

Its members did not do it. They did not say that during the election campaign, but they have done it.

They were not elected to make those changes to the unemployment insurance scheme, those changes which are going to have such horrendous effects on Atlantic Canada in particular.

This government was not elected to wreck the fishery, despite the fact that the Prime Minister says there is no crisis in Atlantic Canada. Well, there is a crisis in Atlantic Canada. You cannot separate the fishery from the rest of the economy in Atlantic Canada. If there is a crisis in the fishery in Atlantic Canada, then there is a crisis right across Atlantic Canada. It is as plain as the noses on our faces.

This government was not elected to unravel or to tear apart rural Canada. All you have to do is go back to my home country, whether it is the province of Manitoba, or the province of Saskatchewan or Alberta and you can see how rural Canada is coming apart. This government has to address many of those issues.

As I said, this government was not elected to carry out some kind of a revolution. It was elected to be pragmatic, realistic and responsible and to deal with the issues of the day and not to proceed along some right-wing agenda, to proceed along some ideological path. That is not what this Conservative government was elected for. Canadians are practical people. They are realistic people. They are pragmatic people. They are responsible people. That is what they want the government to do, not this silly nonsense the government has embarked on ever since the beginning of this Parliament.

I want to deal with a couple of provisions in Bill C-52. I think that the complexities and the technicalities of the bill should be left to the committee. I think we MP's should be dealing with the politics of the bill and the politics of the issues around this bill.

There is the matter of the roll-over of pension income into RRSPs that will not be allowed any more under this bill. This is going to have an impact on a number of senior citizens. It is something that they have become accustomed to over the past few years, and now they are going to lose it. They are going to feel it. I have had a

### *Government Orders*

number of calls and a number of letters with respect to this particular provision.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read into the record one of the letters that I received just the other day. As I say, the letter is from a constituent. It goes like this:

Dear Mr. Harvard:

I would like to bring to your attention a predicament that the recent legislation prohibiting monthly pension payments to be transferred to RRSP's has put me into. I am now being forced to withdraw my Federal Government pension allowance (at age 57) when the intention was to withdraw my pension funds at a pensionable age. The situation is as follows:

I want to read this letter because I think it pretty well sums up the kind of predicament this gentleman is in. I am sure there are a lot of other Canadians who find themselves in the same kind of situation. The letter continues:

In July 1962, I joined the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Treatment Branch as a Clinical Chemist—at Deer Lodge Hospital in Winnipeg.

That is in my riding, by the way.

Negotiations to transfer the hospital from Federal to Provincial jurisdiction were completed in 1982 and the transfer was effective April 1, 1983. In preparation for the transfer all positions in the hospital were reviewed to determine whether the new facility required all these positions to carry out its objectives. Positions no longer required were termed "surplus" and my position as clinical chemist became "surplus".

In the months preceding transfer, all employees were counselled by Federal Government Employees from Ottawa as to their rights and advised regarding any decisions to be made. In my case, the major decision was what to do with my superannuation. I was aged 51 years at the time, too young to receive an annuity (an unreduced pension) and had to choose between receiving an allowance (a reduced pension due to age or length of service) or deferring my annuity until of pension age. Upon the advice of the counsellor—

• (1240)

I should add the interjection that this counsellor worked for the federal government.

Upon the advice of the counsellor I chose to receive the allowance (with a 45 per cent reduction due to my age) and transfer it directly to an RRSP. The reason for doing so was that a deferred annuity while not increasing would pay only 6 per cent interest while RRSP funds would probably grow at a higher rate of interest and not be subject to tax as income until retirement age. I have continued to transfer my monthly pension allowance to RRSP until now when I am being forced to