

*Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)*

said that these soup kitchens should be more readily available. Another individual, a school teacher, pointed out that perhaps soup kitchens should be opened in the schools because children were showing up in his classroom who were not properly nourished or, for that matter, not properly clothed. This is the kind of attack the Government wants to execute against lower income families in this series of Bills.

• (2140)

The Bill before us attacks retired civil servants living on a pension income. It attacks the basic underpinning or the philosophy of most Canadians who believe that when one retires, one should retire with a decent pension income, and that that pension income should be protected from the ravages of inflation by an adequate indexing program. The President of the Treasury Board said that the federal Government wants to show leadership but it is doing it by using, as examples, people in our society who can least afford to be exposed to the kind of cutbacks and very negative, regressive action the Government has proposed. The President of the Treasury Board made a further statement and said that this is just one of the economic measures contained in the June budget, that the government wants to use this particular program against people who have security and jobs and that it feels that by dissolving their bargaining rights, by capping their salaries and refusing them the right to bargain effectively, this will be an economic measure which will lead to recovery in the economy. I would suggest that this is an incredible stunt and that the imposition of the six and five program on the salaries of public servants, on families through Family Allowances, and on pensioners has nothing to do with economic recovery. It will not put one logger back to work in British Columbia. It will not put one of the thousands and thousands of people laid off by MacMillan Bloedel back to work, and it will not put workers back to work in the shipyards of Canada. Only positive government action in our forestry industry and in our manufacturing and shipbuilding sectors will ever put people back to work or turn the economy around. Mark my words, Mr. Speaker. There has not been one positive act by the Liberal Government since the inception of the Thirty-second Parliament which would do anything toward putting the economy on the road to recovery.

Certainly, the question at hand concerns the six and five program. If it has nothing to do with recovery, what is its purpose? The purpose is simply to create a facade of action which, in reality, will create division in our society. The Liberal Party and the Liberal Government are held in such disfavour in this country that I do not think that after February 18, 1985, we will be worried about Liberals for a long time to come. However, in the impending two years, they have a serious problem, as do the people of Canada.

The Government was quick to perceive that the imposition of the six and five program would certainly turn the attention of many people away from the inadequacies of the Government and its lack of sound economic policies, and would direct attention toward an old kicking post, the Public Service. The

Public Service has been a public kicking post for too long, and one for both Parties Liberal and Conservative.

Therefore, we essentially have a situation in which the Liberal Government, strictly for the purpose of political gain and not for economic recovery, decided to impose a six and five solution. Management is now fighting labour, and people in Canada who are laid off are fighting with the public servants. The Government has essentially created the same kind of rift in our economy as it created when it imposed the wage and price controls in 1975 or, I should say, the wage controls. It has nothing to do with economic recovery, but it has everything to do with political deception and an attempt to increase its own position from the one of very low esteem in which it is currently held in the public opinion polls. Mark my words again, Mr. Speaker, that should the six and five program lead to management and labour unrest, it will certainly lead to a reduction in productivity and further spiralling down of the Canadian economy. This could turn out, in fact, to be some of the most destructive legislation produced by this Parliament since 1975.

**Mr. Kristiansen:** Cut off Tiny Tim's crutches next.

**Mr. Skelly:** It is a very serious situation, but we must try to remember that this particular legislation is probably not the direct fault of the President of the Treasury Board. I think that in some former incarnation he actually had some very interesting views on the economy, before he was muzzled and before he did not resign his seat for certain commitments he made while in Opposition. Today, he is out justifying the six and five legislation of a predecessor to his position. It shows the intent and the determination of the Government to impose harsh conditions upon people in our economy who are least able to afford it, pensioners who have retired from the Civil Service, those who are depending on Old Age Security, and certainly those receiving Family Allowances.

I think that most Members of Parliament, most civil servants and most people in the economy today know that the imposition of the six and five solution, the removal of funds desperately needed by pensioners, is something which will certainly be dealt with in the next election. It will be an election issue. It is interesting to consider what the alternatives for the voters in that next election will be. When employed and retired civil servants come to vote in the next federal election there will certainly be a question in their minds. Will they support the Liberal Party and the Liberal Government which removed their right to bargain? Will they support that Government which removed the indexing on their pensions, on Old Age Security and on Family Allowances, or will they vote for the Official Opposition? It is a very curious situation. The decisions must be made by 1985, but a majority Government, whether it has been Liberal or Conservative in the past, has not served the interests of the majority of Canadians, least of all Civil Servants. What people are facing right now is a disastrous Government policy, but I am certain that they must very closely consider what the Official Opposition has done.

**Mr. Lewis:** Oh, you have been doing well until now, so do not spoil it.