

going to help the Government of Canada because it is given in such a way that it can be used to collect foreign coins, or foreign art or to buy condominiums in Florida?

● (1450)

**Senator Roblin:** If my honourable friend wants to debate the issue of the capital gains allowance, I invite him to submit an inquiry, and we will talk about it.

**Senator Argue:** Even a motion.

**Senator Gigantès:** I thank the Leader of the Government for his suggestion, and I will follow it.

I should like to ask the Leader of the Government a question about the suggestion by the Minister of Finance that bonds might be indexed, which is an excellent suggestion. If bonds held by the rich are going to be indexed, is the Minister of Finance going to consider indexing the pensions of the poor?

**Senator Roblin:** When the government's ways-and-means motions and other bills connected with the budget are presented, my honourable friend will have an adequate opportunity to debate that issue. This is not the time to do so. This procedure of his of offering a succession of questions—which certainly goes beyond the usual limits of tolerance of this house—is counterproductive.

**Senator Gigantès:** I acquired my habit of asking questions by observing the Honourable the Leader of the Government and his colleagues when they were sitting on the other side of the house asking questions that were very much in the same spirit as mine, and I remember, too, the great tolerance with which the then Leader of the Government, Senator Olson, and the then Deputy Leader of the Government, Senator Frith, treated them.

**Senator Frith:** Carry on.

**Senator Gigantès:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the Government do me the favour of asking his able staff to examine an article appearing in the *Globe and Mail* today reporting that the Canadian Council on Social Development has made calculations—which appear accurate to me—on the impact of the budget on various families, showing that the budget will take money from people of modest means and the poor and give it to the rich?

**Senator Roblin:** I want to join in the tribute that Senator Gigantès has paid to Senator Olson. It is true that we had a vigorous Question Period when Senator Olson was in this chair—and with good reason; there were four cabinet ministers, each of whom held a portfolio, and he, Senator Olson, was the chairman of the cabinet committee that dealt with economic matters generally.

**Senator Doody:** He was in charge of large projects.

**Senator Roblin:** And, as far as I could understand, did it very well.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Senator Roblin:** And that is the reason why he was the target of a good many questions from me, and from others—and I think he did a good job in dealing with those questions.

The situation today is not the same. I do not know how many times I have to point out to my honourable friend that I am not a portfolio minister. For him to favour the house with this series of budgetary questions—which indeed should be part of a speech—really does not conform with the tradition of Question Period in this place.

**Senator Frith:** Oh, certainly it does. You have to try to get the answers.

**Senator Roblin:** I do my best to get the answers. When I get a good question, I will give a good answer.

**Senator Frith:** But that doesn't make his question out of order.

**Senator Roblin:** No one has said that the question is out of order. We know perfectly well that we have no order in this house when it comes to Question Period. None whatsoever. One can ask as many questions as one likes and as often as one likes, and we do not quit until people get tired of asking questions. There isn't even a time limit here.

**Senator Frith:** Exactly. Hear, hear!

**Senator Roblin:** We have one man who accepts the responsibility of doing what he can to answer questions, and I do not think I have ever backed away from that.

**Senator Frith:** Well—?

**Senator Roblin:** But I think the rule of reason has some place in the Senate and ought to be considered by members of this chamber.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Senator Gigantès:** I would appreciate it if the Honourable Leader of the Government took my questions under consideration and provided me with answers. Otherwise, in my humble opinion, honourable senators, we are in a very difficult situation, because the one minister we have says that he cannot answer the questions because he is not a portfolio minister, and he says he has not been given a portfolio, whereas—

**An Hon. Senator:** Get yourself elected to the House of Commons.

**Senator Gigantès:** —whereas senators from the Liberal Party, in a previous government, had portfolios.

It is not the fault of the members of this house that he does not hold a portfolio. Because the Leader of the Government in the Senate is not informed on matters to the point that he can give us answers to our questions, or because he himself is not willing to provide us with answers, is not to say that we do not have the right to ask questions.

Since we do have the right to ask questions, I should like the Leader of the Government to ask the officials of the government to consider the impact that Mr. Reagan's tax reform proposals—proposals which go in the opposite direction to ours—will have if adopted in conjunction with the proposals to be adopted in Canada.

**Senator Roblin:** I have to agree with my honourable friend that the fact that there is only one minister on this side of the