

Government Orders

We have changed our system of RRSPs. We have made it so that the person earning less than \$20,000 has had his ability to contribute to an RRSP reduced, while a person earning \$86,000 a year has had his ability to contribute to an RRSP and avoid taxes increased dramatically. This is the kind of approach that this government has taken to the deficit and the debt.

My conclusion is that the government has deliberately run up the deficit. It has deliberately run up the debt. It did not take steps when it was elected in 1984 to bring the deficit under control or to bring the debt under control. It simply escalated the tax write-offs for the wealthy and the corporations. It simply drove up the interest rates to keep our Canadian dollar high. It appears that was part of the free trade deal. It made an agreement with the United States to keep it competitive compared to us by keeping our dollar high. I can only come to the conclusion that it has done this in order to attack social programs. The government philosophically does not support the Canadian concept of a social safety net, of national social programs and national leadership in this area. Unfortunately, by doing so it is starting to destroy the very fabric that is Canada.

This is the background that must be taken into consideration when one looks at Bill C-60. It is an act concerning the transfer of payments from the federal government to the provinces. It has to be taken in the view of this government's record. It has taken the stand that it will not be responsible. It will off-load its responsibility for post-secondary education, for health care, for corrections, on to the provinces. It will off-load its responsibility to the unemployed on to employers and employees. It will off-load its responsibility for income assistance recipients and children on to the provinces through the Canada Assistance Plan.

It is because of this that Canadians have lost faith in this federal government.

Mr. Brian O'Kurley (Elk Island): I was listening to some of the rhetoric from my hon. colleague in the New Democratic Party, particularly with regard to the accusation that the Government of Canada has deliberately increased the deficit. This is consistent with other disinformation spread by members of the NDP. The deficit in 1984 was nearly at the \$40 billion level, and as

he should know, it has been reduced now by almost \$10 billion to around the \$30 billion level.

In spite of the rhetoric, I do want to acknowledge that he and other members of his party may be speaking on behalf of a sincere interest in the present generation. However, members of the Progressive Conservative Party not only feel a responsibility to members of this generation in terms of meeting the social needs of Canadians, but we also feel a very serious responsibility toward looking after the needs of future generations.

I see in the House of Commons today some very young people. Members of this party are concerned about ensuring that future governments of Canada will have the capacity to meet the needs of future generations. I am concerned that the "live for today" attitude of the NDP and other members of the opposition seems to neglect the future and neglect the ability of future governments to respond to social needs.

Assuming that we would do what the socialists recommend, spend out of control, as we have seen the socialist government in the province of Ontario do, what would he do for future generations in terms of meeting their needs?

Mr. Karpoff: I wish the member would go down to the food banks today and ask future generations, two-thirds of which are children in the Atlantic region, what their future holds for them. When they are hungry, when they are not able to go to school because they are not properly fed, is that the future you are talking about?

It is very nice to say to the person who cannot get into a university, who cannot afford to go to post-secondary education: "Your future looks good". Where is their future?

The deficit and debt are serious problems. They are problems that this government had the responsibility to deal with in 1984. It has shown, has demonstrated for eight consecutive years, that it is incompetent, that it cannot eradicate the deficit, that it cannot start to deal with the debt. The total debt in this country has gone from \$160 billion to \$420 billion. Even the Tories must understand all that is happening is that they are no longer paying their way, not quite as badly as the Liberals, but they have done nothing. They have not wiped out the deficit, they have not brought it under control, and they have simply off-loaded their responsi-