

To get back to the tax issue, it is a fact that Canadians, especially middle-class Canadians, feel nobody is listening any more. They feel the government only represents corporate interests and ignores their daily concerns. This lack of confidence is extremely dangerous in a country that calls itself progressive. The day will come when Canadians "will not take it any more".

• (1610)

And what will happen in the end? People will be so discouraged and fed up that here in the House of Commons we may end up with any number of parties with extremist views on the way the country should be run, and we will have a real problem. When people feel they have been sold out, extremists become more powerful. This is a very disturbing prospect.

Our leader said in very simple terms, merely expressing the desire of all Canadians, that an election should be called as soon as possible to put an end to the concern and lack of confidence in this country.

[*English*]

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, I should say that it is going to be fun to take part in this debate today. It has been an interesting debate. It is one that I have waited for and anticipated in the last few minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I want to have some indication if your party will split its time.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I am more than willing to use 20 minutes in debate, but I have agreed to split with my colleague to my right. We will be doing that so I will use 10 minutes.

I think the opposition parties are having some fun with this debate today. I was looking forward to taking part in it.

The motion itself calls upon the government to call an election. How many Canadians can sort through that motion? I contend that most Canadians can sort through that motion because in debate today with the hon. member from Broadview—Greenwood I mentioned that the fundamentals are there in terms of the economy.

Supply

This government is doing and has done what has had to be done since it was elected, particularly since 1988. One of the things I am fond of saying, and I say it with great sincerity, is that we are the first generation of politicians that has not been able to go back home to their ridings and sort of make it right with a chequebook.

We have had to face some difficult realities in this country, and this government has done that. We will never be able to buy our way into power as the opposition parties were so successful in doing throughout the sixties, seventies and very early eighties. The Canadian public will not buy that any more.

What conceived this motion, I contend, is really the accusation that our agenda is going to pay political dividends at the end of the day. I will be the first to argue and support the idea that this is not so. We have had to go through some very difficult things and we have had to accept some glaring realities as a government.

One of those glaring realities is that we have a mountain of debt that is creating some real problems and we had to do something about them. We have had to do a couple of things that were very distasteful.

The first thing is that we had to take a look at the revenue side. If we want to take a look at taxation, some of the new taxes and some of the things that we have had to do on the revenue side, it has been very distasteful. None of us liked having to support a new system of taxation, specifically the GST.

On the expenditure side, we have had to take a real hard look at spending as a government. None of us wanted to do that either because that does not make us real popular back home. Those are some of the things that we have had to do, and we have done them. I think they are going to pay dividends at the end of the day.

Over and above that, we have done a number of other things which are beginning to create a sense of confidence. We have mentioned some of those things in the House today, one of them being the fact that interest rates are at a 20-year low, as is inflation. Those are some of the indicators that investors want to see when they decide whether they are going to invest in our country or in some other country. It is a known fact that today foreign investment in this country is at an all-time high