

I would like to remind everyone that there is no country in the world which has done better for its senior citizens at all levels than this nation of Canada. Why spoil it by going through this because civil servants say we have to be consistent? For such a small thought, that of consistency, we destroy our own reputation as being fair and equitable.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the amendment in opposition to Bill C-131, which will limit pensions for old age pensioners. Prior to beginning I would like to refer to the previous speaker on behalf of the Conservative Party. He said that, of course, he quite willingly supported six and five controls over the wages of people who still have income. Then in the next breath he said he opposes the breaking of contracts, whether they are written or unwritten. I would like to remind the speaker for the Conservative Party that when he and his colleagues voted for C-124, they in fact voted for the Government to break contracts with hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers. They supported the Liberal Government in breaking collective agreements which that same Government had negotiated in good faith with its own employees. So the Conservative Party cannot have it both ways.

Bill C-131 is one the New Democratic Party has to oppose. New Democrats across the country, like old age pensioners across the country, recognize that this Government lacks the proper priorities in spending and taxation. The Government is asking people who were born before 1920 to make sacrifices. These are the people who were in their teens during the great depression. These are the people who fought in World War II. These are the people who worked in this country when wages and prices were low, and now that they have reached what we call their golden years, the Government of Canada is saying that they must sacrifice again. The Government of Canada and all Canadians should recognize the sacrifice those people have made. They should recognize that these people have sacrificed during the depression, the war and their working years, and that they should be given adequate and reasonable old age pensions. They should not be the victims of a public relations program divined by some Liberal strategists in the Senate. These are the people who have made sacrifices for Canada and it is time that the Government recognized their contributions.

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Earlier I spoke about the lack of priorities. If the Government really wants the restraint program in order to make more money available for job creation, then why is a former Deputy Minister of Finance receiving a salary in excess of \$100,000 per year although he does no work for the Government? What kind of priority is that? He will receive \$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000, although he is not working. That would pay the old age pensions of a lot of senior citizens.

At the same time, why does the Government introduce tax legislation which will, in effect, reduce the taxes of those people at the higher end of the income scale? Why are we asking old age pensioners to make the sacrifice at the same

time as we reward those with high salaries? Does that make sense? Is that the priority of the Government?

Why is the Government so lenient in taxing the banks? The banks are making good profits at the present time but are restricting the salaries of their workers. Why is the Government not taxing the banks at a higher rate? That really is an example of its lack of priorities.

The Government has issued a green paper on pension reform but it is really just more public relations. At the time the paper was introduced we were debating bills which would affect old age pensions and Government pensions, yet the Government talks about pension reform. That is sheer hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker.

We have often heard Government spokesmen speak in this House about the plight of women in the country. I would remind the House that it is women who will suffer most under the six and five legislation. The legislation affects not only the women in the work force who tend to receive lower salaries, it affects not only women who worked for the Government and received lower Government pensions and also earned lower salaries, not only widows of former Government workers who also receive low pensions, and not only women who receive the Family Allowance—because that is often the only income they have in their own name—and this legislation is a direct attack on the women of Canada. They are the people who need the old age pension the most. If the Government were sincere in asking for sacrifices, it would have given full indexation to these men and women and would raise taxes for those people at the top of the income scale.

That is not Government policy, nor is it Government strategy. Its strategy is to invoke the public relations program designed in the other place by Senator Keith Davey, whose one and only purpose on the payroll of the taxpayers of Canada is to get the Liberal Party re-elected to Government. This is a public relations program and the leaked documents that have come our way prove that.

I will not support that, Mr. Speaker. I recognize the sacrifice of the people born prior to 1920. I mentioned the depression and World War II. Some of these people also fought in the Korean War. They made sacrifices for Canada and they deserve the recognition and support of the Canadian people now.

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be given the opportunity to speak on Bill C-131 and to add my voice to the many others in the House and across Canada that are violently opposed to the latest dictatorial attitude of the Government of taking their inefficiency out on the senior citizens. That is the one group in Canada that can least defend itself.

Yesterday I heard some Members say that approximately 75 Members out of 282 have participated in the debate. The Government seemed to think that was too many speakers. I am quite sure that there are 282 Members of Parliament who have a great many senior citizens in their ridings. If those people who have worked so hard and paid taxes for so many years had