

ment is spending about \$3.5 billion, and more likely \$4 billion. In addition, the rate of contribution on the part of employers and employees has more than doubled. This is no longer an insurance plan but a grandiose scheme brought in by the Liberals, who are now paying for their sins.

When votes cease to be important they will no longer be bought by the Grits, and that boils down the present situation. This government has presented these schemes without any thought about administration, without the basis of any business experience, and is now faced with uncontrollable costs. This government cannot even control the costs that are controllable. Spending by this government is now out of hand. This government's philosophy is to spend, spend, spend; and tax, tax, tax. The philosophy of this government today is not to tax the people for services but to tax the people because the Liberals think it is right that they should be taxed. The quantum that is paid does not matter. They will pay either from their income or their profits. That is then passed on to the consumer. It becomes a vicious circle. This is what created the economic mess we are in today.

● (2040)

That is an example of the credibility we are talking about when we ask the government to cut down the extravagance now and set aside some of its ideas about grandiose schemes. The government should cut down on those expenses which are still controllable. I know one thing—the President of the Treasury Board has never read a speech of mine in which I asked the government to spend more. We are not saying the government should cut out all expenses. We are saying, however, that it should spend the taxpayers' money wisely with proper constraint.

Mr. Harquail: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I was under the impression that today is an opposition day. I am wondering where the members of the official opposition are. I see about six Conservatives in the House. I am wondering where the Conservatives are today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): Order please.

Mr. Paproski: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, may I say that I detest that type of statement from a new member in this chamber when other members are attending committee meetings. I think that it is a shame that a new member should make such a statement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): Many members of this House serve on committees. I suggest that the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) carry on.

Mr. Woolliams: Thank you very much. I have never had so much help when making a speech and I appreciate the support I am getting. However, I should like to answer that. There is one thing that has been said in this House which bears repeating for the benefit of a new member. When one goes out big-game hunting one does not follow rabbit tracks.

Mr. Harquail: Who is the rabbit?

Government Spending

An hon. Member: You are. You have a lot to learn, sonny.

Mr. Woolliams: We ask the government what the deficit will be. We predict that it will be more than \$7,000,000,000. It might be up to \$8,000,000,000. The government will not, as the hon. member for Peace River has said, bring in its supplementary estimates until it has attempted to get its anti-inflation program rammed through the committee by the 11th or 12th of November. That is where our members are at the present time. They are fighting a battle for the taxpayers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired. The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar.

Mr. Woolliams: How much time have I had, Mr. Speaker? I started at 8:30.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): You are allotted 20 minutes, sir, and have spoken for 20 minutes.

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I rise with some modest trepidation after the wonderful and perceptive speech given by my hon. friend and colleague from Calgary North. I feel that anything I may add will be a little anti-climatic. On the other hand I do wish to make a contribution to this particular debate. I wish to voice some concerns and opinions I have with respect to the government's policy concerning the whole question of spending, and lack of control and restraint in that area.

One of the features of the so-called program of the government to fight inflation as represented by the white paper tabled in the House by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) is an obvious lack of enthusiasm with respect to any sort of meaningful policy of restraint in the area of government expenditures.

Some three pages of the white paper are devoted to government expenditure policies largely for the purpose of justifying the increase in government spending and the present level of expenditure. There is an admission that federal government expenditures have risen at a greater rate than that at which the economy has grown, but then it is pointed out that the rising trend has not been unique to the federal level of government, and that a very large proportion of federal government expenditure is under the statutory programs and other arrangements where there is little flexibility.

The bankruptcy of initiative in this most important area of restraint, if we are to have any realistic program to control inflation, as confirmed by the statement made by the Minister of Finance that there is little scope for the government to reduce expenditures. All I can say to that type of approach is that there is a certain touch of lunacy in the proposition when on the one hand the government is attempting to introduce severe limitations on the working men and women of this country, many of whom can scarcely afford the basic necessities of life, and on the other hand it adopts a rather cavalier approach to any suggestion of restraint on its own expenditures.