

Government Orders

economy are not available. Hardly an advertisement for federalism. We have seen better elsewhere.

If at least—for there is nothing in the budget that I find acceptable as far as transfers are concerned—there had been some sign of a real, not just a cosmetic, improvement. Even the financial community has issued a warning, saying that, in the first year, the government's rating was being maintained, but that it was being watched. But no real improvements were made. The big federal machine, the heartless federal machine that is cut off from the needs of Quebecers and Canadians, rolls on.

No departments are eliminated. There is a transfer of expenditures, of deficit responsibilities to the provinces. Because the minister lacked the courage to assume his own responsibilities, he is letting the provinces do the dirty work, but the system as such remains unchanged. The big, inefficient system is still in place. They will say that we disagreed with them. Not only did they not do anything, not only did they not fix anything, but they hurt the provinces, the most disadvantaged, the unemployed, the people on social assistance, and they are about to do the same to seniors.

I would have liked to address the issues of transportation, labour relations and the disgraceful layoffs in the public service. Again, we never said that we should not cut fat throughout the entire system. This has always been our policy, except that there is a way to do it while showing respect for the workers. It is easy to see, however, that this government has no respect for anything. It does not even comply with the Canada Labour Code. It tried to silence us in last week's debate on the rail dispute and refused an opposition motion for more civilized labour relations and a return to work with the possibility of collective bargaining.

If only for the issue of transfers, I would like to propose a motion. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Châteauguay:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following therefor:

"Bill C-76, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 1995, be not now read a second time but that it be read a second time this day six months hence."

In other words, the Minister of Finance should go back to the drawing board and do his homework, because he acted in a disgraceful way, even in trying to meet his goals some time in 1997-98.

• (1120)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The House has heard the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster.

Mr. Loubier: Madam Speaker, I tabled the motion, you read it and asked if we approved the motion. Some hon. members shouted "yes", others "no". I do not understand what happened after that. Can you tell me?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I asked if it was the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion. The answer was "no". So, we are resuming debate.

Mr. Loubier: No, Madam Speaker. We answered "yes".

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I will get back to you on this matter in two or three minutes, after taking advice. You may be right, but I would like to wait for further advice.

Mr. Loubier: Normally, Madam Speaker, one would expect the Chair, after putting the question to the House as a whole, to ask us to vote "yea" or "nay" and then, if you declared that the motion was negated, we would have stood up. But we were waiting for this cue to stand up.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I will get back to you in a moment.

• (1125)

Order. Resuming debate on the motion of the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, pursuant to Standing Order 67(1).

[English]

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Madam Speaker, it saddens me that we have to debate Bill C-76 today. This bill implements laws allowing the government to put Canadians another \$32.7 billion in debt. It saddens me even more that the government feels this is acceptable. It is not acceptable. It is a deplorable act of financial incompetence of a weak kneed government.

The government borrowed a few pages from Reform's taxpayers budget in order to cut spending in some areas. The Liberals only did half the job, however. They would have been much better off following all of our suggestions, not just a few select pages. A lot of the rhetoric was right, but a lot of the numbers were wrong.

Because of the Liberal's failure to make all of the necessary cuts to get Canada back on track to financial good health, we continue on the debt treadmill. The budget is the minimum possible budget. The Liberals cut only enough to compensate for the additional interest charges their over spending has created.

The net effect of the bill which implements a budget that creates a greater indebtedness is before us, and deficit financing continues into the future. The only reason the deficit goes down at all is that the Liberals plan to take over \$10 million more out of the economy.