

*The Budget—Mr. Rondeau*

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I have no intention, in the course of the present debate, of enlarging upon the voluminous contents of the budget for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1975. We will have the opportunity, in the course of coming debates, of analyzing the credits of the various departments. I do not want to waste too much time on that mess of figures, but would like instead to keep to economic considerations which we cannot always deal with during the other debates.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased, during this budget debate, to invite the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) to leave the beaten path, for a change, and set Canada on a financial path other than the one we have known, and especially the one I have known in the last ten years that I have listened to the various budgets brought down before this House.

Mr. Speaker, to my mind, the budget of a nation is its most vital administrative tool, for it represents the eventual economic development of a whole nation. The Canadian Minister of Finance says yes or no to all that can be done economically for the good of the Canadian people. All the departments are dependent on the financial conditions created by the Department of Finance, for they dominate all others. Only dreamers say that finance is not important; the realists know that to accomplish something, finance is required; otherwise, dreams will always remain dreams.

● (1640)

The Minister of Finance is therefore entirely responsible for stagnation in Canada, the progress or financial setback of each department and consequently of Canada as a whole.

Each morning in a business firm, the accountant or general manager opens that vault to take out the accounting books, the invoices, the cash box, the bank books and everything required for the satisfactory administration of the business in order to take the essential decisions. If the accountant, the general manager or the Minister of Finance, instead of taking the necessary decisions in due course, keeps explaining why the business is at a standstill, saying that competitors and other people are to blame, it is because he is incompetent. If he keeps saying that the business is deteriorating, it is because competitors are underselling him and that is yet another indication of incompetence. When the director of a company keeps imitating his competitors, it is because he is incompetent.

It is the same thing for a country. Unemployment is not to be blamed on others, but on ourselves. Inflation is not to be blamed on others, but on ourselves. Epidemics of bankruptcies are not to be blamed on others, but on ourselves.

Economic regression, such as we are now witnessing in Canada, is not to be blamed on others, but on ourselves. When the Minister of Finance of a country keeps throwing the blame for our troubles on others, then he must be incompetent or unable to act in that he is bound by forces which command him to act against his own competence.

Blaming foreign conditions for what is happening in Canada, as the Minister of Finance did in his budget

speech when he referred to inflation, is indeed the easiest thing to do.

Maybe in the next budget we shall blame some unidentified outer space beings for interfering with and disturbing things on our planet as an excuse for our own blunders. Blaming others only enhances our incompetence or inability to act.

The Minister of Finance should exercise 100 per cent control over the country's finance instead of being controlled by the country's financial forces. Why is the Minister of Finance always trying to defend the present government which keeps bringing him everything he does not want? For it is indeed because of the present financial system that the greatest inflationary pressure ever in Canada has been occurring. The present system is indeed the reason for the deficit of our balance each and every year. In 1961-62: \$791 million; in 1962-63: \$692 million; in 1963-64: \$619 million; in 1964-65: \$38 million; in 1965-66: \$39 million; in 1966-67: \$422 million; in 1967-68: \$795 million; in 1968-69: \$576 million; in 1969-70: \$393 million; in 1970-71: \$370 million; in 1971-72: \$750 million; in 1974-75: \$1.5 billion. The present financial system is actually responsible for a taxation system which accounts for the fact that over 50 per cent of all revenue is siphoned off by various levels of government. It is indeed because of our present financial system that the worst unemployment crises always occurs in peacetime. Indeed, because of our present financial system, the wealth can be distributed among the people only under the condition of waging war. Again because of our present financial system, we experience an economic recession; it is only the beginning. And yet Canada has been built with courage, confidence, hope and dreams about the future that are all melting in the pot of the inflationary financial system the Minister of Finance is happy to defend.

In his budget package, on page 1 of the Highlights brochure, the minister refers to a prudent economy policy, instead of a buoyant economy policy. Reference is also made to inflation and a slowdown in growth instead of reduced cost and increased industrial activity.

Further down, the minister says there should be an attempt to sustain demand. So he is not sure. He says there should be an attempt, instead of stating that demand should be increased. Further down, I read that rising expenditures should be kept down, but in the same breath announces a deficit of one billion and a half dollars. He spends one billion and a half more than the amount of revenues. He says one thing and does exactly the opposite. Surely this is the utmost in inconsistency. Special attention should be given to the weak point in the economy, says the minister. But in such an economic chaos, the Minister of Finance should have realized long ago that the weak points in the economy all point to a basically unbalanced monetary system, which entails structural faults and weaknesses.

With his economists, the Minister of Finance is inspective the roof of the present financial structure in an attempt to repair it instead of working at the very foundations of our monetary systems which cause all those faults. He calls them weaknesses in our economic system.