

*Supply*

What we want to continue to impress on the government and the Canadian people is that the Liberal Party believes the only way to have meaningful and credible tax reform is to deal with it on a massive basis through consideration of what the implications are for provincial governments and municipal governments. There is no simple solution of shifting the burden of taxation from one level of government to the other because the taxpayer is always the same.

We believe this is a made-in-Canada recession and that it was planned and put in place by the government. We hope we will have an opportunity to hear from the Minister of Finance who will recognize that we are now in that recession that the government has planned. What we want to hear is how does he intend to get us out of the recession.

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the comments of my hon. friend, who probably could have said them all in 30 seconds because there were absolutely no alternatives there. He referred to some alternatives of other organizations but made a specific point of not endorsing any one of these as the senior finance critic of the Liberal Party.

Why is it that the Liberal Party always shies away from proposing alternatives? Why, when he is critical of the policies we have been following, can he not put forward one or two proposals that might be considered as options? I have never said that I have all the answers. I acknowledge that I do not have all the answers, but I do listen to people and get suggestions of alternatives. We do make adjustments, but I have never had an alternative from the Liberal Party of Canada.

As an example, the hon. member was quite critical of our fiscal record in his comments. Yet, every time we have proposed something to get the deficit down and to reduce spending, the Liberal Party has resisted. It has fought us. It has laid across the tracks. Every time we have come up with something, it has resisted. This makes it much more difficult for us to deal with the problem that he is critical of us not doing a better job on.

Let the hon. member say to me what are the options, what are the alternatives, and what are the things that

the Liberal Party would put forward as possible things that we can consider.

**Mr. Young (Acadie—Bathurst):** Mr. Speaker, the point that the minister makes with respect to alternatives and his consultative process are worthwhile.

We were very fortunate last year in the Standing Committee on Finance in the House of Commons to have an unanimous recommendation. The Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance, the eight Conservative members, the four Liberal members, and the two NDP members all agreed unanimously that interest rates in Canada had to come down. We made that recommendation to the Minister of Finance and to the government.

In addition to that, at the same time, there was a similar recommendation from all the premiers from all the provinces across Canada. Obviously, that recommendation was ignored.

On the question of alternatives, if anyone in the country should be aware of how difficult it is to formulate an alternative, it should be the Minister of Finance. He has been at it for six years. In the opinion of the National Council on Business, the Chamber of Commerce, and, just last week, the CMA, there was mismanagement of the economy by the Minister of Finance and the government with thousands of people at their beck and call to provide some direction and some policy decisions.

What we suggest is that the kind of unilateral non-consultative approach taken by the government is what has got us into this mess. I believe that the recommendation made by the Mayor of Vancouver, when we had our hearings in his city last year, that there has to be widespread consultation dealing with all three levels of government to avoid the kind of thing that has occurred in the last few months. Just transferring the burden of taxation from one level of government to the other is not the way to go.

The last point I would make is that in the minister's speech in Edmonton on September 17, he stated: "I and my departmental officials have been following carefully and closely what Canadians have been saying during a wide range of consultations and public meetings."

Since that time, we have had all the leading business people in the country, the Labour Congress, the labour