

Economic and Social Development

retain the incentive to create jobs with the public goal of redistributing wealth. Of course it is no easy task to strike a balance between the two. We remember what we went through in 1971 at the time we travelled throughout the country to hear the views of Canadians on this subject. Six years have already gone by, and it would not seem unreasonable to me if we were to decide that the tool of taxation, being one of the highest importance, requires regular analysis in order to determine whether it is still in tune with current values and the general objective of the nation.

The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona made one or two remarks which disturbed me. He may be right; I do not know. He indicated that the political process seems to be increasingly unable to respond and that we are working within a political system which is made for another age. With those two comments he raised an area of investigation and study, because if it were so—

● (1740)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order. I regret to inform the hon. member that his allotted time has expired. He may continue with unanimous consent. Has the hon. member unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I rarely speak on these private members' motions but I want to congratulate the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia), who has just sat down, on doing something which should be the aim, I think, of every member who comes to this place, namely, to hear an argument presented logically and coherently, as did the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche), and then as an opposing member to stand up and debate the subject matter raised by the original speaker, which is to have a confrontation type of debate. Sometimes there is contradiction, sometimes there is support. I congratulate the hon. member for Davenport for doing what every member of the House of Commons should do.

Sitting on this side of the House, and having sat on the other side too, nothing depresses me as much as to hear members on the government side reading written material obviously prepared by someone in the department for which they are the mouthpieces. It appalls me that in the House of Commons, where we are supposed to represent the people, not our civil service masters, this sort of thing could happen.

I think the remarks of the hon. member for Davenport lead me into what I want to say in support of the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona. What the hon. member is trying to say in this motion, as I understand it, is that the procedures that we are using to put information before the decision makers, theoretically this parliament, are obsolete. I would question the use of the word obsolete as being accurate.

I should like to remind the House that the subject we are debating briefly today is not new. During the days of the depression and during the days of war many, many people in all parts of Canada put their minds to this problem of where

[Mr. Caccia.]

we are going, and what can we do. Without going through a whole recital there was a vast movement of people who said that the answer to our economic problems was to let the government take over the ownership and control of, for example, resources. That was an alternative course to what we were doing.

There was another train of thought which developed during the war, primarily among our civil servants, and at universities to some degree, namely, that our universities, our business people and our civil servants had done a good job of running the country during the war. They had accepted the doctrine of Lord Keynes, for example, in the monetary field. They had accepted the doctrine of Beveridge—the hand-over proposals which we are debating today, universal pensions for everybody regardless of contribution or need. They also accepted a third principle, namely, the principle that there is only a small elite in each country which can rule. Burnham put it into words.

Rightly or wrongly, this country did not take the course of socialism. It did not continue the course of drifting of the pre-war period. Instead we adopted the course of a directional type of control run by a select few, mostly civil servants, with a few allies at universities and in business, and the name that we began to apply to this peculiar function was "The Establishment". As I understand it, that is what the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona is saying.

Let us assume that there are in all parts of this House of Commons enough people with a mentality sufficient to labour long and hard, and to look at several ideas put forward by the people. Do we have forever to bow our heads and bend our knees in worship of a small group, which is so small in our federal establishment that they can be numbered almost on the fingers of one's two hands? Should this small little group of mandarins decide reaction to events and the future course of our country?

Let me go back a bit, Mr. Speaker. In 1946 these same civil servants, the group I am referring to, when this concept was first introduced, produced a paper known as the white paper of 1946. If a person were to look at that paper—and I looked at it under Mr. Howe's leadership—he would come to the conclusion that it was a brilliant conception of what Canada was going to be for the next 30 or 40 years. This was the real birth of the concept of directional planning on the part of a small, elite group, not the democratic socialists that the NDP, or the CCF in the old days, talked about, but a small, elite group, the managerial elite, who would run this country. I ran into this group as a minister. Certainly I had a few victories, but very few, and I remember the thousands of defeats by these people more able than I, more persuasive, using bigger words, and overwhelming in their logic and their argument.

I suggest that in the last 15 years one of the basic problems facing our people has been the complete surrender of parliament and of the cabinet to the views of this group. That, I think, is what the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona is saying. Maybe there is some truth out there among all these people. Maybe that truth could be funnelled in, as the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona said, by getting out of here