

Waste and Mismanagement

ate with this practice, now has available sufficient copies for distribution. May I assume it is the desire of the House that that be done forthwith?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members will note that at 9.45 o'clock this evening every question necessary to dispose of proceedings on this motion shall be put forthwith, in accordance with Standing Order 58(10).

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, the interim report of the royal commission on financial management and accountability, known as the Lambert commission, begins with a 200-year old quote by Thomas Paine:

Government, like dress, is a badge of lost innocence.

These words, as the author points out, reflect the free spirit of mankind that grudgingly concedes that, while governments may be a necessary evil, healthy suspicion of and constant vigilance over their activities must be maintained.

Government must have money and resources to operate and to do the things we ask of it. While no one loves the tax collector, Canadians certainly recognize that taxes are the price they pay for the provision of goods and services that they ask government to provide.

● (1510)

They give these funds to government in trust and ask that they be spent efficiently and effectively and on programs which they have approved through their elected representatives. That, sir, is the essence of our Canadian democratic system of government and therefore, when the taxpayers' money is misspent, wasted in an effective and inefficient manner and when the elected representatives have little or no say in how that money is to be spent, then our very system of democracy is undermined. That is why we have chosen this motion for discussion on this the final allotted day in the current supply period.

I am certain that when historians look back on the Trudeau years, it will be the gross mismanagement and resulting maladministration and waste that will stand out. It will be that, Mr. Speaker, which will define the place in history of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). No government in Canada's history has taken so much from the taxpayers of Canada and spent it so wastefully. No government in Canada's history has disparaged and downgraded parliament in the way this government has. No government in Canada's history has failed so miserably to achieve the goals it set out for itself.

We all recall, that, when the Prime Minister first took office he was dedicated to achieving the twin goals of a just society within a strong and united Canada. This Prime Minister, we were told, was the man to end separatism and create one strong Canada. Five years later he even declared separatism dead. But as we know, that obituary, like the obituary to Mark Twain, proved to be a gross exaggeration and today there is a government in Quebec dedicated to tearing this country apart. Tearing it apart? Perhaps that is an exaggeration. Perhaps, as

[Mr. Speaker.]

the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lalonde) would have us believe, they are only four-fifths dedicated to tearing the country apart. Or is it one-fifth?

We all remember the other goals of this Prime Minister in his quest to achieve a just society for Canada. He said that he would end regional disparities in this country. He created a Department of Regional Economic Expansion, spent hundreds of millions, indeed billions, of dollars, yet today regional disparities are, if anything, worse than they were before he set out to cure them.

The Prime Minister set out to cure unemployment. He said that everybody who wanted to work should be able to work. Yet despite these lofty declarations of intent and innumerable job-creation programs from LIP to Katimavik, the fact of the matter is that during this government's term of office unemployment, save for a few perturbations, has steadily increased to the current level of 8.2 per cent. In France, a nation of 50 million, there are riots because unemployment is approaching one million. In this country we have had an unemployment level of a million Canadians for months and months and we have less than half the population of France.

The Prime Minister said he would not tolerate excessive inflation and indeed he committed himself to a wrestling match. To aid him in this fight he not only utilized the Department of Finance and the other departments of government, but in addition created five different outside boards and commissions to help him—the Prices and Incomes Commission, the Food Prices Review Board, the Anti-Inflation Board, the Commission for the Study of Incomes and Prices, and lastly the National Commission on Inflation. The current rate of inflation is 9.2 per cent. When this wrestling match started it was less than half that.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, when talking of this wrestling match with inflation we must never forget that it was this Prime Minister who said price and income controls would never work, that he would never introduce them. Then, with the election safely out of the way, he turned around and did exactly what he said he never would do. He will be remembered for that deception perpetrated on the Canadian people. He will be remembered for all of his failures. He fought inflation and failed. He fought unemployment and failed. He fought regional disparities and failed. He fought separatism and failed—failed miserably.

Well, Mr. Speaker, is it fair to ask how all these failures arose? I think it is. Indeed, we and the Canadian people have been asking regularly and these are the kind of answers we have been getting. At various times the Prime Minister has blamed his manifold failures on just about everybody and everything. He has blamed the weather on occasion. He has blamed international economic situations on several occasions. He has blamed provincial premiers for his failures in economic areas, his failures in energy policy, and, of course, his failure to drive separatism into the grave and keep it there.

But lately he has been making the most ridiculous accusations he has ever made. He has started to blame all of these failures of public policy on the Leader of the Opposition (Mr.