

Private Members' Business

ment must get out of this vicious circle. The way to do it is to show fiscal responsibility and not monetary excess.

Mr. René Soetens (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to speak on Bill C-21, and particularly as it is known as the debt servicing and reduction account act. I am sorry that you did not recognize me, Mr. Speaker, when it was time for questions for the previous speaker because I was going to ask him if this was the same House of Commons that I was elected to in 1988 and was I a Conservative and was it a Liberal that I was hearing speak? Is it true that he is a member of the Liberal caucus? I thought I heard an awful lot of things being said which would almost suggest to me that somehow this House had flipped over, that I was sitting on the opposition side, as a Liberal, and I was listening to a Conservative speak. It shocked me tremendously. I will not deal with prior to 1988. I was not a member of this House prior to 1988. I know that in the 1984-88 period neither was the member who just spoke. I will not refer to the record when he was in the House because that is not fair in the 1980-84 period.

I want to refer to the two and a half years almost that he and I have shared this Chamber. He said that the government has failed to reduce expenditures significantly. I think I heard him say that. I heard him say that there are serious disadvantages to raising revenues to reduce the deficit versus expenditure cuts. He wanted the government to demonstrate austerity.

My question to him, which I realize he now cannot answer, is how did he vote when the government restricted transfer payments? How did he vote when the government restricted VIA Rail transfers? How did he vote when we cut CBC? How did he vote when we closed the base in Prince Edward Island among other places? How did he vote when we restricted foreign aid packages? How did he vote when we froze government operations for the last year? Most importantly, today, how did he vote when we decided to pass a bill dealing with the Public Service Alliance of Canada?

I do not recall today him standing up voting the same way I did. He must have either not been here or, I am sorry, I do not know whether he was here or not. But if he stood up and voted with his party, then does his party totally ignore everything he is saying? Does he have no influence on that party because they have voted against everything that we have done to deal with what he says is

the government's failure to reduce expenditures significantly.

• (1900)

Maybe he voted against it because we did not cut enough. Is that what I heard him say? Did he want us to cut further? I would like to speak on the debt reduction fund, and I realize I have a problem. I am out of time. I will be back here Friday morning, and I hope the member is back to ask me some questions when I next rise to speak.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): It being 7 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(6), the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR ROYAL COMMISSION ON PRICES

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of establishing a Royal commission on prices to examine allegations of excessively high prices of various consumer goods and services in Canada as compared to other jurisdictions and which would include considerations of such factors as costs generated by distribution mechanisms, excessive mark-ups at various levels, differential pricing, economies of scale, interest rates and the exchange rate of the dollar.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it should be quite evident that what has provoked this motion has been the vast increase in cross-border shopping which has affected many communities in Canada.

In Windsor, for example, it has been calculated that the city of Windsor will lose something of the order of \$100 million a year to its retailers and quite a considerable number of jobs. In fact, if one goes down the main street of Windsor, one will find that something of the order of one-third of our retailers are closed or in the process of closing. Some of them have been replaced by other businesses that do not operate in the same market that relates to cross-border shopping.