

Income Tax Act, 1986

They have done the opposite of what they say should be done. I believe that our Party, our Government, is able to respond adequately to the demands of Canadians and in particular to the demands of the neediest families. That is what we are striving to do. Let us give more to the disadvantaged, let us make the rich pay and in this way, I am sure, we will create a more equitable system, a system of social justice, and we will be able to say that we are working for all Canadians.

● (1600)

Mr. Carlo Rossi (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Hon. Member for Champlain (Mr. Champagne), who is certainly to be congratulated on his efforts to score a few points for a Government that is going to the dogs, as they say. He tried to give us several figures, but the fact is we are now seeing percentages as low as 36 and 37 in the polls, which certainly does not bode very well for the future.

Mr. Vincent: Wait until 1989.

Mr. Rossi: We shall see.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say that at the beginning of his speech, the Hon. Member for Champlain alluded to the fact that so few Members were present in the House. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that at this very moment, eighteen Conservative Members are present, out of 211. That is a lot more than the Members opposite can draw from.

I am pleased with this opportunity to take part in the debate on the amendment proposed by my hon. friend from Saint-Henri-Westmount (Mr. Johnston), aimed at amending a Bill whose sole purpose is to increase taxes, despite all the attempts of the Government to conceal this fact.

Yesterday afternoon, I heard another Member from Quebec, my hon. friend from Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (Mr. Desrosiers) say in his grandiloquent speech that the ultimate objective of Bill C-84 was to promote justice and fairness. Mr. Speaker, what a farce, coming from a Member who claims he wants to help the needy in his riding. This is incredible, coming from the Hon. Member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve and other Quebec members, when we consider what is happening and what they are doing about it. It is incredible, because these measures are aimed directly at people who lack the financial resources to meet all their day-to-day needs.

The deficit being what it is, I believe that we all have a responsibility and that it is necessary to identify mechanisms by which we can improve the economic situation. Everybody realizes that. However, it seems the Government nearly always introduces measures that take money from the poor and the needy.

An attempt was made to impress Canadians. An attempt was made to impress Canadians by spreading the news, on the radio and just about everywhere else, that the Prime Minister

(Mr. Mulroney) was going to take a salary cut of so many thousand dollars, and that his Ministers were going to do likewise. Mr. Speaker, this may seem very admirable, but when we are talking about a \$10,000 cut out of \$150,000 or \$120,000, my admiration is not that great.

What frightens me the most in this message, Mr. Speaker, is the added mention that Canadians will have to do some belt tightening. That is what frightens me. To what extent will Canadians have to tighten their belts in 1986? What sort of message is the Government sending out? Will there be tax increases? Has the Government found new ways to dig in the pockets of the disadvantaged?

I notice my hon. colleague opposite. I do not know what riding he is from but ever since he came to the House some 15 years ago he has been a constant mumbler.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, my friend the Hon. Member for Champlain (Mr. Champagne) examined the situation quite thoroughly and came up with some figures, but he forgot to tell Canadians that during our election campaign, we said this or that. But your own leader the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), wherever he went in the Province of Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, solemnly promised never to touch the Family Allowances or Old Age Security Pensions. Yet, the only way you have been able to raise money in the effort to cut the deficit has been at the expense of the poor in our society. All you have managed to do is to deindex the Family Allowances and Old Age Security Pensions.

Mr. Girard: Do you believe that?

Mr. Rossi: Sure, they believe me . . . And the proof that Canadians no longer believe you is that compared with September 4, 1984, when you had 54 or 56 per cent of the popular support, you now have only 37 per cent, according to the most recent survey.

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the Prime Minister and the Members of his Cabinet should keep their promise and stop getting money on the backs of the poor and the disadvantaged in our society.

They should stop giving away . . . They were talking about giving away \$500,000 or more to the affluent—

Mr. Vincent: That is another motion.

Mr. Rossi: That is another motion which you will support in a little while. But your great strategy is to get money from the poor and the disadvantaged rather than from the rich.

● (1610)

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.