

*Routine Proceedings*

reported deficit for 1991 would be increased by up to \$2 billion". That is not peanuts, that is a lot of money.

As I said yesterday, the government is cooking the books. We believe it is. The Auditor General says the government is not keeping accounting procedures and methods that are used in the private sector.

Why is it possible for public persons in public life, with public funds, to do things with those funds that in the private sector, with private funds, they would not be allowed to do?

• (1220 )

If the finance minister, in his former incarnation as a car dealer, had used the kind of bookkeeping that he is now using with public funds he would have probably been pursued by Revenue Canada and would probably have been sued and put into some kind of clink because you cannot do that in the private sector. Yet we are doing it in the public sector. That is what we are trying to bring out.

**Mr. Hawkes:** Mr. Speaker, what an opportunity. My heavens, that member stands in this place and complains about the way we keep the books after I was in this Chamber with him in the 1980s when any resemblance between what the finance minister said in this place and reality was purely an accident, coincidental and nonsense. This is the group of people who took the whole UIC deficit out of the Public Accounts of Canada and shoved it off in the corner so they did not have to report it to Parliament.

This is like the pot calling the kettle black. This goes so far beyond belief that it defies any sense of credibility. I almost cannot deal with it because it is so obscene and so over-exaggerated.

He forgot praise where praise is due. Last year the Auditor General said: "This is an accurate statement of the Public Accounts of Canada". That is the first time in anybody's living memory that he was able to do an audit without notes. This year he is saying you reported everything. That is the piece missing in what the member says. You reported everything to him and you just sort of shifted the years a little bit as to how you were going to account for it, but you gave us all the numbers. You did not take the numbers and shove them under the bed and throw them out the kitchen door. You gave us all the numbers and that is very important.

He then says: "We do not want the other departments of government to do what finance is doing". That is the Liberal way.

Do you know what finance is doing, Mr. Speaker, what got him so exercised as chairman of the committee? It is saving overhead money. It is reducing management and leaving the money for the evaluations. It is not paying so many people to push paper around and sit at desks.

We want every department of government to save money. We make no apology for it. We want them to save money and to reduce overhead. We hope they copy the finance department's move in that direction. We will even give them a little bonus from time to time if they save us \$100 million or \$200 million. We will give them an extra \$3,000 or \$5,000 on their salary cheque at the end of the year because we think that is good behaviour and we would like to reward it, and we make no apology for it.

**Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest to the comments that were made about the way the present government has handled the finances in this country since 1984 and I had some difficulty with some of the things that had been stated. Those difficulties really come down to a basic premise of what the truth is in comparison to, I guess, what is being stated.

I can read back in the records and I can check with Mr. Wilson. I have a note from his office which stated: "We were in the area of a \$180 billion debt when we took office. We are now at \$400 billion". The Conservatives in fact have doubled the debt through their great management. They use a silly thing about talking about \$3 billion interest. That is not true. On \$160 billion or \$170 billion which they inherited I agree there is no way that it was \$3 billion in interest. It is \$3 billion and \$4 billion because of the spending they have done.

The other point that has been alluded to all the way is the fact that they have brought about at least a 40 per cent increase in taxes over their period. When we start looking at that huge tax increase they say how much better they are running this economy.

We look at tax increases which are just abominable, the debt which has been doubled, unemployment which is skyrocketing, and we are now putting caps on programs.