

a large group named the Fraser Valley Branch of the Federal Superannuates Association which, of course, is a branch of the national association, which has sent a telegram to me saying:

The Executive of the Fraser Valley Branch Federal Superannuates National Association and our four hundred members are counting on your vigorous support of our demands that Bill C-133 restriction of indexing of public service pensions be withdrawn or defeated in the House. We shall be watching with interest your efforts on our behalf and hoping that they will be successful.

What I am suggesting, and many are suggesting, begging the Government is that in all good common sense it withdraw this Bill and if it does not withdraw it, begging at least a half dozen Members on the Government side to join us in defeating this Bill.

● (1550)

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills): Mr. Speaker, I rise again on this infamous Bill C-133. We have another amendment which has come from the Government side. To my surprise, Government Members are speaking against it. It is an amendment by a caring Member on the Government side which says, let us by statute end this Bill on the date that the Government, when bringing in the Bill, said it would end. Now the Government is speaking against it. It will be interesting to see how they vote on it when it gets right down to the push and shove.

This Bill clearly cuts the pensions of retired civil servants. We are not talking about those presently in the system. They are subject to the six and five restraint program, Bill C-124, that those in this Party, at least, voted for. The whole country is in favour of restraint. This Bill does not have anything to do with restraint. This Bill has to do with the treatment of retired civil servants and the spouses of former civil servants who have now died.

The sole issue on which we are going to stand in this House and vote is to break a contract. Most Government Members will stand and vote against the interests of their constituents. It clearly is in the best long-term interest of all of us as citizens that Government should honour contracts. When Government Members vote to break a contract, that is a very serious matter, not only in the short term but in the long term. They will stand to break a contract for one year.

There is no doubt that because inflation is dropping for 1983, the natural formula will drop the indexing of pensions of retired civil servants to the rate of inflation. There is no doubt that pursuant to the contract, in the year 1983 retired civil servants are entitled to over 11 per cent. They will only get 5.5 per cent or 6.5 per cent, depending on where they are.

That is wrong. It clearly is a situation where the Government is going to break a contract. That really does not surprise me. I will go on later to explain why the grassroots supporters of the Liberal Party have lost control. It has been a progressive loss of control since 1968.

The Cabinet now running the Liberal Party and the strategists behind it are not the Liberal Party that you, Mr. Speaker, fell in love with and joined. It is not the Liberal Party that a lot of young people in the fifties and sixties decided to support because of what it stood for, the concept of liberalism, the individual versus the state. That is totally switched around.

Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)

Now the controlling mechanism in the Liberal Party clearly are statisticians. They believe the state is more important than the Canadian citizen. They are centralists. They like to bring power into Ottawa rather than leave it.

For example, in taxation the philosophy of this Party is to leave money with Canadians, let them decide how to spend it. They are the people getting black lung diseases in the mines and emphysema on the farms. Let us leave the money with them and let them decide. However, the new Liberal philosophy is no, Canadian citizens are not wise as to how to spend their money, therefore we had better tax it away from them. Those in the Cabinet and the bureaucracy will decide how to spend the money because they believe they know better.

Throughout the seventies, they took us into a huge deficit situation. A deficit is really a form of taxation, as is inflation. It means that questions on redistribution are not decided by individual Canadians in the sense of which charity to support or which product to buy. It is done by a central bureaucracy which taxes it away and decides who will get it by way of grants, not tax deductions which leave the onus on the citizen. They decide that if you do this, they will give you a grant.

Essentially, that is socialism. In terms of economic philosophy it is socialism. We see other people suffering under that same type of Government. Every citizen in Quebec now knows in full measure what it is to live under a socialist government where a bureaucracy and a Cabinet decide what is best for the citizens. In that Province, the Government is taking away 20 per cent from its on-line civil servants. It gave them an enormous raise trying to buy a "yes" vote in the referendum. Now they are having to eat crow and are taking it back.

From the citizens' perspective, what did they do wrong? The Government offered them money and they, of course, took it. Now it is being extracted from them. In the meantime they bought houses, have mortgage commitments, and they bought cars. The 20 per cent cutback is truly a serious matter for the individual citizen in Quebec. That flows back. It is a logical result of a Government saying it knows better what the citizens should do than the citizen himself.

The United Kingdom is a classic example. Since the Second World War, they have nationalized coal and the shipbuilding industry. All of the major industries were nationalized under Labour Governments. Again it was increased taxation with the bureaucracy deciding how to spend it. We know where Britain is as a result. They have lost their standard of living.

We know what has happened in Canada. In 1968, comparing ourselves with the 24 western industrialized nations, we were second. On an individual basis, we had the second highest standard of living. Now that has slipped to thirteenth. Under some measurements in comparison, we have dropped to the absolute bottom of the list. We are essentially prisoners in our own land. That is what inflation does. Compared to citizens in other countries, we are thirteenth rather than second.

Why is it the Government would bring in a Bill to break a contract? We know the reason. It is because the national debt