

The statements by Members of the Progressive Conservative Party that this was their idea in 1972-73 is absolutely ludicrous. It was the Liberal Government in 1974 that provided indexing on the income tax tables. It was a progressive measure at that time and it still is progressive. There are enough regressive tax measures in this country that we should have at least one progressive measure to allow all people to pay according to their means, according to a progressive tax table that should be indexed to the cost of living. It does not make sense to say as the Government does that those who make less money should pay as much or more than those who may pay a minimum tax. We will have an opportunity to address that issue later.

I want to conclude by saying that it appears to me that the silence on the Government side is due to their embarrassment. I understand that it is embarrassing to be in contradiction with one's own Party policy. The Conservatives cannot have it both ways. They cannot say that indexation was their idea, only to say a few years later that it is atrocious to continue with the indexing of the income tax tables and propose to modify it so that the first 3 per cent of inflation will not be covered. With that, I hope the Government is defeated on that motion, although I doubt it very much.

[Translation]

**Mr. Édouard Desrosiers (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise on Amendment No. 4 to Bill C-84. As we know, Mr. Speaker, people can juggle with figures. Members opposite call us all sorts of names, but one should not forget that the child benefit, family allowance and tax credit programs provide greater assistance to low-income families—that is the truth—while reducing benefits now being enjoyed by high-income families. This is why Bill C-84 is very important. It should be realized that the legislation as a whole is designed to favour the less privileged families in Canada, the less privileged people, the families in need.

I find it hard to understand that the Opposition cannot grasp that situation.

We all know who is responsible for everything that is happening to Canadian taxpayers. We must not forget that the national debt exceeds \$200 billion, Mr. Speaker. The Conservative Party was not always in power. This situation was created by the Liberal Party.

Today, naturally, we have to look at the whole issue and protect the Canadian taxpayers, who are always the ones to pay. Bill C-84 creates a perfect balance. We finally have a Government which will take care of the needs of low-income families and penalize a little bit families with high incomes. In my opinion, it is normal in our society for everyone to do his share and to provide some assistance to the most needy, those who have the most problems.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-84 includes many excellent provisions. For instance, there are truly valuable provisions for the artists. Of course, this is not the time to speak about them, but I shall have another opportunity to do so.

### *Income Tax Act, 1986*

I simply want to tell the Canadian taxpayers who are watching us that the Conservative Government\* wants to protect and help them, especially those with low incomes. That is the reason for Bill C-84.

• (1610)

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** Resuming debate. The Hon. Member for Laurier (Mr. Berger).

**Mr. David Berger (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, this Bill is only one thing, it is about increased taxes. That is what the Budget is all about, no matter how the Government seeks to disguise its plan. What it is doing is imposing a massive tax increase on Canadian taxpayers.

Continuing what my colleagues have said, I would like to outline the effect of some of these tax increases on individual taxpayers. The important point that must be stressed, and I heard the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) and the Hon. Member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (Mr. Desrosiers) speaking, is that if taxes have to be increased to pay our way as the Conservatives are so fond of saying, let it be so. What I and my colleagues in the Liberal Party object to and what millions of Canadians object to is that taxes are being increased unfairly. A greater burden is being placed upon the poor in our society.

[Translation]

If the Hon. Member says that everyone should do his share, I agree with him. But that is not what this Bill provides. The poor will pay more than their share. When we look at all the budgetary measures, we realize that the wealthiest in our society are doing very nicely. That is what is unfair about this budget and it is this injustice which we oppose.

[English]

A study was published late last year by the National Anti-Poverty Organization which was presented to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson). What was its conclusion? It stated that federal tax increases announced in the Budget will take twice as much from the poorest Canadian as they do from the most affluent. Is it fair for a Government to impose tax increases which take twice as much from the poorest Canadians as they do from the most affluent?

We all remember, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) talking about a bank president earning \$500,000 a year. The Prime Minister cited him as an example of those who do not need family allowance in the famous debate over family allowances several months after the election in the fall of 1984.

What does the National Anti-Poverty Association have to say about this famous bank president? It says the tax increases announced in the May budget have a much greater impact on the bank teller than they do on the bank president. I would ask my colleague opposite, the Member from Mississauga South,