

Government Orders

to exploit and capitalize on those resources with which nature has gifted all Canadians. I refer to land for farming, the enormous riches in the fishing industry, and, of course, our mineral and forestry resources.

If we do not leave a mechanism in place by which those Canadians can continue to employ their skills and their talents in these industries, then we are abandoning a fundamental character of the way that Canadians see the development of the economy of this nation.

Another principle that the government refuses to acknowledge and addresses in the most perverse fashion with this bill is that taxes not be regressive, that they apply equitably to all Canadians, and, above all, that they be fair.

I refer you, Mr. Speaker, to the debates over the course of the last several months with respect to one of the initiatives of the government. That one and only initiative, the GST, is going to reign its terror on all Canadians, unless of course the House and the other place can in some fashion cause the government to change its ways.

Finally, among some of those principles is also the one that is consistent and flows from the last one. It is that Canadians not be made to bear the burden of government fiscal and economic mismanagement. Those who are in a position to dictate the finances of this nation must also be accountable for their actions.

Yet, what do we have? With this bill, the government very callously, in a nonchalant, almost arrogant fashion, says: "Give us the \$25.5 billion to meet the obligations which we incur as a government, as the representatives of the people." I want to stress the "representation of the people" component in that statement. If we consent to this bill—and I will not—we will become accomplices to the plan that the government is putting before Canadians in a most insidious fashion.

The government is violating those principles I have enumerated via its economic mismanagement. Through that economic mismanagement, it is drawing conclusions through its analyses that suggest that its way is the only way to correct all the faults and evils that visit us. In fact,

what we have is a forum for incorrect analyses upon which to base decisions.

• (1220)

Let us take a look at the record. The government has tried over the course of this budget to rectify an enormous problem presented by it over the course of the last six years. After six years of total indifference to what has been developing in the country on an economic basis, the government is now advocating an economic policy of high interest rates, budget cuts, and increased taxation to the point that we have counted 31 different direct increases of taxation by the government since 1984.

Why are we doing this? Why would anyone on this side of the House agree to such a bill as the one proposed now? "In 1984," the government is very fond of saying, "the former government left a public debt of \$170 billion." I say, with them, "Shame." A mere six years later that public debt is now \$380 billion.

It took from Confederation until 1984 to raise the public debt to \$170 billion. Yet, it took the people opposite a mere six years to increase that \$170 billion to \$380 billion. That is spelled with a "b" as in intolerable.

The same government, which through its finance minister says: "That is not our problem", is the one which, in 1985, said in the House in front of all Canadians: "Do you know what we are going to do? We are such great managers that we are going to rectify all the problems of the past. We are going to present a budget that is going to decrease the deficit that stood at intolerable levels in 1984. We are going to decrease it to \$18 billion by 1990."

We are at 1990. Thank you, Mr. Finance Minister, your predictions have come true again. The deficit stands at \$30.5 billion. This is a great sign of economic management, of fiscal management. As long as the only version of reality that we hear emanates from that side of the House, then we are faced with the prospect of simply saying: "No, no. Enough is enough."

On the basis of the presentations of reality by the Minister of Finance and the government, the minister says: "The only way that we are going to pull up our socks and make Canada more competitive, make workers