

ten years we have had the fastest growing national debt in Canada's history, even including the period of two major world conflicts.

● (2042)

When the President of the Treasury Board spoke about taxation today, he did not mention that there will have to be an increase in revenue this year for the funding of our international debt due to the devaluation of the dollar. When it is considered that this will be in the sum of half a billion dollars, then it is time that somebody faced the facts.

I am glad to see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) in the House, Mr. Speaker. I am sure he is aware of all the problems Canada is facing today because business confidence is being destroyed. Priming the pump does not put more water in the well.

There are many issues the government should face up to. Canada is in a very, very serious economic condition at the present time. I hope the government will accept some of the opinions expressed on this side. Canadians have been reprimanded for living too high on the hog, and I do not have to tell the House who said that. They have been instructed several times to tighten their belts. These same people are forced to witness their country speeding down the road to economic disaster, with its well-being and security undermined by a government which only exercises control where it can do the most harm—by manipulating the regular and vital actions of the RCMP and by creating unexplained and unnecessary ways to squander their taxes.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has muddied the waters of law enforcement through his personal appointments at incalculable cost, financially and on the security front. I believe, in the best interests of the security force and of Canadians generally, that the Prime Minister should revoke all these appointments he made within the RCMP security and analysis branch, excluding the present Commissioner, and give sole jurisdiction for control, management, appointments and advancement of that force to the Commissioner. This should cut down on the cost of operation.

The Commissioner should be responsible only to the Solicitor General as head of that department, with parliament setting out guidelines on the "rules of the game" within that force. The government has been lax in not giving the RCMP adequate protection and guidelines that could be provided by legislation so that members of the force would not be subjected to criticism, investigation or innuendo in the performance of one of its main duties, the protection of the security of this country and the maintenance of the rights of Canadian citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I am 100 per cent behind the RCMP. Every Canadian has known that force to be dedicated and loyal for almost 100 years.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Income Tax

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Loiselle (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, it is very amusing to see hon. members from the opposition parties make a lot of criticism against the government while not being able to put forward any valuable suggestions. Mr. Speaker, because of its past, particularly its recent past, Canada is a very rich country. Canada could benefit from tremendous natural resources as it continues to do. Canada could rely on its subsoil and its food products without having to face real competition from foreign countries. However, some time ago there was a change which is not particular to Canada but which is worldwide, namely the emergence of Third World countries among the productive countries. Let us just look at the mines which made Canada an exporter of natural resources, and which are now forced to face foreign competition. This abundance of natural resources must be used much better, and with different means, if it is going to go on supporting our balance as a country. Of course, Mr. Speaker, in a country such as ours, labour costs more than in some countries of the Third World. Taking into account the present situation, we will therefore, over the long term, have to consider a policy for the complete transformation of our industrial organization in Canada.

As a Quebecer, I am that much more concerned about the matter, because we find in our province the traditional industries; neither the provincial nor federal government willed that we find in Quebec mainly the shoe and textile industries, and others, we call soft. Mr. Speaker, I think of the St. Lawrence River going through Quebec before reaching Ontario; Canada developed historically first of all in Lower Canada, the Quebec of today; in that area we find the first industries ever built up in Canada and consequently those that run up against the most difficulties today.

Mr. Speaker, on the other hand, we have had the good luck of benefitting from a country that is vast and has enormous potential. We need but think of the field of energy; contrary to almost all other industrialized countries in the world, we can enjoy so many things. And time is on our side because we have enormous natural resources. On the other hand, we, in the east, depend on the west for energy supplies; but because we will have construction of the pipeline, exploration projects and, naturally, the building of the infrastructure needed to develop the resources of western Canada, we, of the federal government, will have to see to it that eastern regions can benefit from those developments and thus be assured of some economic fall-out.

Mr. Speaker, let us examine the economic structure of Canada. I believe we should recognize the fact that the western provinces can no longer be considered as a means of supplying the rest of the country with food or energy products. We must accept the aspirations of western Canadians to industrialize. I believe this is legitimate and normal. Moreover, because of the enormous projects that this will require in that part of the country, we shall have a unique opportunity to change the economic structure of Quebec, the Maritime provinces, and partly of Ontario.