

which would give the government 2.8 cents. Perhaps the government should print a special bill of that denomination and send that along with the first cheque to the old age pensioners in order that they might show their gratitude to this government by mailing back that special bill. This could be done as a token of the gratitude they have for this government.

The other day I obtained a copy of the *Evening Report* and a copy of the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*. The *Record* contained an article headed "3.6 per cent pension increase for vets 'great insult,' says legion head". Pensioners in this country may need every cent they can get, but they have some pride. It is an insult for the government to give them this kind of meagre handout in anticipation of an election, expecting them to be grateful rather than suspicious of the government's motive. The government would be better off to leave this matter alone until after the election. Once we had a "three buck election" in this country.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** It was six bucks.

**Mr. Saltsman:** That's even better. We might look at the student assistance which on the surface would appear to be very good. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it will be very good for somebody like myself with my income. It will be very good for members of parliament because we are receiving reasonably substantial incomes. We are not being badly treated. But it will not be good for an ordinary workingman because it is only possible to take advantage of the student assistance, the \$50 a month for a student attending school, if you have taxable income. It will be a very substantial benefit for me since I have a son attending university. What sort of benefit will it be for the steel worker who is earning \$5,000, \$6,000 or \$7,000 a year? What sort of benefit will it be to him?

• (1640)

Is this fair, particularly when we realize that the provincial governments have increased the fees at universities. They are cutting back in many ways and making access to university more difficult. I do not want the Minister of Finance to tell me it is a provincial problem and not a federal problem. The provinces started cutting back when the federal government placed ceilings on the aid it was prepared to give the provinces. The federal government told the provinces that every time their expenditures exceeded a certain amount there would be no sharing of the amount above that figure. The federal government said, in effect, that the provinces had so many years to start raising the money because they would no longer get it from the federal government. Then, the government has the gall to preen itself for what it is doing for the students. It destroys the financing of universities on the one hand, and then says that students will be better off because some advantages and compensation will be offered.

There are many things wrong with the financing of universities. I do not agree with everything that is done there. However, this method creates more difficulty and is insulting to the students of this country who do not make a great deal of money. It is a great benefit to a student who does make a lot of money, but how many students are there in Canada who can attend school and earn large enough sums of money to have a taxable income against

#### *The Budget—Mr. Saltsman*

which they might obtain a benefit? There are not very many so far as I am aware.

The assistance to the crippled and those who are disabled falls into the same category. Whoever drafted this legislation must have thought that only rich people have mothers who are incapacitated, that the poor do not have mothers or relatives who have to be wheeled around, because the benefit again applies to taxable income. This is similar to child care provision in the tax legislation which gives far more benefit to those with high incomes than to those with low incomes.

Also, it would seem that there are no farmers in Canada. I do not think a word appears in the statement about farmers. If the minister did not intend to do anything for the farmers or the fishermen, he might have had the good grace to apologize and say that he will do something for them later. It is as though they did not exist. When the Minister of Finance is asked why there has been this gross oversight, he says a lot is being done for them in other legislation. He will have many hard-nosed farmers to convince about that. The farmers have only themselves to blame, because they do not pay the \$50 to attend the banquets at Toronto. The farmers have placed themselves in a terrible position by not attending the banquets and thereby qualifying to receive this treatment in the budget. I hope they have learned something from this budget about attending banquets. I do not know how much money is required to fly from Moose Jaw to Toronto to attend these banquets. The only reason they do not attend is that their wives prepare much better food; they cannot tolerate either the food or the speeches.

Let us take a look at machinery purchases. The government's argument is that the provision of benefits for machinery purchased will create jobs. I do not think the government will find many economists on its side. There is no evidence to support the idea that stimulation in respect of capital equipment will provide more jobs. It may improve profits and productivity. We will not quarrel about that. But it will not provide more jobs, particularly when we realize that more than half the machinery purchased for use in Canada does not come from Canadian sources but rather from sources outside Canada. Of course, the government is talking about correcting that situation.

There is no evidence that there is unused plant capacity. The factories in Canada are not so burdened with work that their machinery is overworked and is getting so hot that it is necessary to retool. Quite the contrary. There is a hardly a member of this House who cannot give an example of a plant closing down. In my riding, which is a highly industrialized riding, there is all kinds of plant capacity. The true effect of these plant purchases will be to increase corporate profits. The assumption the government is making is that if it gives its friends these goodies, they will be very responsible. The Minister of Finance loves the word "responsible" just as previous ministers have loved the word "confidence". There are things called corporations, markets and financial institutions, but there are no people. The government worries about the market because it says that is where confidence is needed. It says that you must stimulate corporations because that is what must be done. The people do not count. The minister has