

The second statistic: "Home ownership rate of households in the lowest quintile declined to 39 per cent in 1990 from 45 per cent in 1980". A significant drop, because house prices have gone out of reach for people in the lowest income groups.

Finally, "the proportion of renters spending 30 per cent or more of income on rent has decreased from 23 per cent in 1989 to 27.2 per cent in 1990", which sounds just fine, except that when you look at the lowest quintile you will find that, in fact, it increased significantly there.

On average, renter households spent somewhat more of their income on rent in 1990 than in 1982, an increase of about 1.5 per cent.

These figures belie a failure on the part of the government to address the needs of the poor in Canada and it has failed in this bill to do anything about it. In fact, it has made the situation worse.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I simply wish to remind the House that, because of the Prime Minister's statement and the opposition's response, the debate on the orders of the day will be extended until 5.47 p.m. Therefore, Private Member's Hour will begin at 5.47 p.m. The hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood.

[*English*]

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to go over the fact that this Canada Assistance Plan covers the payments for those who are most disadvantaged in our community.

A lot of people tune into these House of Commons debates and sometimes we use expressions like CAP and we do not tell people often enough what we are actually debating. I know in a city like Toronto when we talk about the fact that we are getting payments cut back by the government that are due to those people who are disabled, foster homes for abused children, safe housing for abused women, subsidized child care, we are talking about capping. We are talking about cutting back.

An hon. member: One of the three the richest provinces in Canada, in the whole country.

Government Orders

Mr. Mills: The member from Newfoundland talks about the three richest provinces in Canada. I presume that he would include the province of Ontario as one of those provinces. I want to let the hon. member know that right now in the province of Ontario and specifically metropolitan Toronto, we are on our knees.

I must tell you that I am totally sympathetic to your riding as well. I am not trying to say that people in Toronto are the only ones suffering pain. I want to let you know that this is probably the first time ever that we in Toronto have experienced the kind of pain that the hon. member from Newfoundland has faced over many years. This may sound blasphemous to some of my friends in Toronto, but perhaps it is not a bad thing that for the first time ever some of us in Toronto have experienced pain the way many other regions of the country have faced it for many years.

There may be a chance that this experience we are all going through right now might even bring us closer together. In fact, I am quite happy this afternoon that we are talking about the economy. Because, with all my respect for the Constitution, the people in my community, in my riding, certainly want the unity question settled, but they want us in this House to focus on the economy.

• (1710)

When my friend from Newfoundland talked about coming to his riding and that things were rough there, I understand that. But I will tell you what is happening in Toronto right now and why these cutbacks are of such concern for us.

It doesn't matter whether it is rental housing or the cost of goods, the prices in Toronto are almost double those in most other regions of Canada. So if you receive a welfare payment or an unemployment insurance cheque in Newfoundland, it goes a lot further than it does in Toronto. You are lucky if you can rent a one bedroom apartment in Toronto for \$750 a month. I know in my riding that single mothers with kids are renting basement apartments for \$1,100, \$1,200, \$1,300 a month. I know in some regions of the country that just sounds right off the wall, but those are the facts. And so when all of a sudden we are faced with this economic crunch, which we have never faced the likes of before, com-