

*Old Age Security Act Amendment*

astounds me when I think of the ability of this government to turn the people and society against them. When I think of what this government has done or has omitted to do I think of students, medical people, paramedical people, workers, unions, senior citizens, farmers, and I would have more to say about them had the minister remained in his seat but he has gone. I also think of the people who should receive the benefits inherent in the designated area program, and I think of the investors in this country who do not receive the consideration of this government. I am reminded of what has been done on an international basis as a result of the actions of this government.

Having regard to the budget brought down last evening it seems to me that the government did not inform Canadians that they are now going to have to pay for what we now know old age pensioners require. In other words, the old age pensioners are being blamed for the increased taxes announced last evening. That is wrong because there is approximately \$330 million now in the fund. With that knowledge I am sure every Canadian must realize that it was unnecessary to increase taxes for this purpose.

Let me now refer to the different segments or classes in which old age pensioners are to be placed. We are to collect taxes to pay for the \$75 basic old age security pension, taxes to pay for the Canada Pension Plan and taxes for supplementary payments. It is high time that we should think about efficiency instead of recruiting a vast number of bureaucrats to tidy up the existing mess. The government is overtaxing so far as the old age security plan is concerned, and it is overtaxing to pay for the Canada Pension Plan. It now intends to overtax, bearing in mind the \$330 million in the fund, to pay for supplementary payments to old age pensioners. All this overtaxation is unnecessary because the necessary amount of money could be saved by increasing administrative efficiency. We should have one administrative staff instead of three to handle social security measures.

**An hon. Member:** How do you pay for them?

**Mr. Winkler:** We certainly are not going to find the money by hiring an additional but unnecessary administrative staff, and if the hon. member does not realize even that much he has not been here long enough to know what is happening.

[Mr. Winkler.]

All our social security measures should be put under one administrative staff in order that we can be efficient. The extra taxes now being imposed are unnecessary. Rather than thinking of the various segments of our society that can be taxed to a greater extent we should think of saving money. All we are doing is creating a bureaucratic kingdom without end. That is a Grit philosophy, not one of ours. I hope the press will take up this point and bring it to the attention of the people. We have three small but very important segments of taxation for the same purpose; yet we are being totally inefficient in the administration of our social programs.

While I feel it necessary to vote in favour of supplementary payments to our old age pensioners I am obliged to bring to the attention of the house the fact that our taxation policies are unjust. This government has not even thought of efficiency with regard to handling our social measures on behalf of the people who have built this country. It has not adopted an honest attitude in building a future for those people who will enter our economic society in days to come.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, before the house is asked to give third reading to Bill No. C-251 I wish to make one more appeal to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) and to the government of the day to transform the bill into the kind of legislation it ought to be. We welcome as heartily as we can the fact that a new figure has been set for old age pensions in this country, namely, \$105 per month, but we regret that this bill involves a retrograde step in its departure from universality in that the government is applying what it calls an income test but which most people in this country will call a means test. I intend to give effect to our appeal on third reading by moving an amendment, but let me hasten to say that the minister need not regard my amendment as a motion of non-confidence.

It is my belief that if the minister were willing, as I am sure in his heart he is, to accept the proposition we intend to put from this side of the house and go back to the idea of a full pension without a means test, he would find the house prepared tonight to pass all stages of whatever legislation is necessary to provide a pension of \$105 per month to all pensioners without a means test. I can speak only for myself in saying there would be no debate, but I am fully confident that would be the attitude adopted throughout the house. I