

Family Allowances Act, 1973

becoming an authority on the costs of daycare. I can tell the House that it amounts to \$312.50 a month. Therefore, the Family Allowance for an entire year would barely cover one month of daycare on Parliament Hill. Of course, if one is discussing education for children one can say that once they get into the public school system there is no cost, so the Hon. Member is full of feathers and wet behind the ears, as usual. Concerning the cost of children's clothing, this has been mentioned by some other Members in the House, and the relationship between food, education and clothing, as the Hon. Member for Churchill said, is totally irrelevant to this debate.

The Hon. Member for Churchill said that the NDP was also the only Party in this House that was fighting this Bill.

Mr. Deans: That's right.

Mr. Clarke: Right now we are discussing the amendment, which I notice that not all Hon. Members have addressed, and I also note that this is our amendment. I hope, although there has been no evidence of it, that the NDP will have many amendments to bring forward—

Mr. Deans: No, you can't amend something that is unamendable!

Mr. Clarke: —if its Members will allow this to come to a vote.

Mr. Deans: How do you amend something that is totally wrong?

Mr. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, I notice, and again I speak in facts, that on Fridays the Party over to the righteous left had one Hon. Member to speak on this very important amendment. They could not get anyone else up on Friday, but today they complain that we are not putting anyone else up. The logic of the New Democratic Party is, as usual, just not there.

● (2130)

Again, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy), did not talk about the amendment. He referred to the Bill a couple of times, but he also spent his time talking about the bad performance of the Tory Party, and asking where all the Members were, I think I explained, Mr. Speaker, there are over 60 Members of this caucus in another meeting in this very building.

The Member for Churchill made another false statement, Mr. Speaker, and I say that without fear of contradiction. The Member for Churchill, when called to order on it, admitted that he had made an 100 per cent error in that he had said that precisely half the number of speakers from the Progressive Conservative Party had spoken as was the fact. When this was later pointed out to him, he admitted to that.

If the Party to my left is so indignant and wants to prolong the debate, how is it that in an hour only three or so of them spoke? They must know the rules of the House. The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) was trying to tell us what they were, and they should know that short speeches and no amendments is not the way to delay a Bill, if

that is what they want to do. Maybe they would like to take lessons from the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). I am sure he could give them some ideas.

I want to say a word about restraint, because that is what this Bill which is being modified by this amendment is all about, the six and five. That is restraint, and certainly the Progressive Conservatives are for restraint. I think we have indicated that in our actions in the House, and we have also argued in favour of fewer Crown corporations, for example, less Government expenditure, all of these things that add up to more restraint and lower deficits, which would bring us to a position of lower inflation. If we had lower inflation, then of course we would not have the need for this kind of a capping Bill.

I made reference earlier to the taxing back feature of the Family Allowance Program, and for greater clarity I just want to say that although the mother or principal caretaker of a child gets the amount of money, the amount is deemed to have been received by the person in that household earning more, the higher earning parent, usually the father, but that is immaterial, really. Therefore the maximum benefit from the Family Allowance plan goes to the families and the children and the mothers that need it the most. I think that is fair; I think that is the way it should be.

Having said that, if we analyse what capping does, it means that the higher income people will pay less income tax because they will have less income on which to pay tax. This obviously means—and I can only think that the Minister did not realize this when the whole program was accepted—that the lower income Canadians are the ones who are going to be penalized by this measure, not the higher income Canadians who are suffering already from the tax back feature of the Family Allowance payment.

I have heard it said that the whole capping procedure is going to save \$320 million, and then another figure has been introduced into the debate which indicates that it will cost \$250 million this year for the higher tax credit that has been given to parents, and a net cost of \$70 million is what is being quoted. But that ignores the tax back, Mr. Speaker, and my figures tell me that, considering that the higher income earners do not receive the Child Tax Credit and do pay tax on their Family Allowances, the estimated saving will be something like \$15 million. This Government could lose that in about a day and a half, as I recall, the way things go over there.

I think the ultimate aim of my intervention on this amendment of my friend, the Hon. Member for Calgary West would be to try to persuade some of the Members opposite to allow the next session of Parliament—if indeed it ever comes, and that is becoming doubtful now as we carry on through two and half years in this session—to decide what financial measures should be taken in 1984. If inflation is bad, or if it abates, then maybe the cap should be a different amount. Perhaps it should be higher in 1984; perhaps it should be lower in 1984; perhaps there should not be any cap in 1984.