

As I have said on previous occasions, hon. members have merited the support of their constituents, not on the basis of textual speeches but on the basis of having appeared on platforms with other candidates and there speaking what was in their hearts and minds. Therefore, let us do away with all these long-winded textual addresses which are made when someone piles a number of *Hansards* on his desk, places a written speech on top and reads from it. When that happens we do not know whether they are the hon. member's words or the words of someone else.

[*Translation*]

It is proper, on the other hand, to congratulate the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Marceau) who gave us a speech of his own and who, thank God, has nothing in common with his predecessor here. We are happy to have this new member represent the Lapointe constituency. I congratulate the mover and the seconder for their performance in delivering the traditional speeches.

[*English*]

I wish I could say the same thing for the speech of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) because, again, as a seasoned member of this house I object to ministers coming in here with completely textual speeches from which they will not depart. This is only acceptable in the House if one is reading statistics, if a quotation is being read or if a very closely reasoned argument is being followed and one must refer to a text. I cannot say that the minister's speech was a closely reasoned argument, and there were very few statistics in it. I believe ministers should deliver good, oral speeches without relying upon executive assistants or on speeches put together by departmental staffs.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) did not reply to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) in any way. The Prime Minister, too, read us a textual speech in which he dealt philosophically with certain matters, but frankly there was no joining of debate. However, I think the Minister of Finance started a debate on the question of inflation, a debate which I hope to continue. Inflation is with us and it is a most important subject. The Minister of Finance devoted his entire speech to a justification of government policy and attitude with respect to inflation. I am not going to criticize all of his speech because I say thank goodness the government is finally concerned with inflation. But having heard the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister

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and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) it reminds me of what is said about a convert to some new form of religion, namely, that the convert is far more vocal and far more ardent in support of his new-found philosophy than is the long-time practitioner.

During the summer recess the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs inquired into the subject of high interest rates. That committee was meeting right up to the opening of this session, and I hope it will return to its work fairly soon. I am sure the committee will not be able to arrive at any positive solution, any cure-all formula, but I think it will agree with the proposition put forward by my leader, and to some extent by the Minister of Finance and other members, that the problem of inflation will be better solved, and this in a more equitable and acceptable manner, if it is done on a voluntary basis.

• (3:10 p.m.)

I think the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was right yesterday when he said the government hopes that the back of inflation can be broken by voluntary means. To this extent I wish the government well in its fight. Although I think it is going about this problem in the wrong way, I also think that everybody in Canada must support the government in its ultimate aim to beat inflation. I do not care whether this involves the person on a low pension, or the highest income earner in the land; inflation is a most insidious enemy and we must all fight it. Each one of us must be concerned and we must not leave the fight to the other fellow. I think it is rather cheap for the Minister of Finance to say that the opposition is responsible for all sorts of demands to spend more money. Maybe he should put his money where his mouth is, as the saying goes.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** What demands? We can show that there are also demands on the government side, legitimate demands. We are concerned with the non-working poor and the working poor. We are concerned that something be done about welfare. Is that saying that the government should embark on some grandiose scheme of spending? Not at all. The whole welfare scheme should be reconsidered. I will come to that a little later in my speech.

The Prime Minister asserts that there will be a rigorous examination of priorities. Mr.