

Government Orders

• (1640)

I could not go to my grave with a good conscience knowing I had done that, especially when we have people in this House who have brought the government practically to its knees. If they have not done that yet, they soon will with a \$600 billion deficit. People are crying because they cannot get unemployment insurance. Seniors cannot make it because of their pensions. I cannot believe what I am hearing. They would not give me an inch. Not an inch.

During the 1993 campaign, boy were things going to be different. Were they ever going to be different. I stood on the same platform with people who agreed with me that things had to change with the pension. If the Liberals could agree with the Reformers on one thing, it was to fix the pension plan. This is not even a band-aid.

We ought to be ashamed of ourselves for even considering such a thing when we are asking everybody in the country to tighten their belts. There will be no more UI money. There will not be any more old age security money. No more CPP. We have to cut our health care. We have to cut education. But boy, we are going to keep those fat pensions coming. What a bunch of hypocritical nonsense.

I hope in the next election, on this issue alone, if they do not pay the price for what they have done today that they will wish they had.

Mr. Duhamel: What is your pension?

Mr. Thompson: My pension, just in case hon. members want to know, is about \$914 a month as a school teacher. I paid into it for nearly 40 years and it was not matched dollar for dollar until about the last five years of my work. It took a long, long time. That is called a private sector pension.

Mrs. Brushett: Double dipping.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, they can call it anything they want but it is not double dipping.

I also issue the challenge to my friend from Fraser Valley in British Columbia. If any one of you suckers wants to take me to your ridings, let us go.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order, please. I want to take a moment to remind all members that interventions must be directed through the Chair. I think it becomes apparent on a day like today with subject matter on which there are strongly held views, that if the debate is not maintained in the traditional parliamentary fashion with interventions being made through the Chair that some rather unexpected and possibly unparliamentary statements might be made. I urge members on both sides of the House to be judicious and respectful in the normal practice of the Chamber.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, no doubt a person is going to get a little riled up over this kind of an issue. I apologize for not speaking through the Chair. I lost it, but I will repeat what I said.

Any one of my hon. colleagues across the way who would like to take me into their ridings to debate the pension and my personal pension which I earned after many hard years of work at less than a dollar for a dollar, then I would be more than pleased to accept the invitation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you because I am sure you are the only one who really listened at heart.

• (1645)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I do want to take a moment to express my gratitude to the hon. member for Wild Rose for the manner in which he completed his remarks and particularly in reference to an earlier statement made which I think bordered on the questionable side of debate. I certainly compliment and thank him for the manner in which he handled that issue.

Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to follow my hon. colleague. Much of what he said and much of what he feels is what I feel.

I do want to speak today at report stage on Bill C-85, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act. I spoke on this bill last month at which time I expressed my concerns and reasons for vehemently opposing this piece of government legislation.

My opposition to this bill is based on certain principles that I as a member of Parliament for the Reform Party hold and advocate. I would like to state these two principles from our blue book:

We believe in public service—that governments, civil servants, politicians and political parties exist to serve the people, and that they should demonstrate this service commitment at all times.

We believe that public money should be regarded by governments as “funds held in trust”, and that governments should practise fiscal responsibility to balance expenditures and revenues.

I mention those principles to the House today because they show us a government that has distorted this process and has flaunted the trust of the Canadian people. Reformers want a fair hearing on this issue.

Today, as we come to this place in which the government has invoked closure on this bill we come with the same outrage that Canadians must feel.

I put to the House as did a witness in the committee the other day the intervention that this bill is bad for the members who sit in this House, it is bad for Parliament and it is bad for the Canadian people.