

national level are in my Department of National Health and Welfare and in servicing the debt. I say this to members of the New Democratic Party in as straightforward a manner as I know how. They say, "Don't bring in any cuts. Don't bring in any reductions. Bring in taxes on the rich". But keep in mind that this change will come into effect at the same time as the minimum tax, which was pointed out by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), that is, on January 1, 1986, if I have the date right. But those Hon. Members do not tell the people about that side of the equation. So I am saying to them very directly; they know and I know that there is no money tree out there from which, if one shakes a certain branch, one will get more money without pain and will be able to sustain these programs without turning around that ship of state, that deficit and that load.

**Mr. Waddell:** You didn't have any problems with the oil companies, did you?

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** Surely they can understand that. Creating jobs was mentioned in the Budget. Surely, the best job that we can give Canadians is a permanent job. And if deficit financing is as successful as the socialists put forward, why is it that we have this large debt?

**Mr. Waddell:** Because you gave away too much money to the oil companies. You gave them \$2 billion.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** And why do we have 1.4 million unemployed—

**Mr. Waddell:** Because you have monetarism.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** —of which 500,000 are under the age of 24. So I say to the Hon. Member, if his system works so well, why hasn't it worked?

**Mr. Waddell:** Because we have not been in government. You are in government. The Liberals were in government. We have been in the Opposition, remember?

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** And you will stay there. I will change my opinion about the Liberals and the New Democrats after I see what happens in Ontario. I do not know how you are going to defend that, but that is for you to worry about and not for me. I say to the Hon. Member very directly, please put that forward.

The other point the Hon. Member likes to make is that we have not maintained universality. That is also not the case. We have maintained universality. Every Canadian who is eligible for old age pension at age 65 still receives it, as they received it before the Budget, as they received it after the Budget, and as they will receive it as well on January 1, 1986.

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

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** While I might have my philosophical differences with the New Democratic Party, I must mention the Liberals. Here they are rising in their places and telling us that this is a dastardly act. Let me read what my

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immediate predecessor, the former Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Hon. Monique Bégin, said. I do not believe she was ever accused in this House of being very concerned about the deficit. At the time she was speaking, the annualized deficit was \$19.6 billion. Let me quote the following from *Hansard* of November 18, 1982, at page 20801:

I emphasize this last point because, in spite of the position taken recently by the New Democratic Party, there are people in this House and throughout Canada who believe that we can simply increase the deficit by a few hundred million dollars to achieve our pressing objectives. However, beyond a certain point, the interest payable on the deficit becomes intolerable because, from the point of view of a Minister of social affairs, it is a waste of money.

We must be realistic and avoid seemingly easy answers which would only prolong the economic crisis and exert even more pressure on all future social budgets.

That is the point, Mr. Speaker, and I say to my Liberal and New Democrat friends, that is the point. Have they looked at the demographic figures ten years from now? Have they looked at demographic figures 15 years from now? That is why, for instance, there were changes to the Pension Benefits Standards Act, which the Hon. Member of the New Democratic Party knows full well will help people to plan for their pension futures. But do they say anything to the old age pensioners about that? No, they leave that out. They will not say anything like that. And, Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no question that if people will rely throughout our history only on the OAS and the GIS, they will be at or near the poverty line. Surely it is better for us today to start planning for the future so that these programs that we all want to maintain can be preserved. I say to the Hon. Member of the New Democratic Party, don't ask us to give the international bankers more. Don't defend the bankers. Defend the old age pensioners for a change.

● (1600)

I could go through speeches by the finance critic or the health critic for the Liberal Party, as well as others, but I say to all of them: Yes, we have maintained the principle of universality, and what we are also trying to maintain, through Bill C-26, for example, through the spouse's allowance, and through changes to the Pension Benefits Standards Act, is the ability of Canadians to invest and create jobs for the future.

Yes, I am sure the Hon. Member has many small businesses in his riding, people who do not consider themselves rich and who had to pay capital gains tax when they sold the business. I say to him, start believing in your neighbours, the people up and down your street. They can do more for the economy than this or any Government can do. Surely people can look after themselves better than either you or I can with rhetoric. Look at the StatsCan figures which came out yesterday, and keep this in mind: if we are going to continue down the road we have been on, the cost of servicing our debt will become so great that the programs and pensions we have for those who reach 65 a few years from now will be unsustainable. Let us not get into that trap. Let us make the decisions today which will turn that around and give not only our senior citizens some hope, but also those who are in the workforce today and those who want to start their own businesses. Let us give them