

The Budget—Mr. Mazankowski

the Corps informed the RCMP that they were no longer able to supply personnel for this purpose and the RCMP have made other temporary arrangements with Pinkerton.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question on this matter to the Solicitor General. I wonder if the Solicitor General can report to the House on whether the RCMP made an investigation into the background of the Pinkerton agency, particularly its labour relations, before engaging this agency to do this work?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I have been informed by the commissioner that after four calls for tenders the main angle for the RCMP was to consider human resources as well as security measures supplied to the RCMP for this control. Finally that company was selected as offering the best guarantees in this field.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

• (1500)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from Monday, May 15, consideration of the motion of Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance), that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West), (page 2178).

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in this debate may I congratulate, first of all, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) for the showmanship he displayed during the presentation of the budget and for the flurry of enthusiasm that went along with it. His display of enthusiasm covered many of the shortcomings of the budget. That, I suppose, is quite a tribute to the minister, since he appears to be a good salesman in his own right. His actions reminded me of the cliché one hears in sales circles. Salesmen say, "Do not sell the steak; sell the sizzle." Unfortunately, in this budget there is not much sizzle. On close examination we find that there is not much steak in it, either, for the average Canadian.

His statement that providing a job for every Canadian is his first and most urgent priority was indeed commendable. It was a bold statement and was one which I am sure every member of this House would support. That was supposed to be the characteristic by which the present Minister of Finance was to be distinguished from his predecessor. However, rather than take a positive approach and deal with the future, he spent a great deal of his time in his budget presentation in rambling, in defending the record of the government and in defending

[Mr. Basford.]

the record of the minister who previously occupied his portfolio. He blamed the state of the economy on unemployment, on rampant inflation, on everything and anything, from the so-called phenomenon of an above average participation rate in the labour force by too many young people, to too many women being in the labour force. Then, he went on to blame the economies of the United States, of the European Common Market and of Japan for many of the economic problems of Canada; yet nowhere in the budget speech was the minister bold enough to admit that our state of affairs has been caused in large part by the government itself, particularly by the previous minister of finance.

It is fairly well accepted that this government has failed to manage the economic affairs of this country in an efficient and effective way. Really, Mr. Speaker, when the government at the helm cannot operate even an effective postal service, there is little hope of its being able to run the economy of this nation.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: The service of the Post Office Department has deteriorated to such an extent that the provincial government of Alberta has been forced to set up its own mail delivery service. At least, it has entered into a contract with a private mail delivery service for the delivery of inter-government mail between Edmonton and Calgary. It has done that because of the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Post Office Department in carrying out its obligations.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Mazankowski: Today, I received a letter from a gentleman known as Fred Lonsdale Jr., who has offices at Lloydminster, Saskatchewan and Marshall, Saskatchewan. That letter reads, in part:

Our business interests involve mainly communications and we view with alarm our high postage bill, up 60 per cent in the past few years, seems only to have resulted in rapidly deterioration in service.

One part of our business, the Credit Bureau of Lloydminster, is making increasing use of TELEX as an alternative to the mails.

It might not be long before that business will be on DEX 1 eqpt., which similar to PHOTO FAX transmits a photo copy of documents over a telephone line in 1-6 minutes.

Time service by the post office department is bad enough but worse still is the unreliability.

We are also in the insurance business and as we cannot depend on the mails with last minute closing of construction bonds some of our clients simply have to drive bids and bonds to Edmonton or Saskatoon.

The 1903 ox cart was more reliable.

The letter is dated May 18, 1972.

Mr. Paproski: And today is the twenty-third; shame.

Mr. Mazankowski: I will be glad to send the Postmaster General (Mr. Côté) a copy of that letter and will be glad to hear the outcome of his investigation into circumstances surrounding the provincial government's decision—

Mr. Côté (Longueuil): Why is the hon. member waiting?