

*Economic Development*

when the Prime Minister first took office. These are some of the statistics.

The government's total debt is the equivalent of \$11,970 per taxpayer. That is just the debt. I am trying to give that hon. member these facts and statistics. In private industry, an enterprise with revenue which only equalled 76 per cent of expenditures and gross debt that was more than double the value of its net assets would be forced into receivership. However, the federal government cannot declare bankruptcy. It has no place to file. The Liberal government just borrows more and prints more, which only goes to feed inflation. Yet what is the Liberal administration considering at this point in time? Well, the Trudeau government is considering an end to the indexation of the personal income tax system. In fact the Liberals want us to pay for their financial sins. A typical taxpayer earning \$20,000 annually would see his taxes rise by \$1,564 between now and 1985, and lower income families would proportionately suffer even more.

And for what? For the exorbitant spending habits of the government. That is for what. For example, in 1978 the federal government spent \$7 million on food, booze and entertainment. That is almost \$20,000 per day. Expressed another way, that is the equivalent—and perhaps the hon. member will be interested in this—of 70,000 cases of liquor. The list goes on and on, and I will drop that part of my statement right now.

I just wanted to satisfy the hon. member, who came up with those ridiculous statements during his 20 minutes telling us that there is no concrete evidence to show the mismanagement of the Liberal administration and the fact that the Liberal administration has not developed any economic development programs. It has not. In fact I had hoped that after the Quebec referendum was over and the constitutional debate got under way, which it now is, the Liberal administration would settle down and begin to deal with economic problems. Although constitutional changes are necessary and important, it is my belief that the economy is still the number one concern of every Canadian, and I also believe that unless and until many economic problems and questions are resolved, regional differences are going to continue to grow regardless of how many constitutional debates are taking place.

But what happens? There has been no budget. A budget is the basis for an economic development program, but there has not been one. On April 21 there was a so-called mini-budget, and that mini-budget leaped beyond all precedents and denied members of Parliament the right to debate and amend the motion of approval required for tax measures, and although labelled as an economic statement by the Trudeau government, the proposed measures began taking money out of Canadians' pockets at midnight that same night.

Not only did hon. members opposite try to sneak in tax measures in a mere speech in reply to the throne speech, but the Liberals also attempted to short circuit the parliamentary process by not allowing a proper debate on what are clearly budget matters. A budget—even a mini one—demands debate, especially when it demonstrates a spendthrift direction in fiscal policy. What about the profound arrogance of the Liberals in

introducing tax measures which, for the most part, were identical to those on which they defeated the former government just a few months ago?

The mini budget was, however, consistent with the Liberal's political philosophy. First, it stole many of the measures introduced in the budget of the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), necessary tax amendments in which the Liberals had already indicated they had no confidence. Second, the Liberal document demonstrated a willingness to spend more and borrow more, as I have just stated, with no apparent concern for the consequences, and the new Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) cribbed some of the Progressive Conservative spending programs and ignored, on the other hand, the balancing revenue-producing and cutback measures. Third, the budget of the Minister of Finance broke the Prime Minister's campaign pledge not to increase the deficit.

The Liberal fiscal policy projected a \$14.2 billion deficit in 1980-81, an increase of 13 per cent over the projected deficit of the hon. member for St. John's West. In other words, it offered no help to farmers or small businessmen. It substantially increased government spending. It offered no help to home owners. It just stole some of the positive measures from the budget of the hon. member for St. John's West.

On a general basis, therefore, we can conclude very easily that there is no economic development program present right now or being considered for the future as far as we can see, as far as the Canadian public can see or, more important, as far as the Canadian businessman can see.

There are many areas which can no longer be overlooked. One of them is the ailing auto industry. Just to show the importance of the auto industry in Canada I will read a few paragraphs from a paper produced by the automotive parts industry in Canada. I quote:

The automotive industry is essential to Canada. The automotive industry has a significant economic history, having played a central role in the establishment of secondary industry in Ontario and the rest of Canada. There are over 120,000 workers directly employed in the automotive industry, over half of which are producing automotive parts. The automotive parts industry supports a great deal of employment indirectly by major purchases of goods and services and through the disbursement of income. It is estimated that the 120,000 industry jobs can be linked to another 520,000 workers in Ontario and 600,000 jobs in the rest of Canada.

The automotive industry supports one-third of the steel industry and a similar portion of the iron-ore industry. Plastic producers, aluminum casters, glass manufacturers and the specialty products industry are all dependent to a large degree on the industry. In addition, many Canadian cities are entirely dependent on the automotive industry and "live and die" according to the health of the industry.

The governments in Canada must recognize the importance of this sector in its economic framework and provide an environment in which the automotive industry can survive and compete in world markets.

That is from a Canadian automotive parts industry brief. Having said that, we have heard nothing specific, as evidenced by the minister's answers over the last few months—and I am glad he is in the House today—to questions from myself, from the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson) and from other colleagues. I personally have asked the minister to give up specifics on April 16 and 24, on May 5, 13 and 23, on June 25, and as recently as last week, and the minister has yet to