

*Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)*

**Mr. Skelly:** I notice that the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker) who led off the debate, made a great fuss over the entire issue. I listened with great interest to his speech on this particular topic. He stood, full of sound and fury, blaming the Liberals for this Bill which would harm retired civil servants. He blamed the Government for the six and five legislation and its negative impact on families depending on Family Allowance. He went on and on, blaming Liberals and everyone he could find, but he never stated for the record what the Conservative Party would do. Not one time have the Conservatives put forward a constructive alternative to the very destructive programs of the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Lewis:** Just wait.

**Mr. Skelly:** It is funny to hear the people to my right hollering, "Just wait, just wait". It is interesting to find that when it came to the six and five program, they supported its philosophy very clearly. The Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton and other Hon. Members in the Official Opposition in the House tonight supported the six and five program. They knew full well what they were doing when they supported it. As a matter of fact, they called for speedy delivery of the rest of the legislation to implement that program. They wanted to get the legislation before the House so they could vote on it and get it in place, and that is part of the public record.

It is an incredible act of hypocrisy for Hon. Members of that party to stand up in the House tonight and say, as they are saying, allegedly in support of the Public Service of Canada, the retired members of the Civil Service and families who are having their indexing cut on their Family Allowances. It was absolutely astounding to hear those same people demanding that this legislation be brought before the House so they could deal with it quickly. Tonight they are speaking in short ten minute or 20 minute jabs to deal with it quickly. However, if they were to use the full time allocated to them to make their points, then there would be more Government Members who would consider opposing the legislation.

When we voted on the original legislation to implement the six and five program, Bill C-124, the Conservatives voted with the Liberals time after time. As a matter of fact, they voted against an amendment put forward by our Party which would exclude this six and five legislation from applying to the pensions of retired civil servants. The Conservatives voted against that amendment. They demanded that this series of Bills be brought forward quickly so they could deal with it expeditiously. What we have tonight, I guess, is the full circle, where the Conservatives are trying to tell the pensioners of Canada that they are supporting them, when in fact their actions very clearly eroded the position of those pensioners. The Conservative position was recorded in vote 245 when 26 NDP Members supported the protecting of pensions and excluding them from the six and five legislation, and the Liberals and Conservatives together voted against that motion.

• (2150)

It is going to be an interesting act of hypocrisy when the Tories come forward and vote as they say they are going to, against this legislation. I will bet money that there are not enough Conservatives in this House when this vote comes to defeat the Liberals, even if 12 Liberal Members vote against this Bill. The Assistant Conservative House Leader is giggling at that prospect.

**Mr. Lewis:** At that idiot.

**Mr. Skelly:** But I recall that on numerous other occasions they have failed to show up to vote when there has been an opportunity to defeat the Government. On August 3, for example 41 Conservative Members were absent from the House of Commons; 27 Liberals were absent and five voted against their Party. That is a very clear example of the Conservatives lack of—I would say—integrity on this particular issue, that they had a very clear opportunity to defeat the Government, and yet failed to show up to vote.

That is not the only opportunity that the Conservatives had to defeat the Government. On December 2 the same thing occurred; and on December 3. As astounding as it seems, when we deal with this legislation there will not be enough Conservatives in this House to defeat a Liberal Government which does not have enough Members in this House to carry that legislation.

So the incredible hypocrisy of the Conservative Party on this and many other issues in this Parliament is an extremely serious issue.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Skelly:** It is a problem that we cannot obtain—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River has the floor.

**Mr. Lewis:** He should do something constructive with it.

**Mr. Skelly:** I wish to thank the Assistant House Leader of the Conservatives for his advice. I am going to do something constructive with it namely, to elaborate on the hypocrisy of the Conservative Party.

One of the big lies that the Tories have developed in Canada has been the theory that we in the NDP prop up that mess over there, that Liberal Government. Listen to them ranting and raving; but, travelling the country, the Leader of their Party suggests that it is us, who keep the Liberals in power, when in fact since the commencement of the Thirty-second Parliament, in 1980, on 69 occasions the Conservative Party voted with the Liberals on critical issues in this House of Commons, on amendments and procedures to protect consumers in the banking industry in this country. The Tories aided the Liberals to promote the give-aways and tax grants to the oil companies. On these kinds of issues, the Conservatives and the Liberals are locked together.

**An Hon. Member:** And on six and five.