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while the income of a non senior will be taxed at the top rate of 29 per cent.

Where is the fairness? Where is the equity? My view of universality has traditionally supported the concept of equal access to equal benefits across income levels. This concept of universality was integrated with that of a progressive tax system. Successive Liberal Governments strove to increase the level of progressivity in the tax system. The tax system was a corrective, progressive mechanism to assist in a fair distribution of benefits. Every individual within a defined client group received the same benefit regardless of income. At the same time, the tax system introduced the element of fairness by ensuring that high income Canadians pay higher marginal tax rates. Granted, a perfect degree of progressivity was not attained. Yet the tax system under Liberal Governments provided, in my view, a more equitable and fair range of marginal tax rates. Prior to tax reform, the upper marginal tax rate was 34 per cent, exclusive of surtaxes. The Conservatives have now reduced this rate to 29 per cent, exclusive of surtaxes. This move has resulted in lower overall tax rates for upper income Canadians.

Figures from the National Council of Welfare showing the percentage of changes between 1984 and 1991 in total federal and provincial income taxes paid by a dual-income family of four at three different levels of income illustrates this fact very clearly. Income taxes for the working poor in middle income families will increase in this country by 60.2 per cent and 17.4 per cent respectfully between 1984 and 1991. However, families in the upper income range will pay 6.4 per cent less in income taxes over the same period.

The Conservative assault on the old age security and family allowance programs has three distinct components, all of which represent regressive departures from traditional equitable policies. For the first time, the tax back rate of universal programs is linked directly to the benefit received. The tax back rate was previously determined by utilizing progressive marginal tax rates which are impartial as to the sources of income. On its own this linkage between benefit and tax back rate renders universality a sham. The measure is doubly insidious coupled with the regressive tax measures instituted by this Government. As noted above, tax reform

has benefited the rich, and further changes to the child benefits package has significantly eroded the principle of horizontal tax equity. The poor and the middle class are paying a substantially higher rate of tax today than they were in 1984.

A one income family with two children in this country earning a poverty line income of \$23,639 will have to pay an increase as a result of this Budget of \$324. That is a cumulative effect since 1984 of 60.2 per cent. For a one income family with two children earning \$45,422, the percentage increase since 1984 has been 29.3 per cent, whereas for upper income Canadians earning \$100,000 with one income and two children, the increase will be roughly between 6 and 7.7 per cent. That is a shame. There is no fairness in this. It is just a further enhancement of the Tory ideology which is to help their rich friends and corporate friends at the expense of poor and middle income Canadians.

What about two income families with two children, where both the husband and wife are working? For those who are at the poverty level, which is roughly around \$23,639, and I have quite a few of them in my constituency, as I am sure other Members do as well, this Budget will provide an increase in taxes of roughly \$341. What does it mean in terms of the cumulative effect since 1984 on these individuals? It means a tax increase of 176 per cent, whereas for an upper income Canadian earning 100,000, the increase this year will be \$1,429. Since 1984, the increase in percentage, as related to the poverty situation that I have just mentioned, is a mere increase of 10.9 per cent. In that there is not very much equity, not very much fairness.

Mr. Wappel: That is Tory equity.

Mr. Dingwall: That is right, it is Tory equity.

Finally, the Government has embarked on a slippery slope. By varying the level of benefit from universal programs relative to income, the thresholds for the reduction of benefits under both the old age security and family allowance is to be \$50,000 of net individual income. However, this threshold is only partially indexed. The Government has indicated that the threshold will be reviewed—and this is key—periodically and adjusted as appropriate. This is a signal they are sending to Canadians that next year, six months from now or 18