

tax on the rich. Most democracies in the world; western Europe, even the United States—even Ronald Reagan's America—have a minimum tax. It is time the rich in Canada paid their share. Why did the Government not bring in a minimum tax?

There was another option. We made a proposal, which has been applied in other countries, that all those corporations which have deferred taxes and owe all these revenues to the people of Canada, should pay a certain percentage of interest on what they owe just like other individual taxpayers. That would have given the Government additional millions of dollars.

Another proposal, Mr. Speaker, was with respect to the Western Accord. We agree with the Western Accord and those aspects which give to our producing provinces additional shares of revenue. That is entirely justifiable and overdue. But, we asked, why give multinational oil companies windfall profits? Why give them additional millions of dollars on oil which has already been discovered?

Another option we presented, Mr. Speaker, is that instead of expanding the loopholes in terms of extending the capital gains tax for upper-income Canadians, we should just leave it where it is. That would save us millions of dollars. Finally, we said we should restore to upper-income Canadians the tax rate which they were paying before the Liberals made the change in their 1982 Budget. Just bring back those marginal rates and that would give us additional millions of dollars.

The point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that from these five options we would get anywhere from \$4 billion to \$5.5 billion. They were real options. They were serious options. They would have given us a fair tax system; they would have been effective in stimulating the economy; they would have been comparable to what exists in most other democratic countries; and, very important in the context of this debate, they would have left the pensions going out to the pensioners at fully indexed rates so that they could continue to live with some dignity. But, in short, Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives turned it down.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, through you to the Prime Minister: Sir, you had not one, not two, not three options. You had five options. And in the crunch, Mr. Prime Minister, when you had to make a choice, you chose the few over the many. You chose the rich over the pensioners, and for that you deserve to be condemned by the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, with some observations about this particular motion and about the abominable course of action which the Government of Canada proposes to take, which has now demonstrated three characteristics of this Government; first, its insincerity, second, its insensitivity, and, third, its intransigence. That is a harsh judgment, Mr. Speaker, but we are not here to be mealy-mouthed. We are here to be fair but firm and clear in our judgments. I want to hear Hon. Members of the Conservative Party reply to these charges because they are serious. I say

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that the Government is insincere because the Prime Minister of Canada in Sherbrooke—

[*Translation*]

—in Sherbrooke he promised our country's pensioners he would continue to index pensions. And in the same speech on July 25, he indicated that as Prime Minister he wanted to consult pensioners on future changes in the system.

[*English*]

He said that the Government would keep the indexation and he said that pensioners would be fully consulted about any future changes to their pensions. The Minister of National Health and Welfare, responsible for pensions, himself, in a document in June, indicated that the Government of Canada would not be changing the pensions. We all know what has happened. We know that these promises have been categorically broken by the Conservative Government.

I will cite just a couple of instances of the Government's insensitivity. The Minister of Finance in the past week went all the way from saying we did not have enough rich people in Canada—which was insensitive enough—to making a speech a couple of days ago in Quebec City in which he made a proposal to make the rich even richer. He said we could no longer fully index pensions but he was thinking of bringing in indexation for investors. How insensitive can one be? The Prime Minister, responding to a question about pensions the other day, had the nerve to talk about car sales. I suppose he expects that half the pensioners living in poverty, and the 200,000 additional pensioners who will have to begin to live in poverty, are going to be able to go out and buy a car. That is great sensitivity.

The Government has shown intransigence almost without limits. Almost everyone in this country has indicated his or her opposition to what the Government is doing. If the Government wants to listen, now is the time. The three Atlantic Premiers who spoke out were opposed. The legislatures of Quebec and Manitoba unanimously disagreed with the Government. Tories all across Canada are opposed. Pensioners are opposed. Members of my caucus have submitted to the House of Commons more than 10,000 names on petitions of Canadians from coast to coast who say they are opposed to what the Government is doing.

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Now is the time for the Government to listen to what the people are saying. Even businessmen have joined in. They have said the Government is wrong. I say the Government does not need consultations for another week, month or year; it simply has to listen to what the people of Canada are saying today. If it listens to that message, it will, at the end of this debate, get up and say it made a mistake and it is going to restore to the pensioners what they deserve, namely, fully indexed pensions.

Mr. Gagnon: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the impassioned plea to stop partial deindexation. It seems that the basic premise of both the Liberals and the NDP is really twofold. First, because you turn 65 you should receive taxpay-