

Speech from the Throne

will pay for themselves many times over in the months and years ahead because more products will be sold through their being more competitive and because more people will be employed instead of drawing unemployment insurance or direct relief. There would be more commodity taxes because more commodities would be sold. There would be more corporation taxes because lower costs reduce the overhead on individual products making available more profits to tax.

The second way we can keep prices down is to take steps to keep prices from rising at the very rapid rate at which they are rising at the present time. Prices should not be allowed to rise at a rate greater than 2.5 per cent a year which is the average yearly inflation for the past 17 years since the Dominion Bureau of Statistics started keeping a record of our yearly increase in inflation. Last year, as we know, inflation increased by 5 per cent or exactly twice the rate it should have increased. Inflation can be checked by introducing price and wage guidelines backed by the flat assertion by the government that if they are not observed the government is prepared to bring in price and wage controls. I have spoken to leaders of industry and labour about this matter. They have said privately to me that if the government should make it clear it would bring in mandatory price and wage controls; if guidelines are not observed they would have no alternative but to obey the guidelines the government sets to keep prices within the 2.5 per cent rise each year.

The third way to keep costs and prices down is to lower taxes. The way the government can lower taxes and certainly keep taxes from rising, which has been the case all along, is to stop wasting the taxpayer's money. A good example of how the government wastes the taxpayer's money was given a few days ago in an interview between the Director-General of Information Canada and a representative of the *Globe and Mail*. It turns out that although Information Canada was established several years ago at an initial cost of \$7 million and has cost \$7 million a year to operate since that time it has not achieved anything, but rather is doing what it was supposed to do far worse than it was being done before. Information Canada was supposed to collect reports from all the departments. They were supposed to be funnelled through Information Canada in order to be more easily available to the Canadian people. What has happened is that it takes about three weeks, for some reason or other which nobody knows, for information to come from the departments to Information Canada and be reprinted. So, if one wants to know what is going on in any department it takes exactly three weeks longer than was necessary before because previously all one had to do was call up the department and the public relations man would tell you exactly what you wanted to know. Now it is necessary to wait three weeks longer and this costs the Canadian taxpayer several millions of dollars a year to have far worse service than before.

What the Director-General of the department said is reported in the *Globe and Mail* of February 12 after an interview with a *Globe and Mail* reporter on February 11. Mr. Robert Phillips, deputy director-general of Information Canada was asked why there was such a great slowdown in information being made available. Here is what the reporter says:

Robert Phillips, deputy director-general of Information Canada, slaps his forehead, sighs a lot and rocks agitatedly on a genuine Canadian pine arrow-back chair that helps furnish his office on Shuter Street in Ottawa. Look,' he says, the situation is no better or worse than it was before we came on the scene. We deplore it as much as everyone else'.

Everybody knows the situation is a whole lot worse. Everybody knows this is the way the government wastes the taxpayer's money, that this is the reason taxes are going up and that costs of products are uncompetitive. I would simply say that the Prime Minister, in an interview last Friday after his speech in the House, was asked about what had been done or left undone regarding the unemployment situation in Canada. He said he would be glad to fight an election on the unemployment issue. Mr. Speaker, I simply say to him that if he is willing to fight the next election on the unemployment issue then he is a dead duck right now because all the polls which have been taken across the country on this government's handling or mishandling of the unemployment situation have shown that a steadily increasing majority of the Canadian people are thoroughly dissatisfied with what the government has been doing.

• (1450)

So I say in conclusion that when the Prime Minister finally does screw up his courage to go to the people, particularly if he decides to fight this election on the unemployment issue or on any other issue, the indication that I and most members of the House get is that the people of Canada will decide to elect a businesslike government in the future, a Conservative government, the only kind of government that demonstrates every day that it knows how to stimulate the economy, stimulate production and produce the kind of jobs that Canadian people not only need but deserve.

Mr. Murray McBride (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton): I begin today, Mr. Speaker, by congratulating the two respected and talented members of this House who were given the high honour of moving and seconding the motion that is now before us concerning the Speech from the Throne. I refer of course to the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) and the hon. member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Lajoie). Their speeches brought credit to them and to the people who sent them here.

Today I want to take advantage of the free range of the Throne Speech debate to deal with more than one issue. First, I want to talk about the needs of the far flung constituency of Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton and the people I have the honour to represent here. Second, I want to refer to the Official Languages Act which has assured Canadians that they can communicate with their government in English or in French. Third, I want to say that the ombudsman's role of putting flesh and blood to government is perhaps the primary responsibility of a private member like myself. For example, last week alone my office handled about 200 individual requests from the people I represent regarding a great variety of problems, and this is only possible when you have efficient and hardworking secretaries which I am privileged to have. I want to commend them and the work that they do which enables me to accomplish so much on behalf of the people whom I represent.