does come with me to visit senior citizens. If he does that, it will give him increased ammunition to fight within Cabinet to make the Government reverse what it is doing to old age pensioners in the country.

When the Liberal Government planned to deindex pensions in 1982, the present Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) called it the meanest move in the Budget. The present Minister of Finance, who was at that time the Opposition's finance critic, and now is the Minister of unfairness, said that the Liberals' plan to deindex pensions "put the boots to those who are hardest hit in the economy today, the low income people and pensioners".

In fact, at that time, the Conservative Party spent \$30,000 to take out full-page newspaper ads across the country in which it condemned the Liberals' plan to deindex pensions. It said it would be harmful to Canada's elderly. In that ad, it urged Canadians to send a message to the Government. I make the same appeal today. I urge anyone out there who is listening to this debate and who has listened to Question Period and what has been going on in this place since the Budget came down, to do exactly what the Conservative Party was asking him or her to do back in 1982, that is to say, to deluge this place with letters, petitions and telegrams so that the Government will clearly understand that what it is doing does not have the support of elderly Canadians, or even of those Canadians who are contemplating retirement.

I wish to make an additional point. I say this anticipating hoots of derision from Members on the government side. In this country, pensions are a non-partisan issue. Pensions affect everyone in the country. I do not care how you lean, whether it is in partial support of the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party, or even the Rhinoceros Party. What the Government is doing through its Budget will affect every senior citizen in the country, everyone who is contemplating retirement and anyone who looks forward to retirement in the few short years ahead.

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The Government is just not listening to the message being sent to it by senior citizens across the country. As I said before, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance should take their own advice by responding to the message sent to them by social policy groups and senior citizens' organizations from coast to coast.

Deindexing old age pensions has been condemned by Canadian Pensioners Concerned, United Senior Citizens of