

*Time Allocation*

Also, in listening to the Hon. Member for Don Valley East (Mr. Smith), in this particular debate, I found that he took the tack that I have heard for so many years coming from the Government side, which is that there is an increasing tendency to blame everyone for the country's ailments. Whether it be on economic questions, whether it be on oil pricing, it is never the Government that accepts the blame for all these things. It is always international markets, international conditions that are to blame and the fact that inflation is an international phenomenon. Now what we hear from the Government side is that senior citizens are to blame for inflation, and they are asking senior citizens to mobilize to bring down the country's inflation. One of these days I would hope, and I am sure most Members on this side of the House and most Canadians would like to hear it, that the Government just for once would stand up and accept some responsibility for its own actions, rather than try to blame everyone else, as I said, in this case senior citizens, recipients of Family Allowances, public servants, for the high inflation in the country. Just for once I would like to hear them stand up and say, "Perhaps we had a role to play in bringing about inflation".

**Miss MacDonald:** Admit a mistake!

**Mr. Young:** They could say that perhaps it is through measures that they could implement in the House and in the country that inflation could be brought down. But I think I am going to wait a long time before I hear this Government make that kind of concession both in this House and to the Canadian people.

The Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) correctly pointed out that she did not understand why the Government was initiating this indecent haste to pass this legislation through, what we like to call closure and what the Government complains is not in fact closure, it is something else. But by any name it is closure and designed to cut off debate on this extremely important Bill and in effect put a gag on Parliament, and especially the Opposition Members, who have a responsibility to express the views of those Canadians who strongly disagree with what this Government is trying to do. In my view I was elected to do exactly that, and I deeply resent any measure on the Government side which says, look, you guys are opposing this to such an extent that it is hindering us in implementing this piece of legislation, albeit bad legislation. I think that is my right to do that as a person who represents the constituency of Beaches.

One of the reasons why I really resent this Government measure at this time to limit debate on this Bill is that I sat on the committee, as did other Members present in the House, and we took a look at this piece of legislation. We said to the Government, "You have had this intent since last June, and the legislation was finally referred to committee last December". I believe it was referred on Thursday or Friday and went into committee on Monday. The Opposition Members said to the committee, "This piece of legislation has such serious implications for the seniors in this country that we believe they should be given the opportunity to appear before this Committee." They can then give us their views on this legislation and

tell us what impact, in their view, this legislation would have on their future incomes.

We said that simply giving this committee one week to study this piece of legislation will not give people the right to do that. As a result, we submitted a list of people who we thought should be called because they represented large segments of the population. Those people were contacted and we heard from many of them. We certainly did not receive a wide input from many Canadians who may have wished to appear before that committee to express their concerns about this piece of legislation. I think that is a crying shame because I know of many individual Canadians who have spoken to me since then who said that they felt badly because they would have likely to appear before the committee to talk to us and, hopefully, to make the Government Members understand what the true impact of this legislation was going to be on them.

There certainly seems to be an awful lot of confusion about the impact of this legislation. The Member for Willowdale, in his contribution to this debate, told us that in his view this would not add to any great numbers being driven into poverty as a result of the 6 and 5 legislation. He is totally off track with most other Canadians who have taken a look at this piece of legislation. Some very authoritative organizations which have studied the impact of the 6 and 5 program on seniors have estimated that at the end of the two-year period there will literally be a couple of hundred thousand elderly Canadians, who now have incomes above the poverty level, who will have incomes below the poverty level at the end of the two-year period. If the Government reintroduces full indexation of pensions at the end of the two-year period, and that is a big "if", because I have never heard any assurance that it will do so, the indexations on which the pensions are calculated will be much, much smaller than they would have been without the six and five program. We have pressed the Government to give us figures to show what the true impact will be, and the Government still has not done that. Surely, if they are imposing this kind of legislation on over two million senior citizens in this country, at the very least they should have done the calculations which would have clearly shown what the impact will be at the end of the two year period, and they have failed to do so.

• (1650)

Until such time as they do that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue to stand up and protest any attempt by this Government to gag the Official Opposition or the Members of my own Party. I totally disagree with the concept and I will oppose it today, tomorrow, next week and over the next two years. In fact, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we in this Party, and I am quite sure I speak on behalf of the Conservative Party, intend to make this issue a major issue in the next election campaign.

**Mr. Jim Schroder (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, this debate today has ranged far and wide, but the major reason for the debate is