

realize that the COSP and CHIP programs have been extremely successful and I agree with my hon. friend about that. However, the time has come when Canadians can no longer be subsidized in every area. We will save over \$800 million by terminating these programs, and that money will be put directly toward the deficit.

• (1420)

**Mr. Gagliano:** Mr. Speaker, according to the Hon. Member, the Liberal administration did everything wrong.

I know, however, that this program, which the Conservative Government wants to abolish, is very popular. The people in the Province of Quebec are very concerned because as of March 31 the program will no longer be available. The Government announced on November 8 that the program would be discontinued. It should extend the program for at least six months to provide an opportunity to the people who want to take advantage of it. I do not understand what the Hon. Member is driving at. I definitely did not speak about discrimination, I said that Quebec was the Province which was the largest user of that program and the people of Quebec are not being permitted an opportunity to continue to use that program after March 31.

**Mr. McDermid:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend from Saint-Léonard-Anjou (Mr. Gagliano) said that this Government was prepared to mortgage the future. I found that to be an interesting comment.

We have taken over from a Government which had almost a \$200 billion debt. This year, there will be a \$35 billion deficit. He is talking about this Government mortgaging the future of Canada, when it has to borrow money to pay for this program in order to give that money back to the Canadian taxpayers to convince them to insulate their homes or go off oil. I believe that Canadian people are more intelligent than that. They do not have to be bribed. They must be educated on the importance of going off oil, insulating their homes, using passive solar and solar opportunities, and renewable products. But for the Hon. Member to stand up in the House and accuse this Government of mortgaging the future of Canada, that is somewhat facetious.

**Mr. Gagliano:** The Hon. Member said that the Government was borrowing money to give this program to the Canadian people, so that Canadian people could reduce their heating bills and invest the money which they save. I think that is a good thing. However, he does not realize that the Government is taking money away from the Canadian people. That is the problem.

**Mr. McDermid:** It's their money!

**Mr. Gagliano:** In the long term, this Government will put the country into bankruptcy.

**Mr. MacLellan:** Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary said that this program is costing the Canadian people money. However, the program is taking money away from the people

who can least afford it. This program was aimed at consumers, people on fixed and low incomes, and the unemployed. Those were the people who were taking advantage of the program, and those are the people who will lose.

The Parliamentary Secretary referred to the deficit. The deficit has increased since this Government has been in power. The Government cannot even bring in a budget or give us the date on which the budget will be brought down. It is not only the question of the funds which this program gave to people, but also the provision of information, guidelines and a toll-free line which people could call to ask questions about insulation and off-oil programs that is very important. Those were programs, aids and ideas which the people needed. We have not yet heard what the Government will do in that regard, or what information the Government will provide to Canadians.

I would like to ask the Hon. Member what difference it will make in his area, when people are no longer able to get the information or an assurance from the Government that the furnaces and systems which are put in place will be approved by CSA, or in fact whether it will be equipment which will meet the standards?

**Mr. Gagliano:** Mr. Speaker, on April 1, when this program is no longer in effect, a lot of home owners will not be able to convert from oil heating to electricity or gas, especially in Quebec. As well, the Montreal area does not have very many natural gas lines, and because of the hard winter which we have had, it has been very difficult to create those lines in order for people to have gas installed in their homes. April 1 would probably be a convenient time to start work on the projected natural gas lines, however the program will not exist at that time. I am sure, as well, that the termination of that program will mean the loss of many jobs.

**Mr. Waddell:** Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary and other Conservatives have been saying that this program must be cut because this is a time of restraint. They are saying that we should let the people invest for themselves and that we should not subsidize consumers. They are saying that the people are sensible and that they will invest in the market.

A Montreal economist, Diane Bellemare, submitted material to the Macdonald Royal Commission from which I would like to quote. It reads:

It may be that subsidies are necessary to encourage people to use more efficient forms of energy. Without them, consumers may not be able to afford the investment needed to conserve or switch from one form of energy to another, either because their levels of earnings are too low or because they feel that sooner or later prices will drop back to more attractive levels.

I wonder if the Hon. Member agrees with that. Has he found in his riding that lower-income people do not have money to invest in the market? Has he found that people have the money in their pockets to spend without a Government grant? We must keep in mind that we are talking about million-dollar programs. However, the oil industry is receiving PIP grants in the amount of \$1.6 billion from the Government. PIP grants are subsidies. We have an interventionist economy. It is not a free-market economy. Anyone who thinks it is a