

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

students painting fences all summer long. We are putting them in jobs to match the kind of training they have received and prepare them for a career. The Liberals didn't do that Mr. Speaker. Since the Hon. Member for Outremont seemed unhappy about what is being done for women, if we look at the former Liberal programs, it is hard to find a program aimed at getting women back into the labour market. Mr. Speaker, how do we know the Hon. Member for Outremont is someone who defends the status of women? When the Liberal Government was in power, I don't remember hearing the Hon. Member for Outremont expressing her indignation at having a Government that felt no responsibility towards women. Today, we are introducing programs that are adapted to the situation of women on the labour market. I don't see why the Hon. Member for Outremont is so upset. She should rise in the House and applaud a Government that is responsible and that is serious about its responsibilities, unlike the former Liberal Government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): A supplementary question. The Hon. Member for Outremont (Mrs. Pépin).

Mrs. Pépin: I should like to set the record straight for the Hon. Member for Champlain. The Liberal Government was one of the few administrations which ever passed legislation concerning women. If Canada is so far ahead in the field of legislation concerning women, it is due to the then Liberal Government. With respect to programs designed to integrate women into the labour force, I am sorry but they do not date back only to 1984, those programs were established long before that. You may very well say that you never heard me protest loudly when the Liberals were in office, but I was not a Government Member to begin with. Read your papers and your newspaper clippings, you will see that I was then among the first to criticize the Liberal Government when it did not treat women properly. That is why today I feel quite justified to criticize you, for I did criticize the Liberal Government when it was not doing its job.

I can also tell you that when you said that the Liberal Government had been a bad administrator, that the social programs were terrible—What was the first thing the Conservative Government wanted to do after the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) was quoted in the press as having said that the old age pensions were a sacred trust? You wanted to slash them! You did reduce family allowances! And now, as a result of your last Budget, in 1990 a family with two children and earning \$15,000 a year will pay 23 per cent more in taxes. Taxes will go up only 13 per cent for a family with an annual income of \$35,000, 8 per cent for those earning \$50,000 a year, and 1 per cent for those earning \$100,000 a year. This is the result of your Budget. Do not try to tell me that we did not do our job with our social programs. The first thing that your Government did after the election was to take an axe to them. I am sorry.

Mr. Champagne (Champlain): I shall be very brief, Mr. Speaker. We now see that someone who, before joining a

political party, might be able to make fair and well-founded assessments, after joining a political party such as the Liberal Party, like the Hon. Member for Outremont (Mrs. Pépin) has done, can forget completely what this person always fought for before.

However, I shall remind her, Mr. Speaker—

Mrs. Pépin: I shall criticize you. I shall still criticize you.

Mr. Champagne (Champlain): —if she will just listen to me, Mr. Speaker, I shall remind her—

Mrs. Pépin: I shall criticize the federal Government because you are not doing your job.

Mr. Champagne (Champlain): —that the federal Progressive Conservative Government wanted to reform old age pensions to help those who need it the most. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we never thought that someone like Pierre Elliott Trudeau should receive the same pension as the neediest person in a senior citizens' home. However, Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have never understood or accepted this—

Mrs. Pépin: It is not the Liberals, but the senior citizens themselves.

Mr. Champagne (Champlain): —and the worst thing is, Mr. Speaker, that they have led the Canadian population to believe that we wanted to punish the neediest even though it was the Liberals who had done so.

Mrs. Pépin: You did not keep your promises.

Mr. Hamelin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for letting me make this brief comment and ask a question to the Hon. Member who has made a truly passionate speech.

However, I would like to come back to the language used by the Hon. Member. I could say that I lost \$1 million last week. I lost \$1 million and I therefore have a shortfall of \$1 million. It is true, because I bought a lottery ticket and did not win. I have therefore lost \$1 million.

When the Members opposite say that there have been cut-backs in provincial transfer payments, I would like to tell them that, if the provinces had hoped to receive several million dollars and if they will in fact receive less, this is not a cut-back, as my colleague has said, but an increase which, while perhaps not being as substantial as the provinces had hoped, will still be an increase. It is not like a lottery, where I lost and my million dollars is forever gone.

I would like to return to an aspect referred to by my colleague concerning the inflation rate as it relates to those transfer payments to the provinces. I would like him to amplify on that. In the sense that those transfer payments are increased by 5 per cent when the inflation rate now is only 4 per cent, while under the Liberals we had interest rates around 24 per cent and inflation rates around 10 to 12 per cent.