

*Government Orders*

maybe going to be a little bigger. Instead of being \$600,000, it is going to \$13.5 million”.

**An hon. member:** Shame.

**Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth):** Thirteen and a half million dollars to a province of about 140,000 people. That is not chicken feed. Those are real dollars for real programs that are necessary.

We had a debate in this House last week about the at and east program. They certainly did not mind coming after Atlantic Canadians on the at and east program. They had basically earmarked every program of support and equalization in this country for the garbage bin. That is what they have done because they are playing the politics of the centre. The politics of the centre says: “When you do the numbers folks, if we only have  $x$  number of dollars to spend, we are going to spend them in central Canada”. That is what it says.

The minister rolls his eyes. How else can you say it? You have cut billions of dollars from regional development. In the regions of this country you have severed the national rail transportation system and at the same time you support the policies of the Governor of the Bank of Canada, and those very policies of the Governor of the Bank of Canada do what? They are supposed to be there to slow down growth in the golden belt in southern Ontario. Who has to pay the piper? Just businesses in southern Ontario? Just consumers in southern Ontario? No. This government is putting people in my riding out of business because it is supporting or telling the Governor of the Bank of Canada what the interest rate policy should be.

• (1840)

If anybody ever doubts that the Governor of the Bank of Canada knows what it is like to suffer, then they should have seen him on television the other night when he was chased by reporters. After coming from a committee hearing and being asked: “Do you think you should speak to average Canadians?” “Oh”, he said, “I think the members of the committee are the people who are supposed to speak to average Canadians.”

I can understand how the Governor of the Bank of Canada could say that. There are not too many people, average or otherwise in this country, who make the salary that that man makes and would have the gall and the audacity to take a 29 per cent increase at the same time that he is manipulating the economic lever of interest rates to their highest level in years and telling Canadians to tighten their belts. “Do with less. Those of us who got more, boys, we are rolling in the dough”. That is exactly what he did.

We have seen this government increase taxes 33 times since 1984. I do not know how government members can get up and look at themselves in the mirror in the morning. Go and talk to somebody who is on a fixed income and living below the poverty line. These people still pay income tax because our tax system still needs major reform. If you ask those individuals who are on pensions or on an annuity: “Are you better off today than last year or the year before?”, they will tell you that they are not.

This government has a regressive taxation policy. There are no loopholes for the average Canadians. There are no loopholes for the seniors in my riding who are trying to live on poverty wages. There are no loopholes. There certainly is for the upper income levels. The government has shut down women’s centres right across this country. It even went after the veterans.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I am a proud member of the Royal Canadian Legion. I was at the Royal Canadian Legion in Dartmouth, the Centennial Branch, and I was flipping eggs on Sunday, because I try to do my bit to make sure that those good service organizations like the Royal Canadian Legion have enough money coming in so they can sustain themselves.

This government has broken the trust that was placed in it by many Royal Canadian Legion members when it decided to change some of the Veterans Affairs programs. If the government members think that they are going to still join in the camaraderie that is legendary in Legions across this country, they have not visited since this last budget came down.

With regard to the proposed changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act, Bill C-21, that members opposite are apoplectic about because the Senate of Canada is holding it up at this point, people in Nova Scotia are trying to tell the government to change things. The