

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): Would the hon. member for Témiscamingue allow me a question?

Mr. Caouette: Certainly.

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): After the statement that the leader of the Social Credit has just made—a most interesting statement by the way—I wonder what would happen if the municipalities which, at the present time, spend about \$800 million, or some \$200 million, on social welfare, were told by the federal government: As of tomorrow, we will administer all social security programs, and this will cost us \$14, \$15 or \$20 billion; and then, the provinces and municipalities will have no say in the matter. I wonder how the provincial and municipal autonomy could be reconciled with such an interference by the central power?

Mr. Caouette: Frankly, I do not think there would be any discussion or debate. The provinces, of course, would not accept this scheme without discussion, but if we want for Canada as a whole a scheme which would succeed in reaching each individual, I think that it would be advisable for the provinces and municipalities to come to an understanding with the federal authorities in order to establish a single scheme for Canada. Moreover, I do not think that this would prevent Quebec from being Quebec or Ontario from remaining Ontario. We would have a comprehensive plan which would be less costly to finance than different schemes, that is one for each province. Such is my opinion and that of my colleagues. I understand that we—

Mr. Jacques-L. Trudel (Montréal-Bourassa): Would the hon. member for Témiscamingue allow me a question?

• (9:20 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that the hon. member for Témiscamingue makes this speech and blames us for not accepting his ideas or not listening carefully to what he is saying in the House.

The last time he made it, Mr. Speaker, I asked him a question. He told me that he had not managed to figure out the cost of the programs he was advocating. I wonder if he would be willing now to give the answer I was asking him then?

Mr. Caouette: I have just given that answer, Mr. Speaker. We are spending at the present time \$14,903,000,000, and with just about \$15 billion, we could apply the system I am advocating. So it comes to about the same thing.

An. hon. Member: Just about \$15 billion?

Mr. Caouette: Just about \$15 billion dollars, yes. At the present time, we are spending \$14,903,000,000, which is not very far from \$15 billion, but even if there were a difference of about \$2 or \$3 billion this year, we had to go to financial institutions in order to get \$1.7 billion. And the Prime Minister told us that if we did not have enough, we would find more. And that billion dollars did not exist in Canada. It is a deficit that the government simply and purely created. We did not take it out of the pockets of the people. And they are ready to create another deficit.

I am asking a very simple question: Should war break out tomorrow, and should we have to take part in it, the

government would not ask if there were enough money. We would find all the millions and billions of dollars that would be necessary for the war.

Why are we not doing the same thing to establish a peace system at home, a social security system that would allow everybody to feel at home? It seems to me that it is easy to understand.

An hon. Member: The poor man!

Mr. Caouette: Now, Mr. Speaker, there is—

An hon. Member: That is socialism!

Mr. Caouette: No, that is not socialism. We are not against private enterprise; on the contrary, we encourage it.

We do not intend to scuttle private enterprise.

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the hon. member in order to clarify a figure which he quoted a moment ago. In fact, he said that the federal government is now spending about \$7 billion—that is 50 per cent of its total budget of \$14 billion—on social benefits of all sorts. Could we have more detail to support the figure of \$7 billion? The hon. member is certainly in possession of that information.

Mr. Caouette: Yes, I can give that information to the hon. member.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) but I feel that hon. members are straying considerably from the subject under debate. While his remarks are very interesting, I say with respect that the hon. member for Témiscamingue is straying from the subject matter. We have before us an amendment to the motion for third reading which in effect would delay the coming into effect of some parts of the bill. As this is the matter under debate, I invite hon. members to stay fairly close to that subject.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking for a breakdown and I can meet this request since I have all the necessary figures.

Federal expenditures for social security for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1971, including National Health and Welfare—not including the transfer payments to the provinces—old age insurance, allowances for the blind or the disabled, family allowances, social assistance, unemployment insurance and medicare, amount to \$2,359,534,000. Subtracting from this amount the administrative costs for the Food and Drug Directorate and the Amateur Sport program amounting to \$23 million, the balance is \$2,335,791,000.

The non-budgetary operations: old age security fund: \$914 million; Canada Pension Fund: \$1,024 million; unemployment insurance fund: \$771 million; other accounts—annuities, insurance and pensions for federal civil servants, armed forces, members of Parliament, members of the Senate, Royal Canadian mounted Police, \$999 million. Total: \$7,043,791,000.