

Income Tax Act, 1986

ignore while seeing on television these class struggles occurring in other parts of the world, including Great Britain. I fear that if the Government is given more latitude through this kind of legislation, we will not only see class struggles on our television sets but we will see them very clearly and vividly on our own Canadian streets.

You are indicating that my time is up, Mr. Speaker. Despite its absolute majority which can defeat any motion or win any vote, the Government should be prepared to pay attention to the views of Canadians who are saying that this piece of legislation and others are unfair and inequitable and they will not tolerate them.

● (1600)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Are there questions or comments? The Hon. Member for Edmonton East (Mr. Lesick).

Mr. Lesick: Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi) go on and on and on with his gloom of doom and doom of gloom. I sometimes cannot believe everything I hear because it is no different from what we are saying. If the Hon. Member had listened carefully to the speech of the Hon. Member for Cardigan (Mr. Binns), he would have heard him outline very carefully the purposes of Bill C-84. He set out the advantages to the country and how we have to share the goodness while shouldering the problems which we have. There is equity in this measure.

With respect to the \$500,000 capital gains tax exemption, it is a measure primarily for the small and medium-sized businessman. In some cases it is for the ordinary working man who manages to buy a second home and who makes a little money after he sells it. Would the Hon. Member deprive an ordinary working man of that capital gain? He spoke of some people going to the United States. Yet, he has not mentioned one person who supposedly received this mythical amount in capital gains.

He mentioned that the oil companies were receiving all of this money. They are just getting back the money which his Party took away as a result of the National Energy Program. We have simply righted a wrong. Is the Hon. Member aware that when the oil companies were doing well so were tens of thousands of people in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec? They were successful. The oil companies made money and they paid taxes. Does the Hon. Member know that after the National Energy Program was introduced some 25 per cent of businesses went bankrupt in one small city with a population of 30,000? Does the Hon. Member understand what that meant? It meant alcoholism, family break-ups, unemployment, and problems of all sorts. The Hon. Member said that we should not give them money. We all shared in this. However, the Hon. Member has to realize that.

Over the 18 years the Liberals Party was in power the economy came to a stumbling and bumbling halt. In 1985, the debt per person per year was \$1,000. That is for every person

in the country. In 1968 it was only \$75. I ask the Hon. Member: Who will pay for that?

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Edmonton East (Mr. Lesick) says that I bring him doom and gloom. The central premise of my argument comes from a Tory polling firm, Decima Research, which has indicated there is a serious concern in the country in that some 35 per cent of Canadians are worried about the gulf which has been created between the rich and poor since the Conservative Government came to power. They are concerned that there is a stratification of a class system taking place in the country. They are concerned that the Government will not be able to bridge that gulf, or that it will not have the courage or determination to do so. Those are the concerns of Canadians. They are the concerns of individuals who may have voted for the Hon. Member from Alberta, for myself, and other Members of the House. I would like to ask the Hon. Member why his Government refuses to pay attention not necessarily to him, or any other Member in the House, but to the concerns of Canadians. If he accepts that premise, then he ought to accept the issues and difficulties which we are articulating with some degree of responsibility on behalf of our constituents.

The Hon. Member also mentioned that the capital gains tax exemption would be enjoyed by every average working Canadian. In that case I would like to ask him why the statistics with respect to capital gains over the last five years show that nearly 65 per cent of those gains are attributable to only 4 per cent of the population. Why was it not attributable to 50 per cent, 70 per cent, or even 85 per cent? If that were the case, then I might give him some credit—I would not have said the things which I said.

The Hon. Member points out that oil companies have paid their taxes, have worked hard and are now benefiting. Is he suggesting that other working Canadians have not paid their taxes?

Mr. McDermid: They were not taxed in the same way.

Mr. Marchi: What members of the Conservative Party are really saying is: "Look, we are now giving a break to the oil companies". Canadians are paying for that break because the whole tax grid is completely unfair.

Mr. McDermid: You don't know what you're talking about.

Mr. Marchi: If one considers a family which earns \$50,000, then it is unfair. It is gross and perverse for that family to pay 35 per cent more tax when the rich in society are getting away with paying only 2 per cent.

I might have knocked over a glass of water, and Hon. Members might be laughing, but Canadians are not laughing because those are the facts. The facts show that the situation is unfair and inequitable. Whether in 1987, 1988 or 1989, this Government will pay the consequences of not listening to the aspirations of Canadians. We will then see who will be laughing.