

Government Orders

Let us also look at programs that allow people who are not in the conventional labour market to contribute to pensions, including the Canada Pension Plan. There have been discussions about making it possible for women who have chosen to stay home to be part of our pension plan system on a systematic basis, something which they cannot now do.

I see that the Speaker is indicating that my time is up. I would therefore like to sum up by saying that I cannot support this legislation. I think it is a piece of legislation that the Tories have concocted to pay off their wealthy friends handsomely. It is not pension reform. It has nothing to do with guaranteeing adequate levels of income so that people may live in dignity when they retire.

We have to go back to the words of Stanley Knowles and bring in a true pension reform program.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the hon. member's speech and I wondered if he was speaking on the same bill as is before the House. I must say that I see all sorts of areas here where loopholes have been closed in this tax reform. He mentions it benefiting the rich. It seems to me that the tax assistance to high income people will be curtailed by this bill. I wonder if perhaps the member could point out to me where he sees that benefit to the rich. It seems to me it is quite the other way around.

I look at the area of assistance for young families who now, when buying a new home, would not have an opportunity to make the maximum contribution to their pension plan because all of their cash is going into the purchase of a home or savings for a home. Today that opportunity is lost. With this tax reform such a young family, or a young woman going out on her own, or a separated family that needs that extra cash, rather than losing that opportunity to put money into a pension, they have a seven-year carry forward which gives them that opportunity. That is only one aspect as I read through this bill.

It seems to me that many loopholes for high income earners have in fact been closed. This new tax reform in this pension bill makes it much fairer for all Canadians right across the board.

I enjoyed the nostalgia trip back to 1964 with Stanley Knowles, but I wonder if the member might want to talk about this bill in 1990.

Mr. Karpoff: Mr. Speaker, not only would I like to talk about in 1990, I would like to talk about it in 1995 and all the years in between. Does the hon. member really believe that he can hoodwink the Canadian public by saying that we are going to give a \$1,000 tax credit to people earning under \$20,000 and a \$7,000 tax credit to people earning over \$86,000? That is money back. That is the same as the government taking it out of its pocket and sending them a cheque. That is what this bill is all about. That is what this bill is all about. It makes it possible for the wealthy to avoid paying their fair share of taxes.

The member talks about the young couple buying a house. This government has made it impossible for young families in this country to buy housing. The high interest rate policy that it has continued to carry on means that families who are earning even \$30,000 and \$40,000 cannot afford to buy a home. The government did away with the RHOSP which at least enabled people to save a little money for a downpayment.

The member stands up and talks about these people who are buying a house. If they are buying a house in this country they probably are earning over \$50,000 or \$86,000. They are not the single parent on a wage of \$18,000 a year. What do single women in this country earn? They do not earn \$86,000. They are the ones who are working at the \$5 and \$6 an hour jobs. That is not going to get them into the tax brackets that this piece of legislation is intended to benefit.

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Surrey North for his comments with respect to this legislation and for putting it in the context of our approach to the whole question of tax reform in this country. As the hon. member has noted, the 20 per cent of Canadian families with the highest incomes ended up with 41.8 per cent of the total income pie and the 20 per cent of families with the lowest incomes got less than 5 per cent.

What this legislation would do, of course, is make that even worse. An individual who earns \$20,000 a year would get an annual tax break of about \$1,200 but someone who is making more than \$86,000 a year would get an annual tax break of \$7,500 a year. So this is regressive tax reform.

I must say that I am disappointed in the Liberal Party. It is not surprising, I suppose, that they are standing with the Conservative party on this legislation since, of course, it is very similar to legislation that they tabled in 1984. We had hoped that perhaps on this policy, as on so