

to this topic. If nobody else wishes to speak at this time, I suggest that we consider the order debated.

The Hon. the Speaker: If no other honourable senator wishes to speak, this order is considered as having been debated.

SPORTS POOL AND LOTO CANADA WINDING-UP BILL

SECOND READING—ORDER STANDS

Leave having been given to revert to Order No. 2:

Resuming the debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Phillips, seconded by the Honourable Senator Doody, for the second reading of the Bill C-2, intituled: "An Act respecting the winding-up of the Canadian Sports Pool Corporation and Loto Canada Inc."—(*Honourable Senator Perrault, P.C.*)

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have made some inquiries and Senator Perrault is unable to be here until later this afternoon. I shall discuss with him the matter of debating this order tomorrow.

Order stands.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES

GOVERNMENT STATEMENT—DEBATE CONCLUDED

Hon. Ian Sinclair rose pursuant to notice of December 19, 1984:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the growing concern, even in some cases fear, arising from the contradictory government statements on economic and social policy.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise at this time in a very contrite way. When I last brought this matter to the attention of honourable senators, it was just prior to a long vacation period for Parliament. At that time a certain group of people within the country were deeply concerned. Shortly thereafter, the Prime Minister, in a spirit of remembering what was, in his words, a sacred trust, said unequivocally to the House of Commons and to the public, "There will be universality," and those elderly people who had felt concern went to happy Christmas. Now, as we approach the summer vacation, concern, fear, misunderstanding and wonder rest once again in the bosoms of those elderly people. Why?

This time their fear is greater. They thought the Prime Minister of this country, remembering his promise on universality—and it took their fear to bring it to the fore—would not

let it happen again. But it has happened again. Just yesterday an honourable senator from the province of Alberta brought to the attention of the Senate via petition this very real concern. The people who are concerned have lived in their salad days. Honourable senators will recall that I asked the honourable senator for the average age of these concerned Alberta citizens, but he did not now. I am sure that the median age would be much higher than the median age in this very distinguished chamber.

Some honourable senators have suggested that we wait and see what the Prime Minister says. Honourable senators will remember that he said, "I have no hesitation at all in saying that I hesitate, and this is why I have put this off until 1986." The Leader of the Government also drew this statement to the attention of honourable senators. The proposed elimination of full indexation of Old Age Security will not go away because it bothers people. You might say that they should not be worried, that when the Minister of Finance, a man of great integrity and the Prime Minister, a man of great words, move across this country reassuring people, they should accept it. Why should they accept this reassurance when all the Prime Minister has to do is to say, "I promised you that indexation of Old Age Security would not be touched; I am a man of my word, and it will not be touched," and the concern will disappear.

If you say that they should not be fearful, I remind you of the words we heard in just the past few days, that perception is often more important than the fact. If the perception of elderly people is that they will have their pensions cut, that there will be some slicing, even if the fact is that there will not, surely that perception should be looked at and action taken. What can be done? The *Globe and Mail* of June 18 quotes in an article Ms. Joyce King, President of the United Senior Citizens of Ontario:

—the federal Government's proposal to limit old-age pension increases will have a massive negative impact on the lives of hundreds and thousands of Ontario senior citizens—

Hundreds of thousands of Ontarians are concerned and while the task forces of the government rush across the country talking about what they have done for business and what that will do for the investment climate, is it not time that a single word or a single sentence was uttered by the Prime Minister to allay the fears of our senior citizens?

After the words of the Prime Minister just before last Christmas, I delayed rising to speak to this inquiry. In view of the necessity for action now, I rise again and I hope that honourable senators and the Leader of the Government will bring this matter forcibly to the attention of the government before our senior citizens go through this summer—for some of them their last summer—under this cloud.