

The Economy

ment, first of all for having failed to bring effective measures forward to deal with those who have reached age 60, and also for having failed to present legislation that would stimulate the consumption of Canadian products. If the federal government had reduced its own federal sales tax, that would have been of universal application.

● (1552)

We worked on the sales tax and dropped the building tax from 12 per cent to 5 per cent. We managed to persuade the government to reduce sales tax on children's clothing, even eliminating it completely. Why did they not reduce the sales tax and make it universal for all people, whether those people were buying gasoline or building houses? If they had removed the tax entirely on building materials, this would have been the greatest stimulus to the house building industry of this country. Not only the consumption of Canadian products, but the whole Canadian economy would have received a great shot in the arm. Therefore, I want to thank the proposer of this motion and the Social Credit party for having brought this motion to the floor.

[Translation]

Mr. Claude Tessier (Compton): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to participate in this debate, but also very unhappy because I must object to a motion which, although it may appear acceptable at first sight, must be rejected out of hand because it is overly simplistic, because it is irresponsible, in short because it is not rational, that is neither logical nor serious.

Mr. Speaker, one cannot try to sell anything under the pretence of sincerity and good-heartedness, but I think what we should heed from that motion is the sincerity and the philosophy of its movers. However, Mr. Speaker, when someone makes up half-truths and incomplete statements and then believes in them, which is more serious, he ends up making up falsehoods and, if it were not unparliamentary, I would even say becoming a liar. It is first and foremost unworthy of the unquestionable credibility and efficiency of a representative at the government level. As far as I am concerned, it is a sign of dishonesty to try to subtly deceive right-minded people—perhaps demagogically would be more accurate. It is about time to be serious, that is logical and realistic. The problems stated or described in the motion, I might rather say denounced, such as unemployment among youths aged between 18 and 30, I would have liked the motion to tell us what those young people could do. What can they do, at what cost, and of course who will be able to buy the goods thus produced?

As for the old age security pension at 60, then again the question is how much, and who will decide? Does the decision lie only with the federal government or does it involve consultations that some hon. members consider necessary at times while on other occasions they advocate lavish spending to finance programs such as the old age pension at 60? As for a national dividend to increase buying power, the federal govern-

[Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich).]

ment and particularly the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) in his last budget tried to introduce a measure which would actually increase the purchasing power of the Canadian taxpayer, and there again for reasons that some would call constitutional and others nothing but political, objections were raised in this House to the government's proposal aiming at putting more money into the Canadian consumer's pockets. We did provide for that, but the opposition parties seem to enjoy thwarting our efforts.

This motion suggests stimulating consumption by discounting retail prices or doing away with interests. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, when I hear motions like the one before us today, whether the *Créditistes* are not simply turning communists. One of these days they will have to tell us whether they do in fact advocate private enterprise, and what role, what place and what rules they want for it. As far as the government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau, is concerned, I feel that the Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras), the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen), have introduced many solutions to the various problems we have today.

Nonetheless, the problems that exist in the areas of unemployment, old people, rates of interest, are actual problems, but it remains to be seen whether the government proposals can be considered as beneficial and until we have evidence to the contrary, I consider them such. We must recognize, Mr. Speaker, that when it comes to implementing solutions, we have partners who have their own viewpoints and their own compulsions. I think it might be well for us in this House to realize that we are not here to establish heaven on earth; but we should at least be convinced that we can render hardships more acceptable; I think that some day we shall have to accept living with problems without blinding people to the facts in a totally irresponsible way and trying to have them believe there are miracle solutions that can be applied. I wish the opposition would at least account for its proposals. It definitely would have helped the House today if the opposition had really accounted for its proposals since, with a budgetary deficit of some \$11.5 billion, it is quite easy to add or subtract. And I believe this is as much the responsibility of the opposition as that of the government. I am sure that the day when the opposition agrees to account for its proposals, we will be able to spend more time working effectively to meet the needs of our constituents, as they will become more realistic and responsible instead of constantly trying to win votes and campaign on strictly demagogic issues.

● (1602)

The hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) seems to think that interest rates, income tax and taxes in general are the cause of inflation. Obviously, interest rates and income tax have always been considered too high, but, Mr. Speaker, I think one should realize it is the income tax and the taxes we pay which allow the federal government to give taxpayers the