

*Government Orders*

There are, for example, the Caisse de dépôt et placement, the Société générale de financement, the REAs, the financial institutions reform, and Hydro-Québec. I would like to point out that these initiatives are mainly the brain-child of a single man, who will most likely become the next Quebec premier in a few months, Mr. Jacques Parizeau.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Our expertise in the management of our assets is well established, but given the persistent opposition by the ruling government, I repeat, we have realized that it is only by being sovereign that we will be able to patriate those powers that are essential to Quebec's economic renewal.

We must also ask ourselves the following question: In its deficit reduction plan, did the government opposite do its share? Did it penalize only the unemployed and the old people by taking away their tax deductions?

Here is a long excerpt from an article by reporter Claude Piché which appeared in *La Presse* on February 22 this year. He wrote: "Here are some figures. Let us not forget them when the minister socks it to us while saying he has to put government finances in order".

It seems that the reduction and restriction spectre did not keep our diplomats from sleeping. Last year, and the figures are accurate, they are dated February 22, the Foreign Affairs budget exceeded \$3.8 billion, a 13 per cent increase over the \$3.4 billion recorded in the previous year, when spending was up 5 per cent as compared to the year before. Alone, spending directly related to representing Canadian interests abroad, such as embassies, high commissions, consulates and other diplomatic activities, including everything that goes with it, planes, trips, and soon, increased by 23 per cent over two years, a figure that does not show an obvious concern for austerity.

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The Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, by far the main agency of this department, spent \$2.2 billion last year. CIDA increased its expenditures by \$232 million last year and by \$133 million the year before, for a 19 per cent increase in two years.

The budget of the Department of Indian Affairs exceeds \$4 billion. This is another department where it is obvious that they do not know about making sacrifices. Their expenditures have increased by 7 per cent last year and by 9 per cent the year before for a total of 16 per cent. More than half of their budget, more than half of those \$4 billion is made up of grants and contributions to band councils and tribal organizations. These payments have jumped 23 per cent in two years to reach \$2.6 billion last year.

The inflation rate in Canada was 1.8 per cent last year and 1.5 per cent the year before. We have to wonder.

Let us now take a look at the Correctional Service of Canada, the very agency which builds for criminals luxurious condos such as the majority of honest workers could not afford. It has spent \$876 million last year, an increase of 7 per cent over the previous year.

At Fisheries and Oceans Canada, expenditures took a 30 per cent leap over the previous year to \$869 million.

The increase in Communications Canada's budget is close to 10 per cent. This department is spending \$2.2 billion of your taxes and mine, nearly half of this amount being allocated to CBC. But the biggest chunk which makes all other expenditures look insignificant by comparison is the debt service. This is when we stop counting in millions and talk about billions of dollars.

Last year, Ottawa spent \$39 billion to service its debt. If one were to add all the expenditures, the subsidies, the grants—whether justified or not—and multiply the total by four, the result would be the cost incurred last year by the government only for servicing its debt.

Such is the painful assessment of twenty years of poor public finance management.

This article tells us what is wrong. The government asks Canadians to foot the bill and, at the same time, increases its spending—in that case, by an average of 17.7 per cent in the departments I have just mentioned. While the cost-of-living index rose by 1.7 per cent, government spending increased ten-fold.

It is also important to recall the position of the Liberals when the late Conservatives changed the Unemployment Insurance Program. Remember the shouting and the insults of the Liberals against such changes when they were in the opposition. They changed their tune. Remember the position of the Liberals on the issue of granting more authority to the Auditor General. Now, they are opposing a motion proposed by their own party. Change of side, change of heart.

What consistency! They wonder why there is a lack of confidence on the part of the public. A used-car dealer is more popular than they are! I therefore repeat my position with regard to economic recovery and job creation.

In conclusion, the government is once again trying to fool the public. But this time, it does not work because citizens are much better informed than they used to be and cannot abide trickery.

The government must stop believing that it alone can create jobs. You said it, we said it, we agree on that, small businesses have been the main job creators for many years and they have to keep on playing that job-creating role.

The failure of the previous government and the one foreseen for the liberal government should get them to become a bit more responsible. They have difficulty doing that. An efficient government has to be a custodian of public funds, it has, in principle, to keep its spending under control, to keep the deficit