

Supply

Let us discuss things, if we are going to discuss things in this House of Commons, along factual lines. We are all to blame for spending getting out of control. It is out of control still when we look at the helicopter purchase. It is out of control still when we look at the federal deficit, which is almost \$500 billion.

When we talk about free trade it is almost like the weather because it is there, it has been voted and we have it. If it is raining or if it is shining, one side or the other always tries to blame the other for that particular meteorological phenomenon.

If it is raining, if we are losing money, it is free trade. If it is shining you can be sure that if the economy has a little blip where it goes up, the Conservatives are going to say: "You see how good a deal our free trade arrangement was".

I do not think Canadians are buying this argument. I do not think Canadians watching the motion being debated today are particularly happy to see the bantering back and forth where the Liberals are saying you guys are incompetent and the Conservatives are saying you Liberals are incompetent. The message it sends to the people who elected us is that both political parties are incompetent. They are the ones who have managed the public purse for the past some 30 years where most people remember the economy just going into the pits.

Think of the message that we are sending to the people who have elected us. The Liberals are calling the Conservatives no good, the Conservatives are calling the Liberals even worse. What is the solution?

An hon. member: Vote NDP.

Mr. Edmonston: No, I am not necessarily saying vote NDP. I think you have to look at the facts. There is something which must come out and it is this. There are three provincial NDP governments, that is true. Those governments have been hit by the cupboard being bare, by what I would call disingenuous rhetoric from the other parties saying: "Oh well, the cupboard is bare, we did not say it during the election but that is what happened. You are the new government. Do something with it".

I am going to ask the Canadian people to do this. Look at how well our governments are going to do provincially.

I think they are going to do very well even though they have been asked to run a marathon with what I would call lead Reeboks because the recession and the over-spending of the governments provincially have given a good opportunity for the NDP to show what it can do as a good government.

I think things will work out in Saskatchewan. They will work out in Ontario and I think they will work out in British Columbia.

• (1325)

It shows that contrary to what most people believe when they think of the Conservatives as excellent money managers or the Liberals as almost as good money managers, they are the chief architects of the terrible situation of unemployment we find, of the number of people on welfare and of the bankruptcies. They are the chief architects of this situation that we find ourselves in right now.

I do not think any one particular party has a monopoly on the culpability for what has happened. We are all responsible, but our party, the NDP, has a unique chance to prove what it can do when the going gets rough. I think we are going to do that. As we go on, probably in the next year or so, particularly with what is going on in the United States, the economic climate is going to improve somewhat. We are going to be able to have a chance to do the best with what we get, and I think we are going to be getting a better economy.

When we are talking about the situation as it is right now, and what we can do to improve it, the obvious thing is to cut spending. That means thinking the unthinkable. It means looking at universality closely. It means shifting and refocusing money perhaps from one sector, senior citizens, to another sector, youth. Those are hard decisions. We are going to have to look at bilingualism and how much we are paying for it. We are going to have to think the unthinkable, not along party lines but along common sense lines.

While we are talking about the Triple E Senate; equal, elected and—I am trying to think of the other E.

An hon. member: Efficient.

Mr. Edmonston: I am sorry. Efficient, yes. Efficiency was forgotten a long time ago. However we should look more closely at a Triple E government in which we concentrate on education, the environment and, above all, the economy. That is the Triple E that we have to concentrate upon. So stop blaming each other and let us