

*Government Orders*

That does not even include the goods and services tax which is yet to come.

That monster will be foisted upon us if everything goes according to Hoyle or at least the way the government wants it on January 1. There is little wonder that there is a crisis in confidence.

My hon. colleague from Etobicoke who spoke before me talked about the insane, high interest rate policy of this government. It is reasonable to ask these questions. Has the government gone mad? Has John Crow gone mad? Has the Minister of Finance gone mad? Have the officials in his department gone mad? Have all the people who are responsible for the government gone mad?

The editorial writers of *The Globe and Mail* support this kind of madness. We have come to know *The Globe and Mail* as a Tory apologist, have we not?

The interest rates in Canada today are more than five points higher than those in the United States. Think about it. It is unprecedented. Never before has it happened. The American inflation rate is virtually the same as that of Canada. We have an interest rate five points higher than the Americans. What does it do? It is quite apparent what the disparity between interests here and across the border do. It makes life very difficult for the Canadian companies to compete in the American market and to sell products across the line. That high interest rate policy kills jobs. It makes houses much more expensive. It makes cars more expensive. Everything that Canadians buy with the help of loans becomes much more expensive.

Earlier I spoke of indicators showing that the economy is going the wrong way. I can tell you there is a slump—and this is one of the indicators—in housing in this country. There is a slump in the retail industry. The economy is slumping. The economy is sinking. For the first time since 1982 the economy has declined for two consecutive months, all of it a very disturbing picture. Canadians are saying: “Enough is enough. We have had enough of this nonsense”. They are loudly and clearly telling the Minister of Finance that it is time that he abandoned his insane high interest rate policy, his over-reliance on monetary policy. But is the Minister of Finance listening? Does he ever listen, Mr. Speaker?

Sadly I must say that the answer to that question is no. This government never seems to listen to Canadians.

Canadians do not like the GST. Does the government listen? Canadians do not like the free trade agreement. Does it listen? Canadians do not like cuts to VIA Rail. Does it listen? Canadians do not like the clawback. Does the government listen? Canadians do not like transferring federal debt to the provinces. Does it listen? Canadians do not like cuts to native programs, to women's programs. Does it listen? They do not like the government's abandonment of the unemployment insurance scheme. Does it listen? Not on your life.

Little wonder that there is a crisis in confidence in Canada. Canadians feel, and it is a growing feeling, that this government is totally out of control and totally out of touch with reality. This government does not have the moral authority to govern. It is down at 15 per cent in the polls which is unprecedented. The government exists only because it gained more seats in the 1988 election, an election that was largely bought, purchased, by big corporate money.

I said that the government is out of control and out of touch with reality. Let me explain further. It says it is concerned about the deficit. Man, alive; that is all we have heard since the election of 1988. But I ask, what is contributing more than anything else to the deficit? It is the government's own high interest rate policy. The high interest rates make it much more costly for the government to do business. The government this year will pay, and I emphasize this figure, \$41 billion in interest charges on the public debt. That is more than what the government pays in federal salaries. Little wonder there is a crisis in confidence.

But there are other things too that shake our confidence. Take for example the revelation the other day about increases in pay and salaries for executives of CN Rail. Those top five executives got an average boost in pay of 18.7 per cent. The CN president got an increase of 10.9 per cent, boosting his salary to \$416,000 a year. The CN group vice-president did much better on a percentage basis; he got a boost of almost 40 per cent. He now earns a paltry \$295,000. Nice work if you can get it. And guess what? They got those increases for what? Can you guess? Performance.