

the needy, it will surely not remove them when more Canadians than ever need help. On the contrary, and this is what is going on now. That is what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) has been doing all along with his six and five program, and that is what we are doing now.

As to the Hon. Members who have voted in favour of the six and five program and who, for petty political reasons, are now voting against each and every clause or bill to amend the existing programs, I do not understand them. How is it possible to support a comprehensive policy and then vote against every specific bill? Only through cowardice, Mr. Speaker. Cowardice! It is always easy to hold back and say: I am in favour of this principle, but I cannot accept the fact that it may affect me. It reminds me somewhat of what is going on in the Province of Quebec. While they are imposing a 20 per cent cut on everybody, we are granting an 8 per cent increase. That is just about what the PQ members are saying nowadays. It reminds me also of the stand taken by the Progressive Conservative Party here. They say that they are in favour of the six and five program, that they are against inflation, but don't you dare change anything, you Government Members. That is not the way to build a country, Mr. Speaker, and especially not the way this country was built in the past. And there exist today a tremendous country called Canada, in case some people may have forgotten. Tremendous, indeed!

We are faced with problems today. As you know, because there is inflation, some people find it strange and wonder who is to blame. Ever since I came here, Mr. Speaker, a great many things have happened. I remember hearing Hon. Members of the Progressive Conservative Party say and even shout in the House that the Federal Government would not pay for Alberta oil, that it was not paying enough and should pay more for it. Is that not inflation, Mr. Speaker? Because of the problems we are faced with today, we must tell our senior citizens who are getting only the basic Old Age Security Pension, not those who are getting also the Guaranteed Income Supplement: You must accept an indexation capped at 6 per cent this year and 5 per cent next year of your Old Age Security Pension. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that says that the inflation rate will not drop to 6 per cent in 1983. As a matter of fact, I am under the impression that the Government's policy is so successful that it might drop even lower. That is what is really great about it. I am dealing with the Canadian people openly and honestly, and I ask my colleagues here to stop frightening the disadvantaged. Let those who have built Canada enjoy a secure old age and retirement, where life will be as pleasant tomorrow as it is today and where they will be able to lead a peaceful and rewarding life.

• (2140)

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis) rises on a point of order.

Old Age Security Act (No. 2)

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to impinge on the speaker's time, but I did ask if I could place a question before the Hon. Member. I do hope I will be permitted at least a short—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The time has expired. In fact, he has been allowed two minutes extra in compensation for interruptions. Is there unanimous consent of the House for the Hon. Member—there does not appear to be. The Hon. Member for Bruce-Grey (Mr. Gurbin).

Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Bruce-Grey): Mr. Speaker, there are several themes which are being promoted by different groups in the House as we listen to speeches on Bill C-131 which we have before us now, the effect of which really is to limit the increases which would have been experienced by people receiving Old Age Security to 6 per cent and 5 per cent in two successive years.

The theme we are receiving from the Government Members is that we are somehow trying to create an impression in the minds of people which will frighten them, or will concern them. Indeed, I think there are some basic issues which are of major concern, and those issues I would like to approach in just a moment. On the other hand, we are getting another kind of theme from the New Democratic Party, which is a little bit extraordinary. I see Members of the NDP standing up and criticizing this Party because we supported the six and five program. Indeed, that is true. The Conservative Party has supported in general the six and five program because who would not want inflation to be down at that level and interest rates down to that level? Who in their right minds would even suggest that that is not what would be good for the country at this time when we are experiencing the current economic distress? But I would like to make very clear to the NDP and the Government that what we have supported in the six and five program was the general thrust. We did not give a carte blanche to policies like this, or to policies which would affect the Family Allowances for children. Those types of specific policies, I believe, are a separate issue, and those are things we are very much opposed to, and are in fact debating now. But I find it passing strange that the NDP would stand up on the one hand and talk about not supporting the six and five program, when the only specific thing that program did when it was first introduced, apart from any other legislation which we are getting now or that we will get, was to reduce the salaries of Members of Parliament. And the NDP voted en bloc against that.

I would like to approach this, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of some of the basic issues which we are being presented with by this type of legislation right now. This Bill proposes to reduce the amount, which has been committed by the Government and which was expected by people who are receiving Old Age Security across Canada over the next two years, by an amount that will be equivalent to approximately \$300.

I think we have to take several things into consideration. First of all, the population is aging, some us faster than we would like. The fact is that in the last ten years there are over