

Anti-Inflation Act

finance, or whether the minister quit. Perhaps it was a combination of both. Perhaps, after introducing four of the worst budgets ever presented in the history of this House, the former minister tried to blame the Prime Minister, or perhaps the Prime Minister blamed the minister. I can imagine the scenario. The minister was backed into a corner. He had listened to the conventional wisdom advice proffered by the Bank of Canada and his officials, advice which was based on Keynesian economics. The point is that under the Keynesian concept, the deficit or surplus, as the case may be, was meant to be budgeted for when only 30 per cent, or at most 33 per cent, of the Gross National Product is absorbed by the public sector. At present 40 per cent goes to the public sector. Hence there is no leeway in which for the government or the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) to manoeuvre. That is why we are in our present mess, a mess which the present Minister of Finance will not be able to correct without the leadership and support of the Prime Minister.

The ball game for Canada and Canadians is almost over, largely because the government has budgeted and dealt recklessly with the short-term windfalls accruing to us from our non-renewable natural resources.

As I consider the background to our plight and as I consider the mess our country is in because of the government's doctrinaire approach, I am proud to call myself a Progressive Conservative.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Graftey: In essence this means that we support humane, decent, and civilized social legislation but, compared to the Trudeau socialistic policies of today, conservative economic fiscal and monetary policies.

This country has suffered from the economic lunacy of the government. I am sure that ministers of the Crown would love to present a list of programs we should embark on in the field of social welfare. But, because of the negative economic policies of the government, we have not generated in this country the kind of growth in the private sector which will support dynamic programs. I say most emphatically that the truth of my remarks will be borne out by any member who wishes to cross this country, who puts his ear to the ground and listens to the grassroots. Never before in my 14 years as a member of this House have I heard the Canadian people calling more definitely and clearly for an alternative to this government, for a constructive conservative alternative to the Trudeau socialism we are getting today.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (2100)

Mr. Graftey: Speaking in more detail in relation to the specific legislation we are discussing, in concert with my leader—

An hon. Member: Which one?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Graftey.]

Mr. Graftey: We have a leader of the Progressive Conservative Party who is universally respected.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graftey: I will not split hairs and get into the details as to whether the legislation proposed by the government is exactly like the legislation proposed by us in the last election. I will not get into the specific details as to whether our approach was different than theirs. With the government, we recognize that inflation is a problem to be licked, and with the government, putting Canada before party, we hope it will be licked, not only in Canada, but in the whole western world. However, I would like to serve notice on the government that we firmly believe this legislation cannot and should not pass through this House of Commons unless there is a little bit of give and take on third reading vis-à-vis the constructive, not partisan, amendments we will be putting forward for the good of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graftey: That is not to say that I am not a little suspicious. I know the government with all its good intentions. The first thing it will make sure happens is that there will be a sprawling bureaucracy. It is more than passing strange that the greatest detailed attention they gave to putting this program in effect, even before they explained to the cabinet what the program was all about, was slowly but surely to get an army of bureaucrats into the 28 regions. I am a little suspicious about the government's good intentions in terms of not wanting, demanding, or having an army of bureaucrats to implement this kind of legislation.

Speakers from this side of the House who preceded me alluded to the fact that the government must lead by example. Although we get pretty partisan on the floor of this House, members of the opposition also suffer when governments lose their credibility, as this government is losing its credibility.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graftey: Having presided over a budget increase of \$10 billion to \$36 billion in seven and a half years, all of a sudden the Prime Minister on the eve of a by-election by some unknown stroke, and I would like to do a little investigating about that, got on prime time television. Having spent and spent, and spent some more, he went before the Canadian people and said, "Do as I say, not as I do."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graftey: Having spent this country into the worst economic mess it has been in since the last depression, he had the nerve to go on public television and say, "Forget about it all. We did not do it. You, Mr. Laborer, and you, Mr. Management, buckle your belts." It reminded me of a drunk preaching temperance.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graftey: Let us make no mistake about it. Economists rarely agree on anything, but one thing on which