

Government Orders

On the matter of fiscal responsibility, a point was made here recently about tradition. It seems that practice has developed a certain kind of tradition in the House over a number of years. We have had an increase in the number of MPs in the House and parallel with it has been an increase in the debt of the country.

That kind of tradition must be broken. Other people have said we are a lean and mean government. I suggest they understand what most of those words mean. Lean, no; mean, yes but not fiscally.

What does it mean to have a balanced budget? I came here to find out how we got into this deep debt. I want for the benefit of everybody in the House to recognize the reason we are in debt is we spend more than we take in. That is why we have a debt. Let us not have any doubt that if we are to get our fiscal house in order we have to get to the point of cutting and controlling our spending.

To increase the number of representatives in the House will not reduce our costs. It will increase them. We can talk about the physical things, the everyday things like salaries, personnel, office space and so on but we need to look at MP pensions. This is in the craw of virtually every Canadian.

We need to illustrate exactly what happens with the C twins, Charest and Copps, the member for Sherbrooke and the Deputy Prime Minister. Between these two alone—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sure the hon. member is well aware we do not use members' names. Rather, we use their title or district.

Mr. Schmidt: The C twins, the member for Sherbrooke and the Deputy Prime Minister, between these two alone there will be a payout of more than \$6 million if they retire and live to age 75, with an inflation rate of approximately 5 per cent.

There is nothing in this bill that will in any way come to grips with these things. We have seen the opposite. We have seen debate on certain bills stopped. There is another way this new bill negates the work of fiscal responsibility. It will do away with the work that has already been done if it is passed, and the \$6 million already spent will be gone.

• (1210)

Fiscally the attitude seems to be to spend, don't worry, be happy. We have seen how democracy works in the country with closure on Bill C-41, closure on Bill C-85 concerning MP pensions, closure on Bill C-68, the firearms legislation. In each case the government has stopped the debate. In each case the government has ignored the wishes of a large proportion of our country. Worst of all, MPs are being warned that not toeing the line could put their opportunity to stand for election on the line and it definitely puts into jeopardy advancement in their political careers.

The people have told them what to stand for and they have been told to stand for what the Prime Minister says. In my opinion that is completely backward and is not the way it ought to go.

Probably the most difficult thing for me to stomach is the message this is sending to our young people. The message that seems to be coming from the House as exhibited by a bill like Bill C-41 is families are old-fashioned. I know as do many members in the House that families are the social institution best suited for the transmission of values from one generation to another. They are where we learn such things as accountability, that freedom has a price and that we must be responsible for our actions, that there is such a thing as common decency, that there is such a thing as respect for another person without fear.

It is necessary to develop courage, to have the guts to stand up to say what we believe and to be honest and true representatives of the people who have elected us to stand in their stead in this place to govern the affairs of the nation in a manner best suited to their interests, to look after their interests and not our interests.

The government did—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, the hon. member's time has expired. Questions and comments, the hon. member for Waterloo.

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I heard the hon. member talk about deficit, pensions, an elected Senate, et cetera. He spoke very little on the bill before us. I feel compelled to make a few comments.

I will say this often because I feel voters have a right to be reminded. Members of the third party mentioned they were to do politics differently and instead of mindlessly opposing all government legislation they would actually contribute to make it better. We in the Liberal Party, both new and veteran members, really appreciated those promises. Instead we have the sanctimony of previous parties replaced by the Reform Party which reminds me of the rise of the right wing parties in the United States.

We have a virtual attack on every institution in the country as well as on every bill we put forth. I still recall the hypocrisy of the leader of the third party who turns in a government car and then we find out he has—

Mr. Morrison: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, has the word hypocrisy when applied to an individual in the House become parliamentary language when I was not looking?

• (1215)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): This took place during the debate. I agree the comment could be on the iffy side. I would request that the member be a little more careful and that all members be more careful in the future.