

Effect of Budgetary Proposals

paign, which members on the government side did not listen to either.

I see it is six o'clock, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps we should adjourn.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Fraser: Mr. Speaker, before the dinner recess I was directing some remarks to members of the government and other hon. members. The point of my remarks was that there has been continual discussion among hon. members on the government side, and among some who are not on the government side, about the significance of votes of confidence in this House. What members of the government should bear in mind, however, is that votes of confidence in this House should not be substituted in the mind of any honest man for the idea that the country as a whole has confidence in the government.

Before dinner I went to some pains to read evidence from the press and elsewhere to indicate that the country has no confidence in this government as far as economic and fiscal matters are concerned, and despite what has taken place in this House in connection with votes of confidence based on a short-term, or perhaps even a long-term hope of survival by other parties, we should not forget there is substantial evidence that the country does not possess confidence in the economic policies of the government. The final item to which I referred appeared in the *Toronto Star*. Only mandatory controls, the writer told us, could now bring costs and prices under control. The *Toronto Star* may not be a paper the government wants to hear from. It changed its politics during the election.

Mr. Hellyer: It was utterly disillusioned.

Mr. Fraser: My hon. friend says it was utterly disillusioned. This paper put the interests of the country ahead of its political loyalty. During the last two months there has been considerable evidence that a number of members of this House are not prepared to put the interests of the country ahead of their own political survival. Sadly, this applies to members on both sides of the House—and I exclude my own party when I say this.

To continue in the same vein, on February 26 the *Financial Times* had something to say about the government's understanding of economic matters. The article reads:

Finance department officials admit it is almost impossible to say what the labour force growth will be during the coming year.

Officials say that assuming there is no increase in the participation rate and assuming that economic growth actually produces the number of jobs Mr. Turner says it will, then unemployment could be reduced to an average of 5.2 per cent for 1973. It seems to be a big "if".

[Mr. Fraser.]

Is this evidence of confidence in the government? On February 20, 1973, the *Montreal Star* carried an article under the heading "Sleight-of-mouth proposals". Then our own party had a chance to say what the Progressive Conservatives would do if we had introduced the budget. There was a lot of hooting and hollering, but let me give an example of the kind of support forthcoming in the country for the propositions we advanced. Basically, our submission was this: we need an expansionary economy kept in check by wage and price controls, preceded by a temporary freeze. The *Toronto Star* of February 24 had this to say:

Progressive Conservative finance critic James Gillies has finally got hold of the real formula for reducing the current unacceptable level of unemployment in this country: expand the economy and impose controls to deal with the consequent threat of inflation.

In Vancouver, the third biggest city in this country, the *Vancouver Sun*, which supported the government in the election, said in an editorial which appeared on February 24, 1973:

The public will now hold the minority Liberal government totally responsible for continuing inflation in Canada.

The official opposition very cleverly put the government on the spot yesterday by calling for a wage-price freeze of 60 to 90 days, followed by temporary controls.

In the first and largest city in Canada, the *Gazette* said on February 26:

The Progressive Conservatives have the makings of an effective and positive attack on government economic policy in James Gillies' first speech as financial critic for his party.

The article goes on to refer to the "widely-heard criticism that Turner's expansionary policy was not strong enough in view of the level of unemployment." I must say I was interested to see that the Minister of Finance was reported in this morning's *Gazette* as saying:

I don't think there is the necessary consensus to bring in controls now. We would need such a consensus before we could bring in controls which would work.

I suggest hon. members on the other side should ask themselves one common sense question. They said they had a contingency plan. Did they expect to bring in that plan when there was a consensus, or to bring it in when they had decided in their own minds that there was a need for it? I say to the Minister of Finance that it is up to him to tell the Canadian people, without any more equivocation, whether he is in favour of a system of wage and price controls or not. Or is he, as seems to be the case from this statement, just sitting around and waiting until people come to him as delegations or through some sort of cosmic association and say there is now a consensus in the country? This party believes that there is a need for this in an expansionary budget and we will not wait to find out whether there is a consensus. This party is prepared to put leadership into the government of Canada, which is exactly what this country has needed and is what the people want.

• (2010)

Let me tell hon. friends to my extreme left, and I do so gently but with sincerity, what the president of the Canadian Labour Congress, Donald MacDonald, said when he met with the government yesterday. As reported