

*Family Allowances Act*

[Translation]

**Mr. Robichaud:** Mr. Speaker, a package is proposed to us, but only one piece at a time.

And that, to my mind, is not quite honest because they say: "See, this one is not that bad but we have another one coming which will repair what we are doing wrong at present." Indeed, they are trying to sell it to us; they are slyly trying to sell it to the people with fine words suggesting that what we are now doing will not hurt them too much, because there will be something else.

When my colleague asks me what the position of our party is concerning the deficit, I say that we have only one position and it is that the deficit or the debt cannot be reduced at the expense of the most needy. There are other ways of doing it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The period for questions and comments is over.

● (1600)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[Translation]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 46, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie)—Environmental Affairs (a) Acid rain—Prime Minister's meeting with United States President (b) Appointment of Canada envoy; the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Epp)—Shipbuilding (a) Halifax Industries Limited (b) Government plans; and the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster)—Agriculture (a) Western drought—Government assistance (b) Request for direct payments to farmers.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### FAMILY ALLOWANCES ACT, 1973

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Epp (Provencher) that Bill C-70, an Act to amend the Family Allowances Act, 1973, be now read a second time and referred to a legislative committee, and on the amendment of Mr. Frith (p. 6625).

**Mr. Brian White (Dauphin-Swan River):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today on the first anniversary of the swearing in of the new Government to join in the debate on second reading of Bill C-70, an Act to amend the Family

Allowances Act, 1973, and the subsequent amendment. The Bill would provide for inflation protection for family allowance payments when the Consumer Price Index exceeds 3 per cent. It is unfortunate that the Opposition has chosen the strategy that it has. Rather than join a reasonable and necessary debate on this important subject, they have chosen to introduce an amendment to delay second reading for six months. This tells the people of Canada that the Liberals have put the issue on the backburner, that they refuse to participate in the debate, and that they are interested in nothing but political gain in a campaign of fear and misinformation. Of course, as always, they are eagerly joined in such a strategy by the NDP.

I now know that the Opposition Parties do not understand the simple fact that has been stated quite clearly by my fellow Manitoban, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) which cannot be ignored in any debate on any social program. That simple fact is that social programs and benefits cannot be separated from economic realities. There is at last a Government in Ottawa that understands this. The healthier the national economy, the stronger the social benefit system.

As we continue to undo the economic damage inflicted on Canada by the former Liberal Government, we must ensure that a greater proportion of benefits go to those in our society who are in the greatest need. In just one year we have started Canada's economy on the road to recovery. There are now 284,000 more Canadians working than there were a year ago. Unemployment is still at a level that is unacceptable, but it is a step in the right direction. Inflation is steady and low for the first time in many years. Over the past three years the federal debt grew at a rate of almost 25 per cent, which is almost three times the rate of growth of the GNP. With the current fiscal plan, debt growth should slow to 17.7 per cent this year and 14.6 per cent in 1986-87. Housing starts have increased to an annual rate of 155,000 units, up 24 per cent from the previous two quarters. And we have only just begun.

I suggest that there is not a Member in this House who does not know that we must provide more for the less fortunate Canadians. We are now attempting to do that in concert with a healthy economic recovery, and not with our heads in the sand alongside the Opposition Parties. Bill C-70 is a good start toward improving the social safety net in Canada. At the same time we must consider the further measures planned by the Minister of National Health and Welfare to address the plight of low-income Canadians. Bill C-70 cannot be considered in isolation.

I refer the House briefly to page 43 of the Budget papers. I wish to refer to a few of the planned changes because they are so important to the debate on Bill C-70 and the amendment thereto. Beginning in the taxation year 1986 the child tax credit, payable in the spring of 1987, will be increased by \$70 per child, from \$384 to \$454. In the taxation year 1987 the