

*Privilege—Mr. Broadbent*

one cent per envelope and eight cents for a stamp. The cost of this propaganda of the Liberal Party of Canada would have been \$527,589.

Mr. Speaker, if you rule that I have a prima facie case of privilege, I would move that this most serious matter be referred to the House committee on privileges and elections and that steps be taken to ensure that the Liberal Party of Canada reimburse the public treasury for this expense.

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the House will have great difficulty in taking seriously the matter raised by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent). In effect, I would say this is just another typical case of NDP hypocrisy.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lalonde:** For the last several months this government has indeed sent Canadian citizens inserts with old age pension cheques and family allowance cheques, giving information to these citizens about the programs both in my department and other departments. I could send the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) a whole series of them and he would find that they cover the many and various activities of the federal government. This government has always been extremely careful to see that anything being sent to citizens is based on legislation and programs approved first by this parliament. Here, Mr. Speaker, I am not referring to instances like the Christmas letter sent out in the middle of the election by the former premier of British Columbia.

**An hon. Member:** Right on.

**Mr. Lalonde:** This letter was sent out on government stationery, at government expense, and had nothing to do with programs. Also, I am not referring to the letter recently sent out by the Premier of Saskatchewan—

**Mr. Broadbent:** I am not talking about—

**Mr. Lalonde:**—which was a personal letter from the Premier of Saskatchewan accompanying medicare premium information, mailed to all Saskatchewan residents at public expense. I am not referring to that because, Mr. Speaker, this government does not engage in this type of political propaganda.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lalonde:** The anti-inflation program is not the Liberal party's program. It is a government program based on legislation passed and approved by this parliament. It is a program that the hon. member might be pleased to hear has the support of all the provinces in this country. When the hon. member says it has nothing to do with the recipients, he has not even read his own speeches, because during the whole of the debate on the anti-inflation program he argued that the people who would be affected most by this program would be families, senior citizens and the like.

This cheque insert is addressed precisely to those people whom the hon. member said would be most affected by this

[Mr. Broadbent.]

program, the senior citizens and Canadian families. This program will affect these people beneficially and, as we have said as a government, this program, in order to be a success or to achieve success, will have to have the support of Canadians across this country and will be very much dependent on the role played by the individuals in their activities. This was basically the message from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), that we must all, as Canadian citizens, do our share in the current inflation fight that has once more been endorsed by this parliament.

● (1510)

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lalonde:** It is the height of irresponsibility for the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby to raise this issue as a partisan issue when it is a matter that is being faced by the whole country. Our action in this regard is based on the will of parliament itself. He says it is argumentative. Certainly it is argumentative: it presents arguments; it is not purely statistics. I refer the hon. member to all the previous inserts; he will find arguments throughout them. They are fundamentally instruments to inform the public and make the public aware of reasons for various activities and programs.

I respectfully submit that the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby has no point and no case and that this motion should be ruled out of order.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I hesitate somewhat to get into this "lovers' spat." It is probably an indication of the political climate of this country that these marriage partners have at least changed the double bed for twin beds. In any event, I read the document to which the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) referred and I was somewhat concerned about the message that it contained for the reasons that have been set forth by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

I am aware of the matters that have been raised by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) with respect to provincial governments of the political faith of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby, but what really concerns me, and where I think Canadian people and members of this parliament have a real beef, is that no one, neither the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, nor anyone else, has come to this House to explain the flip-flop which has occurred since the election of 1974.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** If there is any explanation we should have it, and if the Canadian people have any quarrel whatsoever—and if this parliament, therefore, in terms of its privileges, has any quarrel—with the insert in the old age security and family allowance envelopes, then I think it is the absence of any explanation of the flip-flop which has heaped on this government a load of incredibility in terms of the people of this country and of this parliament.