

expenditures in the long term, when the baby boom generation reaches retirement age.

In the future, the challenge for individuals and decision makers will be to balance the various sources of retirement income, so as to ensure that private and public retirement funds, along with personal savings, will be such that the largest possible number of Canadians and Quebecers can enjoy an adequate standard of living in their retirement years.

It is essential for the government to realize that it must not cut into social programs and thus reduce the quality of life of our seniors. Rather, it must cut into the family trusts of rich Canadian families, since assets held in these trusts are not subject to capital gains tax for several years.

● (1945)

These trusts allow rich families to protect part of their family assets from generation to generation. Family trusts, which were introduced in 1972 by the Trudeau government, required a deemed disposal of assets in trust after 21 years, that is in 1993 for trusts set up before 1973.

The Bloc Quebecois has nothing against family trusts; however, it does object to their use as tax loopholes. For example, the Bloc is against the deferral, to the next generation, of the tax payable on capital gains. We also ask the government to release the figures on the value of assets held in family trusts and on the loss of tax revenue resulting from the deferral of the tax payable on capital gains.

The Income Tax Act should also be amended to prevent Canadian companies with subsidiaries abroad from using the fiscal losses of these subsidiaries to reduce their taxable income in Canada.

Bill C-282 is an act to amend the Income Tax Act so as to eliminate, for taxpayers aged 65 and over who are eligible to the credit for disability, the applicable reserve. This bill is acceptable, since disabled senior citizens are often among the poorest people in our society.

As spokesperson for Canadian associations and organizations representing seniors, I once again pledge to ensure that this social program review does not become a mere exercise to cut into programs which protect the poor, and particularly the elderly.

I have always been firmly opposed to letting the federal government reduce the deficit at the expense of our seniors, who have worked all their life and who deserve a decent standard of living.

We support this measure because all the medical costs would be deductible from the income of disabled seniors, and we feel that this amendment is essential.

Adjournment Debate

[English]

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to be able to reply to Bill C-282, moved by the member for Burin—St. George's, a most beautiful peace of the rock.

I commend the hon. member for his initiative. I only wish it were a votable item. I find there are a growing number of seniors moving into my riding of Victoria—Haliburton. As the population in my area grows, this bill will be a great asset to the people in my riding. In other words, all eligible medical expenses will effectively be income deductible for disabled seniors.

Elimination of the burden borne by disabled seniors with respect to medical expenses is indeed something to be commended. Disabled adults over the age of 65 have the highest medical expenses of any group in our society.

This bill, moved by the hon. member for Burin—St. George's will provide relief for over 170,000 seniors who qualify because of low income, and the number of those in that age bracket is growing every year.

The bill targets a very deserving group in our society and is designed to address the need for fairness in the Income Tax Act. Three million dollars will be available for 170,000 poor, disabled, deserving people who are seniors. Who could question this motivation? Fifty-six per cent of the group are women.

I commend the member. I promise to bring my concerns and the concerns of other members to the minister, and work for disabled seniors not only in Victoria—Haliburton but in all of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 96, the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to once again pose a question I posed to the minister responsible for ACOA. I posed this question on December 8 and I do not believe I received a satisfactory answer. Therefore, I would like to raise it again.

When I do get the answer this time I would rather not go into the rhetoric of regional development grants. I would like to get