

ment Insurance Program, the Old Age Security Program, the Canada Pension Plan, the Canada Assistance Plan and others. Most Canadians who are working seem to feel that we have solved most of the country's problems. They believe or want to believe that we have eliminated poverty in this country. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In the City of Winnipeg and in every city of Canada, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of people who are appearing every day at facilities provided by churches and other community groups to get a decent meal. At the Stella Mission in Winnipeg, just a few blocks from my own constituency, they are again providing food hampers for people who are in need. That is something which occurred 75 years ago when the founder of the CCF, J. S. Woodsworth, the Party which preceded the NDP, was in charge of that mission.

Schools and churches in Winnipeg and in every other city in Canada are collecting used clothes to provide for people in need. There are people who cannot go to work unless they receive those used clothes because they cannot afford to buy needed clothes to wear. There are children in the core areas of Winnipeg and other cities who cannot go to school because they do not have shoes unless they receive them from voluntary organizations who are trying to meet those needs.

I relate these facts because when the Government proposes to deindex family allowances, to take away from many women the one sure source of income they have, it is striking at the hearts of people in need. We are not talking about a few people, we are talking about hundreds of thousands of people.

It has been estimated that half of single-parent families headed by women are living in poverty. That is the situation; yet the Government is proposing that beginning next year we deindex family allowances by 3 per cent. It is almost certain that in the next number of years, the cost of living will increase by more than 3 per cent.

Let us assume that the cost of living increases by 4.5 per cent. If one considers what has happened in the last 10 years, that is a very conservative estimate. That will mean that the real value of family allowances, particularly for those in a lower-income bracket, will be reduced by 3 per cent each year. If that continues for three years, as it undoubtedly will, we are talking about a very substantial decrease in the real value of family allowances.

We say that this is unacceptable, and we are not alone in saying that. Every organization involved in working with families and children has expressed very clearly that what the Government is proposing is unacceptable. May I call it one o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

S.O. 22

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[English]

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

ASSERTION IN ARCTIC THROUGH NATIVE PEOPLES

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, as custodians of the land known as Canada we have the responsibility of conserving and protecting the fragile nature of the Arctic. With the important issue of Canadian sovereignty looming over us, certain questions become necessary and timely. Should sovereignty become an expression of military presence only? Is sovereignty to be asserted by breaking ice and taking oil south? Should we rely on icebreakers, submarines, oil rigs and the like, in order to assert our presence?

Rather than using all this disruptive technology as the only way of asserting ourselves, why not identify and encourage civilian presence by way of reinforcing the native people, their lifestyle and activities in the Arctic? We could facilitate and strengthen traditional life—the living off the land—as was practised so well before the arrival of the white people, and which is now endangered. We could encourage the expansion and facilitate the movement of caribou, musk-ox, and reindeer herds.

We could accelerate the creation north of 60 of a network of national parks and wilderness areas. Our native people have proven over the centuries their ability to live in the Arctic and they should be active participants in reinforcing Canadian sovereignty. In the long term, we will be better served by developing sovereignty with the help of the native people rather than relying on the technology and values prevailing in southern Canada.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

CRITICISM OF MINISTERS' ACTIONS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, this is a story of three billion-dollar Conservative Ministers and each had a little pen.

The first Minister was in charge of the Wheat Board. By the stroke of his little pen he cut out our quality advantage over other wheat exporters by permitting the sale of low quality unlicensed wheat. This was in keeping with the Prime Minister's (Mr. Mulroney) wish that we have a level playing field in our trade relations with the United States. We have now lowered our quality standards to theirs; but the cost to western farmers in lost future sales will be in the billions of dollars.