

*Family Allowances Act, 1973*

shameful, an insult to a very, very, very human problem. It is my hope that in the coming weeks, the Government will wake up and bring in the corrections needed to that famous clause so that it will be a little more humane.

● (1220)

**Mr. Michel Champagne (Champlain):** Mr. Speaker, it is too bad that the Hon. Member for Richmond-Wolfe (Mr. Tardif) has left the House. However, I would like to go over his concluding remarks. It is odious, shocking, revolting and even blasphemous, and I am not talking about what our Government is doing, but about what he and his party are saying about family allowances. How can they say that we are cutting back on programs for low-income families, how can they say that we are not taking care of the most disadvantaged families in the country, how can they say that we, as a Government, having inherited a terrible situation, with debts of \$200 billion, a situation where, for 20 years and even longer, the Liberals did not make the rich pay any taxes and did not take their responsibilities—

Then, people like the Hon. Member for Richmond-Wolfe and the Hon. Member for Montreal-Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) tell us what we should be doing. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I cannot accept that. When they talk about honesty and impartiality, they should perhaps look at what Bill C-70 says. What this Bill says, Mr. Speaker, is that there will be a child tax credit. If the Hon. Member does not understand what this means, I can tell him that it means that people will receive a payment. If we provide a payment, Mr. Speaker, we do so for those who do not pay taxes. When the Liberals were in power, Mr. Speaker, those who did not pay taxes were the wealthy. Under our Government, it will be the poor. The poor will receive the tax credit that will amount to \$70 the first year. This is much more than the 31 cents mentioned by the Hon. Member for Montreal-Sainte-Marie. Much more. Mr. Speaker, it is more than the average rate of inflation. Why do the Liberals not say so? Why do the New Democrats not recognize it? This means \$70 this year, \$35 next year and \$35 the year after that, and this is a tax credit.

I would like the Hon. Member and his colleagues on the other side to keep this in mind. If we want to be honest, Mr. Speaker, we have to speak about it. We have to tell the facts as they are. I am not certain that the Opposition has done so. I am not sure that they have, Mr. Speaker, because they would not have received so many petitions if they had told Canadian families that we are really going to work for the most disadvantaged. I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, that Canadian families, mothers and womens' groups in all Canadian provinces including Quebec would have signed the petitions of the Members opposite if they had been told that there would be a tax credit for the most disadvantaged and that the universality principle is not being attacked as suggested by the Hon. Member for Richmond-Wolfe.

Mr. Speaker, the universality principle does not mean that rich and poor should be treated the same. It means that, as a responsible Government, we are going to give the advantage to the poor and make the system equitable.

I said so yesterday. Unfortunately, the Hon. Member did not understand. If I take my own case as an example, it is not normal for me and my family to receive the same family allowances as a single parent family on welfare with the same number of children. That family deserves more, because of its disastrous economic situation. I know, Mr. Speaker, that the Government will help me when I need it. That is the objective of the Bill before us.

It is only natural, Mr. Speaker, that we should have to limit the cost of governing this country. It is natural because, when we took over in 1984, the deficit was \$200 billions. During the 20 years that the Liberals spent on this side of the House, they claimed they were working for Canadians. Well, they must have worked hard, because they put them deeply in debt. During those 20 years when they formed the Government, they were telling us that they were managing the public purse. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Where was the Hon. Member for Richmond-Wolfe when his Government limited the indexation of family allowance to 6 and 5 per cent, at a time when inflation ran at 11 and 12 per cent? Where was he, Mr. Speaker? I asked him today, but he did not answer.

Since we are talking about honesty and integrity in this House, Mr. Speaker, we should stand up and say precisely what matters in this Bill. We should emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to help those families which are the most in need, while making the wealthiest pay. It should be said, Mr. Speaker, that social justice has more than one meaning, it is not merely the Liberal philosophy, a philosophy for the wealthy. Today, they are telling us that, as a Government, because of the tax exemption, because of the capital gain exemption, we are giving only to the rich. That is false, Mr. Speaker, absolutely false. I know farmers in my riding who are now going to be able to sell their farms at a lower price to their sons, who will now be in a position to take over. I know homeowners, Mr. Speaker, who will be able to sell their houses and not be indexed or affected by this legislation, who will realize capital gains after having worked all their lives in factories, for low wages. Members of the Opposition think of them as rich people; they want to deny them that opportunity and have them penalized, but I can say this: Liberals are hiding the facts. There are certain words I cannot use because they would be unparliamentary, but they are the ones I sincerely mean. If ever Opposition Members want to act as honest Members of Parliament and not engage in demagoguery, then I am sure all Members on our side of the House will be willing to work with them. Building a country does not mean forever sitting across the aisle and reacting negatively to each and every legislative proposal. Building a country means co-operating, working together in solidarity.