

earns more than \$50,000. What that says to me is that you are discriminating against families. Families, I have always believed, are the backbone of our country. We should be encouraging families, but we are not.

We are saying that if you are a one income family, that is, if one of the parents chooses to remain at home with the family but that one parent who works happens to make \$51,000, at the end of three years that family will lose all family allowance benefits. This government should be encouraging families, not taking away something that they may need.

A family which earns \$51,000 if they have two, three, or four children is not rich. They may not be that poor, but they certainly would need the encouragement of this government.

On the other hand, if you have a family where both parents work and the highest income is below \$50,000, the one parent might make \$48,000 and the other might make \$40,000, they do not lose their family allowance benefits. They get it taxed back at the same rate as anyone else, but they do not lose the whole amount. Not only do they not lose their family allowance benefit, but they can claim child care expenses. But you cannot if you have a parent who stays at home. Does that encourage family life? Of course not. You are saying to the couple in this case who might make \$85,000 or \$88,000, "That's all right. You can keep part of your family allowance." But to the other family where there is an income of \$51,000 you are saying, "No, you can't." That is unfair and that is discrimination. We all know how difficult it is to raise a family. I am totally opposed to this kind of legislation. Rather than attacking the families of our nation, we should be encouraging them in any way that we can.

One of the other provisions of Bill C-28 is that we claw back the old age pension for those who have an income higher than \$50,000. At first sight it does not look too bad. But why are we discriminating against that one segment of the population? One of the members opposite was saying before that as members of Parliament we make more than \$50,000 a year. That is fine. We make more than \$50,000 a year, but if we go on the stock market and we make some money playing the stock

market the government does not come in and tax it away at 100 per cent. All we are saying is, treat everyone equally. Do not discriminate on the basis of age. That is what is wrong with this measure.

I am going to read part of a letter that I received from a constituent. It is a letter dated December 4. It states:

Dear Madam,

In answer to a question of the Leader of the Opposition on November 29, 1989, (Hansard p.6372) the Minister of State (Seniors) said:

"We intend to improve our social programs and we are asking 4 per cent of Canada's seniors to help us reduce the deficit—"

This is his response:

I thought that I hadn't heard right so I waited for Hansard. Now my eyes are confirming what my ears have heard. The Tories are asking the seniors to reduce the deficit! How Machiavellian and utterly despicable to now ask seniors who survived the Great Depression, who worked for \$1.00 a day, who endured very patriotically two World Wars, to ask them to pay for the wasteful extravagance of this incompetent government! The seniors of this country have paid dearly in terms of money, blood and sweat for the right to a pension during the autumn of their lives. Taxing O.A.S. is fair game but the proposed clawback is immoral. Let the Government clawback the revenues of strip joints but leave the Seniors alone.

Would it take the demonstrations that we have recently seen in the countries of eastern Europe to bring this government back to its senses?

Yours truly,
Andre Emery

I say to you, this is the feeling of many seniors across this country. They have not only earned the right to an old age pension, but most of them have also paid. If you can recall back a few years, there was a stipulation in the income tax return where they actually paid towards that old age security. They are not asking for special treatment, they are asking to have equal treatment.

What are we doing to the average family income in our country? We are imposing a GST. There will be no relief for these people. We are increasing the surtax and we are now clawing back family allowance benefits and old age pensions.

One of the members opposite said a little while ago, "Well, I do not need the family allowance". I would say to that member, by all means, do not accept it. The government will not keep sending it back to you if you do not want it.