

Government Orders

to make sure the needy are well looked after when it comes to our welfare system. We have put together their thoughts.

I doubt if anyone sitting over there even took time to read it. After all, that did not come from a Liberal, so why look at it. It cannot be any good if it does not come from a Liberal. For the past nine years before the Liberals came it was not any good if it did not come from a Conservative. Before that it was not any good if it did not come from a Liberal. We play this silly game year after year. We all say we need to do something different.

I have not seen anything different; different name, different faces but the same old Tories, same old stories. Nothing has changed.

• (1735)

Mr. Harris: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. While the hon. member for Wild Rose was speaking about the government hearing the message of the people, asking why it was not hearing the right message, the hon. member for Halifax made the comment "because people in the east are smarter". This is an affront to western Canadians—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, that is a point of debate and not a point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me, in the next few minutes, to speak to—

Madam Speaker, would it be possible to have quiet?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Order!

Mr. Rocheleau: Madam Speaker, as I was saying, it is a pleasure for me to speak to Bill C-76, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 1995. Ultimately, in practical terms, the purpose of this bill is to modify certain legislation, following the tabling of the budget with its sometimes devastating consequences.

As I examined this bill, my attention was caught, in particular, by some of the legislation affected, including the first part on public sector compensation, where we can see the results of the government's consistency. If this bill is passed, 45,000 federal public servants will eventually lose their jobs, and yet you will recall, Madam Speaker, that "jobs, jobs, jobs" were what the red book promised.

The ideology continues to be the same. Faced with labour relations problems last week, the government did not hesitate to impose back-to-work legislation on workers who wanted to avail themselves of their right to strike, but who did not even have the time to do so, having first been locked out and then,

twelve hours later, legislated back to work. Sometimes, this government is only too consistent.

I also noted that the Western Grain Transportation Act will be adjusted, and yet we know that following the abolition of these subsidies in the West, there will be compensation of three billion dollars, while subsidies to Quebec dairy producers will be cut by 30 per cent, with no mention of compensation. We realize that the member for Brome-Missisquoi will not be leading the protest.

Finally, of course, there is the main body of this budget, which announces cuts in transfers to the provinces over the next three years of \$7 billion, including \$2.5 billion—around 40 per cent—in cuts to the Quebec government. Quebec, with only 25 per cent of the population, will assume 40 per cent of the cuts. And this is consistent too, not just for this government, but for the entire Canadian federal system.

It is consistent because, if one looks at the figures since 1982, Quebec has been cut \$14.3 billion over 12 years. In other words, the government of Quebec, regardless of which party was in power, averaged cuts of over a billion dollars. It is no wonder that the impact of these perverse cuts is being felt in education and health and throughout the system. One only has to think about the community organizations that face repeated cuts resulting from this system based on concealment, on shifting the burden to the provinces and on irresponsibility.

They may laugh, especially since they come from Quebec and have just been elected. Some have not yet realized it. Some people are slower than others. All these cuts and those to come are to be implemented without any changes in Quebecers' tax rates. Quebecers will continue to send between \$28 billion and \$30 billion to Ottawa. For over a decade, we have seen that compensation in the form of subsidies and tax transfers is steadily declining, while Quebecers' tax rates are being maintained.

• (1740)

In this regard, it is sad that these cuts are being implemented on the backs of the most disadvantaged in our society, that is, patients in hospitals, the unemployed, welfare recipients, retirees and seniors. We feel that these people are being sacrificed because of an administrative choice, a societal choice, an ideological choice made by this government. My colleague, the hon. member for Laurentides, talked about this earlier. In light of the finance minister's situation, it is difficult to make different choices.

I am very happy about the movement that was born in my riding last week, which is going to sweep across Quebec. This proposal by the Trois-Rivières chapter of Solidarité Québec will be put to all of Quebec through Solidarité populaire Québec, a movement that will result in a national Quebec petition calling for a commission of inquiry on taxation. I want