

Family Allowances Act, 1973

brackets from 59 per cent to 50 per cent. That cost the people of Canada several hundred million dollars. Let me remind the Minister of National Health and Welfare that we have had a whole series of these kinds of hand-outs to people in the upper income brackets. If the Government feels it necessary to save money, there are many other ways it could do that. For all these reasons, we propose to vote against the Bill.

• (1450)

Mr. Scott Fennell (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, what we are debating today is very similar to what we have debated a great deal since October, 1980. Now we are removing the cash flow of families. In 1980 we removed the cash flow from the oil industry. Again, this is a Liberal grab. The Minister is laughing. I do not think she realizes the suffering that many of the unemployed are undergoing today. I am talking about the small people.

Miss Bégin: Speak to the Bill.

Mr. Fennell: I am speaking to the Bill. I am talking about those who need the increase next year because they are running out of unemployment insurance.

Miss Bégin: They are getting it. Read the Bill.

Mr. Fennell: Make your own speech in your own time. This is cruelty in a time of spiralling inflation. The Government is doing nothing to curb its own expenditures. I have been sitting on the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee and expenditures are going up. The Government is spending money everywhere it wants. There is no control. Now it is going to hurt the average guy who needs the money to put food on the table.

This is a serious time for our economy. We are dealing with unemployed people. However, not only are they unemployed, but at this time we have surplus labour. I do not know whether they can be employed. This Government has not identified the need to supply jobs for them. This is a serious subject and this is a serious Bill that will take money away from these people at this time.

There are many areas of Government spending that could be cut, but when the Government begins to cut cash flow to the citizens of this country, it is perpetrating a disgrace on this House. There is no way we could support this Bill at a time when people are starving, losing their jobs and not being re-employed.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) referred to the creation of 60,000 jobs. Our Leader referred to the fact that each unemployed worker will get 20 minutes of work. That is not creating jobs for the people who need them; it is an inequity to Canadians. It is unfair to people right across this country, particularly those in areas with heavy unemployment such as Sudbury, where today there is 40 per cent unemployment. Those people do not know when they will go back to work. How can the Government take money away

from them? It is cruelty. This is an absolutely cruel Bill being foisted on the citizens of this country.

In addition to looking at the unemployed, we have to look at the exhaustees. We do not know how many there will be before the next year is out. The automobile industry will not replace that many people; it is installing robots in order to remain competitive. We have the unemployment and surplus labour and this situation is not being dealt with. It is what we should be dealing with today instead of taking money out of the pockets of those who will not have any sustenance.

This is a very brief, short and cruel Bill. I regret that it has come before the House. Again it is the attitudinal situation of a grabbing Government, taking money away from people and grabbing all it can get. The Government believes it can spend the money better. However, people with children need it far more than the Government. The Government does not think of the human suffering that will occur because of this Bill.

Mr. Nielsen: They need the money for advertising.

Mr. Fennell: A very good point. Our House Leader says they need it for advertising. They love to sell their great programs across the country with their Maple Leaf and flying swans. They have to use swans because they have worn out the geese. What is happening in Canada is pathetic.

Mr. Evans: Come on!

Mr. Fennell: I see my usual heckler is here today. He always has something to say when I try to get the point across that he is being unkind to the people of this country. The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Evans) has many good points, but he will have a hard time with families the next time there is an election. I know because I happen to live in his riding when I am in Ottawa. The families who will suffer because of the Bill he is approving will have something to say to him when he knocks on their doors. They will remind him that they have not forgotten what he did to them. That Hon. Member hopes the election is far enough away that they will forget all about this. He hopes that by then the Government will come out with a new package of goodies which will double the Family Allowance just before the next election. That is the way to play the game and get elected. They will do that even though we have a \$25 billion deficit this year.

In spite of that debt, there are many other places the Government could cut back. I plead with the Members on the other side to give some consideration to those who need help now and to vote against the Government.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, by popular demand from Members on the other side of the House, I will sum up the position of the New Democratic Party on this Bill and others like it.

Mr. Evans: That should take all day.