

Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)

provided that the money be used to help young people, does the Hon. Member agree with that principle?

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I am all in favour of the Government doing its utmost to create jobs for young people. The current situation is that young people account for 40 per cent of the unemployed. They are deeply concerned and they have almost given up any hope for the future. The Government must accept responsibility for that, but it does not have the right to get on the backs of senior citizens and retired people in its attempt to correct a situation for which it is responsible in the first place. Under these circumstances, the six and five policy may be acceptable to those who earn a good income, but I am squarely against attacking needy people who do require essential services. These government policies will affect people who cannot afford any lowering of their standards of living. We should ask those who are better off to accept a wiser redistribution of funds, but I still maintain that the Government has made a wrong decision as a result of which it will be singled out as the main culprit for this untenable situation, and that is my answer to the Hon. Member for Manicouagan who does entertain lofty principles. Of course, I agree with him, but, indeed, the Prime Minister of Canada had advocated and defended a commendable principle with respect to retired people, but today he throws that principle overboard in the piece of legislation now being considered. That is why we blame the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): It seems to me Hon. Members will have no difficulties with the Chair if they seek the floor to continue exchanging that kind of questions and answers.

[English]

Hon. Members have no difficulty with the Chair if the House wishes to persist in giving its unanimous consent to an exchange of questions and answers, but I have to seek unanimous consent every once in a while. Is there unanimous consent for an exchange of questions and answers?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Maltais: My question is this, Mr. Speaker. I suggest the Hon. Member for Joliette is making a commendable attempt to support the 6 and 5 program which is designed to provide money for job creation, but when he talks about justice, is he aware that our senior citizens who are really destitute will be entitled to a fully indexed income supplement? This is not at all inconsistent with the concept of a just society. I wish all pensioners were entitled to a full indexation. In view of the manner in which the Government will apply the 6 and 5 program, however, our senior citizens who are really destitute will be entitled to a fully indexed income supplement. Is the Hon. Member for Joliette aware of that fact?

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Hon. Member for Manicouagan that I am indeed quite aware of that fact. We are dealing today with Bill C-133; we will have the opportunity to deal with OAS some other time, but I am shocked to find today that the Prime Minister will not keep the promise he made to public servants and tomorrow, we will have comments to make about the bill to amend the Old Age Security Pension Act.

[English]

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, will the Hon. Member for Manicouagan (Mr. Maltais) accept a question?

Mr. Maltais: Yes.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Could he tell me what aspect of Government policy has worked to create employment in Canada? Could he lay his seat on the line and tell me categorically any policies that he sees in the future which will work to create employment in the country? Why is it necessary for him to support some mythical Liberal policy with respect to employment which attacks the least defensible of society, namely, senior citizens and retired public servants who paid for their benefits? Why is the Hon. Member supporting such a breach of contract?

[Translation]

Mr. Maltais: In short, Mr. Speaker, I feel that the current crisis is worldwide and that it should be borne by all Canadians, both young and old. Moreover, early last fall, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) announced that programs totalling over \$1 billion would be implemented to create jobs and start the economy moving again. One cannot give what one does not have, and what really matters is that all Canadians assume their share of the burden in the best interests of Canada.

• (1200)

[English]

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, is the Hon. Member not aware of the wasted squandering of public money on the purchases by Petro-Canada of something Petro-Canada did not need in a period of emergency? Is the Hon. Member not aware of that? Does the Hon. Member not have enough imagination to consider that there are other programs which the Government could look to which would provide the capital for the programs that he thinks would work, without attacking senior citizens and retired public servants?

Mr. Young: And little kids.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Is he satisfied with the morality of the Government from that point of view?

[Translation]

Mr. Maltais: Mr. Speaker, I can inform the Hon. Member that first of all, Petro-Canada holds a very bright future for Canadians. Through this Corporation, Canadians can invest in their own natural resources, and being from a northern riding