

is necessary to balance your budget, for instance if you buy capital assets such as a house or a car. I agree that occasionally, it may be necessary to take out a loan, but in that case, it has to be planned in terms of repayment over a certain number of years. I would have liked to ask the former Minister of Finance before September 4 how he intended to reimburse our cumulative deficit of \$180 billion. They did not talk about that. It would have been interesting to hear what kind of answer they would have given me. We have reached the point, Mr. Speaker, where we have to borrow to pay the grocery bill. For every dollar we spend in Canada we have to borrow nearly thirty-five cents. It does not make sense. It was and is the duty of the new Government and that of the Official Opposition and the other Party, to support the Government in its sincere endeavour to gradually reduce this horrendous deficit. There is no other way out. There is no easy way out. We have to take the bull by the horns, as the Quebec Minister of Finance said so eloquently this week, when he congratulated us on the responsible action being taken by the Progressive Conservative Government.

Mr. Speaker, the previous Government has accustomed the people of Quebec and all Canadians to constantly ask for federal hand-outs for whatever they need. As a result, Canadians have come to see the Government as a kind of Providence which responds to their every need.

Mr. Speaker, this is not what a real government is supposed to do. Canadians should learn to take care of themselves and rely less on government intervention. Yesterday afternoon I was explaining to one of my constituents that I did not think the federal Government would be able to provide a grant for redecorating the church or enlarging the cemetery, which is what they were asking. Twenty years ago, nobody would have dreamed of asking such a thing. Everybody knew maintenance of churches, rectories or cemeteries was not a federal responsibility. However, it was the attitude taken by the previous government which literally threw money out of the window at anything that moved service clubs, sports clubs, factories . . . They gave money to anything that moved, to all those organizations, and now people have grown to expect it.

Mr. Speaker, it may not be particularly pleasant to have to say to all these people today who have seen the federal manna from heaven literally pour down on neighbouring municipalities to pay for church repairs, picnic tables or roadside haying: sorry, no more hand-outs.

Mr. Speaker, as I was telling this person yesterday, the Canadian people must gradually learn how to regain control over their destiny and realize that it is no longer possible to carry on this way giving money to everyone, money which we do not have in the first place because if we were to follow the example of the previous Government, we would mortgage our own future and that of our children and grandchildren.

I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that such an attitude is at all ludicrous, as was suggested last Thursday evening in his reply

*The Address—Mr. Blais*

to the Hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) by the economic critic of the Official Opposition, the Hon. Member for Saint-Henry-Westmount (Mr. Johnston) who is not in the House this morning. Admittedly, the Hon. Member for Saint-Henry-Westmount is familiar with deficits. From what I read in certain newspaper articles this week, it seems that the Liberal Party leadership campaign has greatly depleted their resources. Therefore, Hon. Members opposite know all about deficits.

Mr. Speaker, how dare they call us anti-francophones and Orangemen?

● (1210)

We can see, Mr. Speaker, how and with what arrogance and contempt for our democratic institutions the previous Government governed our country. It is rather surprising to realize that the only issue for which there was a consensus in all, and I emphasize all Canadian provinces, as was very clearly seen last Summer and this Fall, was the need for change. Everyone wanted a change in Government.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) for the great confidence he has shown in my ability by appointing me Parliamentary Secretary for the important Department of Agriculture. As many of you know, the constituency of Bellechasse is very large. It is made up of a strip about 50 miles wide and 100 miles long on the shore of the St. Lawrence river in South-Eastern Quebec.

I am fortunate to represent a great number of farmers who have told me on many occasions, including last week-end and the one before that, how proud they are that a Quebec Member of Parliament has been asked to help the Hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) discharge his important responsibilities so that agriculture will once again regain its rightful place in the Canadian economy.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, nearly half of my constituency is a forested area. Our forests, especially in Quebec, have suffered from a spruce budworm epidemic and our people are counting on the Minister of State in charge of the new Forestry Ministry to see to it that Canada takes action, in co-operation with the private sector and the provincial Governments, and really looks after—which was not the case in the past—the management and development of our Canadian forests in accordance with the commitment made by the Progressive Conservative party.

Mr. Speaker, we do not claim to have solutions to all the problems. However, we are anxious to have a hard, fresh look at them and especially to co-operate fully with the provincial authorities in the search for adequate solutions.

As I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, there are in my vast riding of Bellechasse a considerable number of farmers who are involved in nearly all types of farming. They provide a