

Allotment of Time for Bill C-11

presented by my colleague, the hon. member for Rimouski (Mr. Allard) of the Social Credit Party, was that the amount be increased to \$400. The \$400 would give the ordinary workingman a break, which he does not get now as does the regular businessman who can deduct anything he can think of, and even things he cannot think of but his accountant can think of for him so that he can get maximum benefits. I think the ordinary workingman should also be given that additional break.

These are the reasons we feel this bill is important and should be debated at length on behalf of all the people of Canada, and that is why I take exception to closure at this time. I hope the amendments to be proposed by us will be accepted by the government. We will not need three days of debate if the government will agree to the common sense suggestions made from this side of the House.

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I do not believe it is a good thing that closure has been imposed again, because I think the economic situation in Canada is worse now than it has been for many years and we need to debate measures such as the one before us. The fact that the government is cutting off debate on this bill indicates, probably, that it is not willing to face up to what lies ahead.

We find that the United States has just come out of a recession and they are discussing what efforts should be made to improve the economy. Their problems are big; their foreign trade deficit stands at \$30 billion. Let us see how their situation compares with our economic situation in Canada. The United States will run a foreign trade deficit this year of \$30 billion, with oil imports alone costing about \$45 billion, as compared with Canada's \$5 billion. Their trade deficit is relatively twice as big if we take into account that Canada's growth rate is only half of theirs, and our inflation rate is two points higher. Certainly we should discuss our economic problems in the House.

Let us consider what the minister himself said not long ago in the province of Quebec. He said that there is a loss of population in Quebec, business is moving out of the province, there is a faster growth of unemployment in Quebec than in most other parts of Canada, and Quebec has one of the poorest records for increased investment and higher rates of interest abroad. In an article which appeared in the *Financier*, a journal of financial affairs directed at top U.S. businessmen, it was pointed out that if Quebec separates, businessmen may find that their loans are being repaid in worthless Quebec dollars, supported by a nation without reserves, burdened by chronic domestic and external foreign payments problems, recognized by few, if any, foreign nations. These are some of the problems we have.

The budget was brought down six months ago, but times have altered drastically since then. Economic changes are coming on fast. We have a higher rate of unemployment, and an increasing budget deficit which has to be met by borrowing. We are borrowing at a rate comparable to the rate during the Second World War, in relative terms. A similar situation prevailed in the 1920s and the early part of the 1930s. Anyone

[Mr. Darling.]

who has read the record will recognize that at that time bankers and politicians were saying that the economy was fundamentally sound, yet the country was plunged into a depression.

Bringing down a budget is more difficult now than it was a few years ago. Then it was a simple revenue-raising device. Now it has come to be recognized as a major weapon by which the government carries out its fiscal, economic and social responsibilities. In recent years the government has been involved to a great extent in social problems. Everyone is complaining—particularly those involved in accounting and those making business decisions—that they are not aware of what the government is doing. Accountants and businessmen will tell you that they read avidly debates in the House of Commons carried on by members of parliament who are not necessarily the most expert financiers in the world; but, say the businessmen, they demonstrate what the government is thinking and they represent what various members have in mind when they present their arguments for and against a particular tax change.

I find that tax accountants in particular would like to have a record of the debates in the House of Commons because it indicates to them what the government has in mind, and questioning of the government brings out what may flow from a certain tax change. It is certainly true that what we pass in the House in the way of regulations is developed by senior civil servants, and these regulations are often very difficult to understand.

May I call it five o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment at 10 p.m. are as follows: the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie)—Unemployment Insurance—Reason for eliminating fraud squad—Possibility of reinstatement; the hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington)—Northern Affairs—Exceeding of departmental appropriation—Possibility of disciplinary action; the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Hnatyshyn)—Federal Provincial Relations—Meeting of resource ministers—Discussion of ownership and taxation of resources.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, notices of motions, public bills.