

Income Tax

\$100 million on an office building in Montreal—although it would not matter whether the building was in Vancouver, Regina, or Halifax. In this so-called period of restraint the government spends money for an office building in Montreal where we are told there is a surplus of office space. It looks as if the government is bending over backwards to buy votes in Quebec.

If Castlegar were to receive assistance from the federal and provincial government it could triple its employment opportunities in the next five years but, instead, it may have to halt the expansion of existing industry. All the applications made to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) fell on deaf ears. The government has tunnel vision. It shafts the small businessman while it introduces a program to assist Canadians to reduce the cost of energy and an insulation program, which I have already said is a good one; then it turns around and, with the other hand, grabs dollars from the pockets of senior citizens.

The government takes and the government gives, but it always takes more than it gives. On the one hand the minister assures us that something will not be done, while on the other hand somebody else introduces it through a provision in this bill. It just demonstrates the government's failure to recognize priorities. It would rather spend \$100 million on erecting a tower to reflect—

An hon. Member: That is not right.

Mr. Brisco: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite will have his turn to speak when I finish, unless he has a question, which I doubt.

The government has failed to set its priorities, it has demonstrated tunnel vision and decided that a community the size of Castlegar does not need to expand and increase job opportunities. Rather, the government proposes to erect a tower to its policies in the city of Montreal.

That is the kind of policy, the kind of tunnel vision, the kind of "emphysema" of rhetoric from which this government suffers.

● (2152)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of interest that I should like to make some comments about this legislation. I notice that the minister has already mentioned misuse of freedom of speech. However, Mr. Speaker, I think that he indicated in his presentation how important this legislation was and, on that basis, I think that we have serious reasons to make comments about it. I wish to say right now to the minister that there are some good provisions in this legislation that we wish to support at once. Unfortunately there are also some which are debatable not to say questionable. Once more, we think that it is a strategy of this government to present a legislation containing several provisions deserving our support because we should not hesitate of course to support, for instance, a tax reduction. We have been asking for it in the last two years. It is only last week that the minister

[Mr. Brisco.]

decided to introduce this legislation. I hope that our friends opposite will not try to take credit for such a brilliant idea.

For two years, Mr. Speaker, the leader of my party and several of my colleagues have been asking—and they believe that it was urgent two years ago—that the Canadian people be given additional purchasing power. And they come up with this legislation in which once more, there are provisions that we consider inadequate for the time being. And we think that those measures should not all be included in the same legislation. If in the minister's view it is urgent to act, then let him suggest a proposal to select measures that are urgent, valuable and interesting and we shall certainly give them our support.

But it looks very much like the omnibus bill of long ago in which totally different measures were being proposed. Four or five of the seven measures were valid and we were supposed to accept the whole package without question. This is where the problem lies, and we ask for the insurance that, at least at the committee stage, the minister be ready to make some concessions and present in third reading a legislation more acceptable than it is now, in which case he will certainly get the cooperation he wishes from the opposition. But I somewhat regret to see that my hon. friends opposite are maintaining a stubborn silence about debatable and debated measures with which a majority of the people probably do not agree.

We believe that it is normal, or at least that we are doing our duty in telling the government members that once again some provisions are unacceptable for the moment, that we are greatly pleased with some others and that what would make Canadians most happy is a tax reduction, but as I said earlier, my party has been asking for these reductions for three years in order to increase our purchasing power. Last week, previous speakers talked in particular about the clauses dealing with insurance companies, the holders of insurance policies and, of course, capital gains, especially as concerns farmers, and we certainly have serious reservations about those provisions. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that we are very much in favour of the good clauses and that we intend to do our duty with regard to those that we find unacceptable for the moment.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I represent a riding with problems as well, and neither the Speech from the Throne nor the estimates that the minister would like to propose and which, in his opinion, the people would find most interesting can truly solve these problems. Some people in my constituency are greatly worried about the economic situation, and this legislation is not likely to solve certain important problems.

I was listening to the hon. member for Chambly (Mr. Loiselle) who is, I believe, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and he mentioned the opportunity that we have to correct the situation. He made an excellent speech which I greatly appreciated, and he touched on almost everything, Mr. Speaker, except for a minor matter. He forgot or tried to forget the past. But that is our problem, our responsibility. According to what he said, he would have liked us, members of the opposition, to forget all the failures of the government in so many areas, he would have liked us not to talk about what has happened and as the