

history. When he was forced to close the mine in Schefferville it was a decision he had to make that was very regrettable, but he certainly did not forget the people he used to work with in Schefferville.

**Mr. Heap:** What about Labrador City?

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** I recall the Prime Minister saying in the House a couple of weeks ago that if the NDP will not help us help the needy, we will do it ourselves.

**Mr. Heap:** Why doesn't he help the needy in Labrador City?

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** We simply cannot afford to be all things to all people. That is why we cannot be all things to all people with respect to this particular piece of legislation. Therefore, it has excluded people between the ages of 60 to 65.

I remind the Hon. Member for Spadina that our Prime Minister is sincerely concerned about the citizens of this country.

● (1530)

**Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, at the outset let me indicate that I will try to concur with the wishes of the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) who indicated that Hon. Members should speak briefly and to the point.

The legislation has some good parts. The market which it attempts to serve is a good one. There is no question about that. As my colleagues said at the beginning of the debate, as Members of Parliament we should approach the issue of providing assistance to those in need very responsibly. In part I support the measures contained in this legislation.

I do not think I have heard Hon. Members on either side of the House suggest that what the Government is attempting to do is bad. In point of fact, there may be a great deal of loopholes.

**Mrs. Maily:** Name one.

**Mr. Dingwall:** The Hon. Member rarely listens. I would hope she would at least attempt to be as sincere as I am trying to be with regard to the substance of the legislation.

**Mrs. Maily:** I am.

**Mr. Dingwall:** The Hon. Member is known for her dealings with the press. She is grasping at straws for the sake of publicity. Surely she has the courtesy at least to listen. I am not a member of her Party. Perhaps I share a different philosophy or ideology, but courtesy ought to be part of the demeanour of the Hon. Member.

I point out for the record that it was a Liberal Government that introduced spousal allowances. The Conservative Government has now decided to extend the spousal allowance, part of the Old Age Security Program, to any person between the ages of 60 and 64 in need and living alone. That is very commendable, but, as I said earlier, there are some loopholes. There are

### *Old Age Security Act*

thousands of single Canadians who would like to be included in this particular package. It is not good enough for government Members to join in a chorus of catcalls and to say, "We can't afford it" when during the election campaign there was no mention of any restraint. In fact, there was a proliferation of promises during that campaign, in excess of 330. They cannot have it both ways. Were they irresponsible during the campaign or were they responsible? I know they will try very hard and very diligently to have it both ways, but I suggest that they cannot have it both ways.

I want to go on record as supporting that part of the legislation which will affect an additional 85,000 Canadians. If the amendments my Party is seeking are accepted, an additional 80,000 Canadians would benefit. We must remember that a large number of Canadians do not enjoy the perks or the lifestyle which we in the Chamber enjoy, or indeed that of other professions.

It is discriminatory, intentionally or negligently, for the Government to exclude this group of Canadians. Hon. Members of my Party who have spoken before me, and those who will speak following my remarks, will repeatedly reiterate that concern. We hope that the Government will take cognizance of what we are suggesting and implement those changes.

Again I commend the piece of legislation before us from the perspective that it contains a recommendation of the parliamentary task force on pension reform. It is in the best interests of Parliament to bring forward legislation containing a recommendation of the parliamentary task force, upon which there was unanimous agreement, as quickly as possible so that it can be put into effect for the benefit of Canadians.

There has been some suggestion today that perhaps we ought to expedite the implementation date. I am in favour of that, whether it is a matter of fiscal responsibility on the part of the Government of the day or a matter of lining up an agenda item for a budget, which was to come down in April, May or even later, depending upon what happens in the Province of Ontario.

There have been some sincere suggestions by New Democratic Party Members in an attempt to expedite this piece of legislation. It serves no useful purpose for the Hon. Member for Calgary West to rise in the House of Commons to admonish the New Democratic Party and its members for attempting to put into effect a piece of legislation affecting low-income Canadians. That was not the spirit in which this particular measure was discussed by the parliamentary task force.

I want the record to show clearly that I support the measure which provides assistance to the individuals I have already mentioned, but I repeat that the Government should extend those benefits to the group which is being excluded. Perhaps the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead (Mr. Clark) would use his influence when speaking to his Cabinet colleagues and his back-benchers to extend those benefits to those other Canadians who are in need. I believe that is fundamental. I have received letters from Canadians in British Columbia, Ontario and other parts of the country who are very upset that we in Parliament would support in principle such an idea but