

*Family Allowances Act, 1973*

much time. I could only summarize it by saying that we in this Party are fed up with the fraud practised by the Government of Canada on the people of Canada. We realize that they can, for a period of time, fool the people of Canada. We realize that that is what they are trying to do with the Bill before the House, where they take away \$100 million from one set of children and pretend to give a benefit to another set of children, with a net increased expenditure to the federal Treasury of \$95 million. And they call that restraint to fool those people in Canada who realize that they have over-spent and that there must be restraint!

I think one thing is becoming clear. Canadians are fed up with this kind of fraud. They recognize it, they realize what it is, and all the rhetoric, explanations and statistics from the Government side will not bail them out of this situation. When the Minister of National Health and Welfare rises again in the House to defend the little people in Canada and to say how the Government of Canada will protect them, I hope she remembers the \$1.61 which she has taken away from the children of Canada. Let us remember that, let us talk about that. I hope she remembers about the physicians whom she is driving out of medical practice when she talks about improving medical care. It gets that personal; it has to get that personal. When we are dealing with fraud, we have to charge persons with fraud and convict them of fraud. That is what I am doing here today. I am charging the Minister of National Health and Welfare with fraud, and I have the evidence here to convict her.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Jim Schroder (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, after hearing the last speaker I think of a United Way slogan which I hesitate to steal, but it goes something like, "Because of you it is working". I believe that today we are seeing the essence of frustration in the Opposition. Opposition Members realize that the six and five program is working, that we will reduce inflation and that there is nothing they can do to stop it. What they are doing is using various kinds of subterfuge and spurious arguments to try to make it sound as if it is not working. I think they will fail in this process, because I do not believe Canadians buy it.

It is interesting to listen to Opposition Members because they talk as if they had Canadians in their pockets. I want to make it clear to them that I do not share that view; I do not think they have.

● (1750)

I know it is popular to be critical. After all, I think the job of the Opposition Members is to be objectively critical and to try to make sure that the right questions are asked and they get the right kind of answers. But what are they doing in this debate? Opposition Members are attacking this Bill with shotguns in their hands as though it were a target, firing off in all directions. Opposition Members are not really talking about the Bill and what it is all about. They are talking about us

taking things away when really what we are doing is giving something away.

The purpose of this Bill in a package and in the context of the six and five argument is to change the inflationary expectations and therefore to reduce inflation. It is not to save money or to change the system. Opposition Members are trying to suggest that we are trying to save a lot of money. They are saying, "Look at the pittance you are taking".

**Miss MacDonald:** That is what the Minister of Finance said.

**Mr. Schroder:** We hear Opposition Members saying this will not save that much money and it really will not accomplish very much. It really will not do much to the deficit. But we are concerned about the fact that we want to reduce inflation. When we reduce inflation, then we make the indexing more realistic. What is the use of having an 11.5 per cent indexation if inflation takes all of it or more? Is it not better to have a program such as we have, which tries to reduce inflation, reducing indexation to 6 per cent so that we will end up with a very little, if any, loss in pension because we are stabilizing things? That is what the big complaint is about. What people want to know is why you cannot do something about stabilizing the situation. We are trying to do that with this Program.

Last evening I spoke in the debate. I said that none of these programs are in isolation. One cannot look at the deindexation of these programs in isolation. I said last night that if reducing Old Age Security payments were in isolation, none of us could support doing that. We probably could not support this Bill if it were in isolation, but when it is part of a package, which is designed not only to reduce inflation but also to accomplish what reducing inflation does, which is to promote economic recovery, we can. Without this economic recovery or economic growth, there will be even greater pressure in the future on these social programs so that we must work toward reducing inflation, generating economic recovery which in turn will help us to generate more jobs and complete the circle of restoring economic growth.

You would think, from the speeches we have heard, that this Bill is an attack on universality. I have already explained to you, Mr. Speaker, and to Members that this method of six and five or deindexing is not an attempt to change the system. The system is still there. We are saying to people that they will still get an increase but the increases are being reduced slightly, ever so slightly. But the system is still there. The system is still working. What we are attempting to do is to increase the real value of what people will get by reducing inflation. Therefore, I come back to my argument that because this is working, this is why we are getting attacked from all directions in the form of spurious arguments about what is happening instead of hearing concentrated arguments on the Bill.

The Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Mrs. Mitchell), probably inadvertently, referred to this Bill as if it were a mother's pension, and the pension was the mother's. I would