

Let me refer to the original Throne Speech in 1980 in which it was said: "My government will reduce the federal deficit in a planned and orderly manner". When that was said the deficit was approximately \$11 billion. Today it is approximately \$33 billion. That is an example of the lack of foresight and planning shown by the Government for many years.

When I go back to my riding I am continually confronted by people in my constituency office who are unemployed. These include people who have been employed for up to 25 years of their working lives. They have held steady jobs and never even thought that they would end up on social assistance or welfare. Today these people are coming into my office to ask what in God's name has happened and why it has happened to them in a country where God has blessed us with so many resources.

Why has this happened when we are the most blessed country in the world? It has happened because of the lack of foresight of the present Government. This is a Government which would rather bamboozle, flim-flam and look after Liberal back-benchers and their supporters across the country with its pork barrelling. As its own Party is beginning to recognize, the Government would rather manipulate than listen to people at the grassroots level in Canada.

We have seen what has happened in the Department of National Revenue and the income tax services it provides to Canadians. We have set up a system of taxation in Canada which is self-assessing. This means that Canadians have agreed, through legislation, to assess their own incomes and determine how much money will go to the Department of National Revenue. While the Department certainly has an obligation to send out auditors to ensure that all Canadians are paying their fair share, it has come out very clearly in the House what is happening in the country.

It has been revealed that auditors are given a quota. I can think of one specific case of a young man, approximately 25 years old, who was appointed an auditor for a certain sector. He has entered my riding with a quota of a certain amount of money in the community that he must reassess. In this case it was approximately \$1 million. The main criterion for whether he is doing his job properly is if he is meeting that quota. People who have an understanding of a quota system may not be too alarmed by it until they see what the next step is. Once a taxpayer is reassessed he cannot file an objection to that reassessment unless he pays it in full. I know of one case of a reassessment of \$12,000. This reassessment of the individual which was carried out by the tax auditor dates back to 1972. The individual in question said that he disagreed with it and felt that it was absolutely wrong. The Department told him that his taxes were now due and payable immediately or it would garnishee his wages.

The individual could not afford to pay so he literally sat down with the auditors of the Department and offered to pay it off at \$250 a month, an amount he could afford. Having done that, of course, he has admitted that the tax is due and payable to the Government even though he disagrees with it. He did not have the \$12,000 to pay the Department up front. The auditor has that \$12,000 credited to his quota even though

no follow up is done to determine whether that assessment is valid. It is still credited to his quota.

I would like to continue after lunch, Mr. Speaker. May I call it one o'clock?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

THE ECONOMY

FINANCIAL PLIGHT OF FARMERS

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, for the past several months, federal cabinet ministers have been jetting across the country informing the masses that the worst recession since the Depression is over. In a speech to the Canadian Club of Toronto, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) said:

In 1984, Canada will move, in terms of economic growth and employment, from the period of recovery to a period of expansion. Having recovered lost growth and jobs, Canadians will begin to make significant new gains.

Clearly these kinds of statements show once again how completely the Liberal Party is out of touch with the suffering and hardship that exist throughout the country.

For the past several weeks, while I have been working in my constituency offices in Timiskaming, I have had dozens of farmers come and see me about the dire financial straits in which they find themselves. High interest rates, coupled with the fact that more and more farmers are having tremendous difficulty securing short-term loans to help them over troubled times, proves the Government's optimism is ill founded.

Ministers of the Crown insist on parading across the country proudly boasting about how the recession is now behind us. Perhaps the figures indicate that the recession is behind us, but the results of poor government planning and forecasting have left the farmers with virtually no hope for their share of the promised prosperity.

I urge the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) to speak up once and for all in cabinet and tell his colleagues that the after effects of the recession can still be felt by farmers.

Mr. Speaker: I regret that I must interrupt the Hon. Member and inform him that his time has expired.