

## Government Orders

their parents of financial obligations. Individuals in this age bracket are typically earning the highest income of their lives.

The obvious impact of higher earnings combined with reduced expenses is increased savings. People between the ages of 50 and 65 contribute to RRSPs and pay down their mortgages. In addition, higher income earners pay higher Canada pension plan rates which in turn increases the benefit levels for CPP when the individual retires.

According to the most recent taxation statistics available, Canadians between the ages of 50 and 64 contribute \$23.49 more than the average tax filer to CPP; \$113.25 more to registered pension plans and \$571.06 more to RRSPs. What this means is that Canadians between the ages of 50 and 65 contribute over \$700 more per year toward their retirement, or 54 per cent more than the average taxpayer.

By removing these able bodied individuals from the workforce the government is sentencing these Canadians to a subsistence living made up of this annuity and welfare for the next few years. This will offer these Canadians only a subsistence living in their post-65 retirement years, comprised of guaranteed income supplement and old age security program payments. These people are going to be tomorrow's poor seniors and the government is doing nothing which would prevent this.

We have to ask what can be done to bring about economic prosperity for regionally depressed areas of Atlantic Canada. There are numerous measures the government could take to achieve this. One such measure is a plan for real deficit reduction and tax relief for Canadians. Eliminate marginal or useless government spending. Put money back into the hands of Canadians by not taking it out of their hands in the first place.

In many of the poorer provinces we have seen how a government downturn leads to more government spending and then to increased taxation which saps income from the very people it was intended to assist.

A second measure would be improving the access of Atlantic Canada to the lucrative eastern U.S. market. Canada's economy has always been dependent on trade, and the areas of Canada which have flourished economically have done so as the result of strong links to our trading partners.

A third measure would be a plan for proper management of Atlantic Canada's resources. This would not only include better management of Canada's fishery but better management of human resources. This would ensure that 15 years from now we are not telling another generation of Canadians that its skills are obsolete.

I am not advocating increased government intervention. On the contrary. It was government bureaucracy that was responsible for much of this problem in the first place and government money is not going to bring back fishery jobs.

• (1355)

However, the government can encourage young Canadians to choose their career paths wisely, assist people in identifying emerging industries in Canada and can help to ensure that Atlantic Canada is prepared to take advantage of future opportunities.

In conclusion, I will not be opposing this bill because it provides laid off fisheries workers with a subsistence living when their unemployment insurance expires. Who could wish to add to the hardship they are already experiencing? Certainly not I and certainly not my Reform colleagues.

However, I will oppose this bill because it fails to provide a path to the long term economic recovery of Atlantic Canada. Bill C-30 fails to provide financial independence to the fish plant workers who have devoted their careers to a traditional industry and wish to continue to earn a living. What these Canadians need is a tool to earn that living.

**Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester):** Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I listened to the comments of the hon. member from the Reform Party today. If he had spent very much time along those fishing coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador, along the shores of Cape Breton Island and throughout Nova Scotia he would see and perhaps have a little more empathy for the dire straits these people find themselves in.

I would ask the hon. member at this time if he so opposes this bill what suggestions might he have to solve this immediate crisis and to have some impact as we take direction for the long term future of these people who have known nothing but the history of the sea, fishing, for over 200 years.

**Mr. Mayfield:** Madam Speaker, the difficulty with this bill is it comes in the midst of a lot of nothing. We have had years of the government ignoring the difficulties that the fisheries on the east coast have been experiencing. There is no insight into this bill at all about the long term solution. This is another band-aid being applied, a band-aid which will simply forestall the long term planning that is required.

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops):** Madam Speaker, listening to my hon. friend, it is a bit like saying that since we do not have a cure for cancer we will not take any steps to bring you some peace of mind and some effort to resolve your problems in the short run.

While I will be the first to say that this legislation is not the long term solution to the economic plight faced by those people living in Atlantic Canada and on the short end of the stick regarding the collapse of the cod fishery, to say that we should do nothing, to say that we should simply turn our backs on these people and let them fend for themselves at this point is not a Canadian way to respond. Canadians by definition are people with compassion who go out of their way to assist their citizens in troubled times in other parts of the country.