

*Government Orders*

[English]

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who just spoke mentioned the whole question of the family trust, something which also came up in question period today. It is the absence of anything dealing with that particular issue in the bill that is relevant to the debate before us.

The member also spoke about advising people to stick by their initial positions. The member should be aware that the leader of his party, in spite of what he said earlier today, was a member of a government that was responsible for greatly increasing the unfairness of the tax system between the rich and the poor.

I remember Michael Wilson in his first budget saying that the problem with the country was that we did not have enough rich people. He set out to create more rich people and he succeeded. One of the ways he succeeded was by being harder on the poor and by reducing the number of middle class Canadians that existed. He did so through the tax system after 1988, with the compliance of the now Leader of the Opposition.

Also on the same issue—and I invite the member to respond to this after I am finished—we saw the Liberal government of today claiming a certain innocence with respect to it. I was here. I remember that when I was attacking the extension of the exemption for the family trust at second reading the Liberal critic at that time, now the Minister of Health, got up and agreed with the Minister of Finance that I was on the wrong track. It was only after testimony in committee that the Liberals changed their minds. On second reading they were very much with the government on the particular issue.

I want to ask the member a question. Perhaps he would want to reflect. It seems to me we have something that speaks volumes about the priorities of this government and previous governments. We have the lack of any action on the extended exemption, thanks to the Conservatives, for the family trust and at the same time an attack on the unemployed.

The unemployed, people without any income, are being told that they will have to go longer and that they will have reduced benefits: a massive bill in order to do that to them. At the same time we have no action on the part of the government for people who have income, in fact billions of dollars of income from those assets, the deemed disposition on those assets and the capital gains. They have been able to plead with the previous government, and now it appears with this government, that it would be hard on them, that it would be oh so hard on them.

We see from the release of letters that at one point there was correspondence between the Minister of Finance and the committee for family enterprise saying how difficult it would be if they would finally have to pay the tax on all the millions of

dollars they have tied up in real estate and other assets that they were expecting to pay for 21 years.

• (1535)

Here we have, it seems to me, a perfect example of what is wrong with our value system. We can say to the unemployed: "You are unemployed. You do not have any income. Tough. We are going to make it tougher on you".

Yet at the same time and by the same governments, whether they be Conservative or now Liberal, we say to the very rich in the country that we understand it will be tough for them to have to pay that deemed disposition and those taxes that they have known since 1972 they were going to have to pay in 1993. Perhaps the member would like to comment on that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Dubé:** Mr. Dubé, I thank my colleague for his comments because I think that is what they were. I agree with him, but I want to make a correction. He cannot attribute to the Leader of the Official Opposition actions in which he was not involved in any way. Let us not forget that he resigned from the Conservative government on May 22, 1990.

When we talk about C-113 and C-105, those bills came after our leader's resignation. I can confirm, since I checked the date myself, that the present Leader of the Opposition left the Conservative Party on May 22, 1990.

As for the other comments regarding family trusts, the hon. member gives me an opportunity to find the explanation that I was looking for earlier as to what may have happened over the last year for people to change their mind. We saw what happened in the case of Pearson airport. We can feel the influence of lobbyists or people who represent powerful financial interests, including the rich families, and there are not that many of them in Quebec nor in Canada. It is something worth looking into, but I will not draw that conclusion myself, giving the government the benefit of the doubt.

However, regarding the hon. member's comments about the Leader of the Opposition and his involvement with Bill C-113 or C-105, the member cannot accuse him of having supported these bills because, according to the information I have, he voted against these measures and was no longer a member of the Conservative government at the time.

**Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to what the member for Lévis said on Bill C-17. I spoke on this subject myself and I would like to ask the member for Lévis a question.

My first question is—