

vast majority of Canadians support this budget and the passage of Bill C-76.

[English]

The last thing Canadians want right now is for us to say collectively that we have a great idea, let us wait six months before passing the budget. Mr. Speaker, could you sell that in your riding? I do not think my constituents would be convinced, after telling them a month ago that we have a budget, if I said now we have changed our minds and we will not implement it for six months. That is what the Bloc Québécois wants us to do.

I will wait to see how the Reform Party votes on Bill C-76. That will be interesting. Will its members vote to delay the cost cutting measures for six months, thereby further increasing the deficit? That will be an interesting. We will find out in a few days.

Assuming the amendment of the Bloc Québécois is defeated, will Reform members vote against cost cutting, saving taxpayers dollars and trying to put the economy back on track, as we have been doing and will continue to do through Bill C-76? That is the challenge right now. I will bet there are some Reform members caucusing as we speak, discussing this important issue. If they are not caucusing because they are all here in the House, perhaps after we adjourn tonight they will caucus. Perhaps the leader of the Reform Party and other Reform members will have a caucus to discuss how they will vote on Bill C-76.

I can give them advice. The so-called budget they presented to Canadians would have been a disaster. What they wanted to do was cancel pensions for virtually all seniors. That is not the way to go. The numbers which did not add up in their budget are not the way to go.

Mr. Penson: Where is your plan?

• (1725)

Mr. Boudria: Our plan was tabled in the House on February 27. Our bill is right now before the Canadian public, Bill C-76.

We know where the Liberals stand. We know the Liberals want to reduce the deficit, put the economy back on track, restore integrity in government, like we said we would do in the red book and like we are delivering.

We want to know which side the Reform Party is on. How will it vote on the amendment not to have these cost cutting measures? Will it vote for the amendment, thereby depriving Canadians of these cost cutting measures? Will it support the Bloc Québécois?

On the other hand, once the amendment is disposed of will it vote with the Liberals as an effort to join all Canadians or at least the vast majority in terms of putting in place these budgetary measures? Will it again vote not to cut the deficit the way we want to do, presumably meaning it does not want for the deficit to be cut?

Government Orders

I am proud to be voting for Bill C-76, although not because it is the sweetest of medicine. Some of the measures are not the sweetest of medicine. Some of the measures are strong but will make the patient, the Canadian economy, better in the short run and in the long run.

If we can do that working together to make the economy better, we can provide jobs for a large number of Canadians. That is why we were sent here.

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will try to explain, as requested by the hon. member in his speech, why our motion asks for a six-month's postponement for this bill.

Quebecers and Canadians are starting to realize what this budget is about and to notice the very real impact of this budget and the severe cuts it contains. Let me give a few examples. I was told earlier that the people in my riding and other ridings in Quebec agreed with these cuts. So what are these people doing? They call us to ask questions about certain decisions. I intend to ask the hon. member about that.

First, they decided to cut funding, without prior notice, to all agencies engaged in international co-operation, across Quebec and across Canada. No more money will be given to international co-operation agencies. Why did they do that? Because they want to keep them from making a connection between poverty in the South and poverty in the North and from realizing that they will have to develop some kind of solidarity between the two, because this government has no truck with solidarity. All it does is increase the gap between rich and poor, and that is what the members of an agency in my riding called CREM are starting to realize, and there are plenty of agencies like that across Canada.

Another example. They decided to cut all experimental research on sheep. All ovine research in Canada, some of which was being done at the Experimental Farm in La Pocatière, for an industry that is developing rapidly, now that sheep growers are increasing market share in Canada. It is now 25 per cent. It has been going up for several years. They say that the funding freeze will save money in the short term. The result: no more research and development, which means that people in Quebec and Alberta who raise sheep will have to go it alone. It is no longer the government's business. And you call that useful cuts and the right thing to do? Maybe you should have taxed the banks first.

I have another example, and I would appreciate your comments. The latest news is the decision to make cuts at Canada Employment Centres: terminals instead of people. Do you think that is a wise decision? Would you not agree that a six-month postponement is a good idea after all?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite ought to know that his colleague, the same one who a little earlier today, and I can see him, moved a motion not to proceed with this bill, said many weeks ago that he wanted to cut what he called fat in government, a kind of shapeless mass, according to