

*The Budget—Mr. Andras*

debate on Dosco. Hon. members of the opposition advocated that the government take over Dosco. I also cite the debate on the estimates of the Department of Manpower and Immigration. In October the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) suggested that the government drop the three year provision in order that drop-outs might receive allowances during training.

I suggest to hon. members that all the projects I have cited are worthy projects and perhaps at some stage, they should all be undertaken. We must recognize nevertheless that they carry a considerable price tag. On that ground, if on none other, I claim that the opposition has shown inconsistency by, on the one hand, demanding government expenditures and, on the other hand, criticizing the government for its so-called profligate spending.

**Mr. Sharp:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Andras:** The opposition's inconsistency is epitomized by the two positions that the Leader of the Opposition has adopted. On one occasion he used words to this effect. "Mr. Speaker, I think anybody who suggests that you can cut down on government spending or offer a substantial reduction in taxes is not being very realistic; but any government can control the rate in the increase in expenditures." That seems to have been a realistic assessment, and it is all the more surprising that, having expressed this common sense attitude, the Leader of the Opposition should depart from that position a few days later.

I ask this question of the opposition: What further cuts in government spending does it recommend? Let us not have generalities; let us have specific proposals. What programs that have been approved by this parliament—and many of them have been approved by the majority of members of the house—would the opposition eliminate, reduce or postpone?

The government has listed the programs that are to be eliminated, reduced or postponed, and every member of this house or every member of the public can readily learn what those programs are. If the opposition wishes to act responsibly, let its members have the courage to set forth, in clear and precise terms, what programs ought to be eliminated, in addition to those which the government has eliminated, reduced or postponed. I suggest that during this debate all

hon. members had the opportunity to consider what they wanted to say. Let the opposition say in clear terms, what are the alternatives that it boasts about. Let the criticisms not be vague and general, but let them be specific and detailed.

It seems to me that with the spate of words which flow from this place—words which are often biased and inaccurate, with inaccuracies often being compounded by superficial and biased reporting—we are building a mountain of misunderstanding in the minds of the Canadian public. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, this could start a disastrous landslide some day, and that could destroy this country.

**An hon. Member:** We are well on the way.

**Mr. Andras:** I sometimes wonder about our technique of debate in this house. We espouse what is known as the adversary system of debate. Essentially the theory is that merely because the other fellow, in another party, sits on the opposite side of the house, he is all wrong. From then on the debate deteriorates into a shouting match. Skill in debate, nice turns of speech and the manoeuvring for press publicity outweigh such considerations as the truth of facts and the need for objective, responsible and balanced thinking.

• (8:40 p.m.)

May I now refer specifically to taxes. Tax increases at any time are unpopular. Let me quote from the introduction by Mr. C. E. Forget to a study he was called upon to make for the royal commission on taxation. He says:

The paying of taxes has never been considered a pleasure. Most taxpayers in most countries feel most of the time that they are worse off than their equals were and are elsewhere. They are inclined to strengthen their belief with odd bits of information from abroad, gathered at random.

There are many taxpayers in this country who feel they are bearing a heavy burden in comparison with that borne by taxpayers in other nations. This is not correct, it would appear from an examination of the figures; and I believe that as parliamentarians we should, regardless of party, try to get the facts across to the people. In the course of this study the author stresses the difficulty of making accurate comparisons between taxation levels because of differences between taxation systems in various parts of the world.