

*Family Allowances Act, 1973*

entirely but, rather, immeasurably—capping is, in a time of inflation, a very severe blow. Therefore, if shoes for the children cost \$10 more next year and one only receives \$6 in terms of one's increase to meet that cost, that will mean, according to the figures of our research department, a total of \$102 for a family with two children over the next two years. Who is the person who will be hit most by that, the single parent? Perhaps it will be the low income people, of all kinds, some of whom are native people in Indian reservations, and it is at this group that the Government is striking. Therefore, it is another example of hitting the poor. It is not the poor who fill out income tax forms for tax credit, by and large. Some of those people cannot fill out any form. Some people do not have either the knowledge or the counselling to assist them in applying for the tax credit. Anyway, this is the second element in the package.

● (2010)

The other element in the package involves hitting the retired public servant. I would like to tell Your Honour of someone who has been affected by circumstances which are very dear to your heart. We received a letter from a retired public servant in a community known as Maple Ridge, which I represent. This man has served his community, not only in his capacity as a civil servant but also as a volunteer, with great distinction. He wrote, "Over the years I contributed 6.5 per cent of my salary, plus 1 per cent for special funds, to cover the cost of indexing." To me, he wrote, "This is a breaking of faith. This is a breaking of contract, and this is the kind of thing that makes me very cynical of my government".

I would like to tell Your Honour in the one minute remaining to me that we will oppose this Bill for all the reasons we have discussed. This cut against the poor, the old and the unorganized will not bring inflation down, any more than will the admission of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) last night when he said, "I do not think that our job creation program will bring unemployment down". Therefore, what I am asserting here is that what the Government is doing here is scapegoating. What we should be doing, when, for example, one out of 13 people in my Province is facing welfare this winter, is to provide a massive job producing program so that people can get to work, pay taxes and collect wages instead of welfare. Then they would begin to purchase again and contribute to society. This is a much worthier objective than cutting their throats, as this Bill would tend to do. Therefore, we will vote against it, and I thank Your Honour very much for your kind attention.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, in speaking against Bill C-132 at report stage, the Bill which would cap indexing of Family Allowances to six and five, as part of the Government's over-all six and five program, I would like to refer to a point made by the Hon. Member for Mission-Port Moody (Mr. Rose) earlier this afternoon when he mentioned the irony of the fact that we are debating this

Bill to cap Family Allowances at a time of the year, Christmastime, when so much effort is being put into the raising of money for charitable purposes to aid the many families who ordinarily require that sort of help, and also to meet the needs of the greatly increasing number of families who are requiring it. It seems to me that we have a good opportunity to reflect on the difference between two different world views, if you will. I hoped that we, as a society, had transcended one view, which relies mainly on charity and on voluntary contributions for the alleviation of poverty caused by our economic system. The other view holds that we ought to build mechanisms into our social and economic structures to prevent people from reaching that state where they need help. Of course, even that which we have done so far, in terms of developing the welfare state, has still not created a society in which we have—

**Mr. Rose:** Insulated.

**Mr. Blaikie:**—families who need no help at Christmas time. However, it seems to me that we are retreating from the second world view with the six and five program, with the ongoing debate about retreating from universality and with the entire politics of despair, as I like to call it, the politics in which the Liberal Party and Government now wallow, the politics which has it that we have reached the limit of our ability to share; that the pool of funds which we have available for social purposes has reached its limit and that we must now do what we can with what we have left.

What has really happened is not so much that we as a society have reached the limit but, rather, that the Liberal Party has reached the limit of what it is willing to do, because in order to share more in our society it would have to challenge certain financial and economic interests. It would really have to be in favour of fundamental economic change, and that is what it is not able to do and that is why we have the six and five program. That is why we have this attempt to create what is called "a better investment climate", and that is why the Conservatives support the six and five program—

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Blaikie:**—because they believe in an investment climate. They believe in catering to the profitability of the multinational corporations and others who make their decisions here in Canada based on profit alone. That is why, overall, they support the six and five program. That is why, in particular, they are only putting up token resistance.

Tonight we are speaking on a Bill which will affect Family Allowances. I say, through you, Mr. Speaker, to those who are watching, that the reason they see one New Democrat after another speaking on this particular Bill—

**Some Hon. Members:** And a Tory amendment.

**Mr. Blaikie:**—and Tory amendment, is that the Progressive Conservatives have caved in on this matter—

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Exactly.

**Mr. Blaikie:**—as they have all along, putting up only token resistance to the six and five program. This is a reflection on