

Government Orders

These measures combined with the economic recovery and the lower interest rates will push our deficit down sharply. In 1992 we are forecasting that the deficit will be in the \$25 billion range. That is the lowest it has been in 10 years. By 1995 we will have eliminated the need, as I say, for any new government borrowing on financial markets. That is the first time that has happened in this country in 25 years.

During the recession of 1981-82 the government of the day chose a different path. It allowed the deficit to balloon in that two year period by \$23 billion to a total of about \$38.5 billion. This burden of debt that all Canadians have inherited—we all have to pay for it and those who are unborn will have to pay for part of it as well—has made the legislation before us today so necessary.

The federal deficit as I said earlier and the debt load are national problems. As they are national problems, they require national solutions. Provinces have benefited greatly by this federal support in the past and by contributing to restraint I believe that they will also reap the benefits by lower inflation, lower interest rates and economic recovery.

Restraint measures in Bill C-20 are an integral part of the government's plan for economic recovery. That plan is designed to restore strong continuing economic growth to create the conditions for renewed prosperity and in the interest of all Canadians I urge members of this House to support Bill C-20 on third reading.

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could seek the unanimous consent of the House to ask the minister a short question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): There is no unanimous consent.

[Translation]

It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for York West—Airports; the hon. member for Skeena—Fisheries; the hon. member for Halifax—Port of Halifax;

the hon. member for Don Valley East—Manufacturing industry; and the hon. member for St. Boniface—Education.

[English]

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for addressing the House and explaining why the government is presenting Bill C-20.

• (1620)

When I was listening to him I was reminded of a book I recently started to read by a professor in the United States, Albert Hirschman. It is called *The Rhetoric of Reaction*, and the subtitle is *perversity, futility and jeopardy*.

He begins his book with an interesting question: "How does a person get to be that way?" Then he says: "It struck me that this question is at the heart of our times, about the massive, stubborn, exasperating troubles people have in a democratic society".

I would like to just share with the House a short few sentences from this book because I think it sets the tone for what is happening between the government and the people of Canada:

"The unsettling experience of being shut off, not just from the opinions but from the entire life experience of large numbers of one's contemporaries, is actually typical of modern democratic societies."

"In these days of universal celebration of the democratic model, it may be childish to dwell on deficiencies in the functioning of western democracy. It is precisely the spectacular and the exhilarating crumbling of certain walls that calls attention to those that remain intact or to risks that deepen."

"Among them, there is one that can frequently be found in the more advanced democracies: The systematic lack of communication between groups of citizens".

I think the story of Bill C-20 is a parable of a government that has become removed from its citizens, a government that is unable to listen and unable to change its opinion. Our government started out in denial with Bill C-69 and it is in continual denial through each budget until we are faced with this legislation which is one more nail in the coffin of Canada's beloved social health and education programs.