

Supply

It has amazed me that at the same time these members voted against those expenditure reductions they stood up in Question Period and were critical of the government. They say that the national debt has multiplied twice while the government has been in office and while they have been voting against these expenditure cuts.

It is interesting, however, that at the same time they ignore the fact that while they were in office for the last substantial period of time the national debt did not go up twice but 10 or 11 times. However, we ignore those facts because that seems to be the nature of this place. We are not here to deal with trying to address problems seriously. We are here to try and score debating points. We are here to try to be partisan. We are here to be a government which is for everything and an opposition which is against everything.

There is another thing I have noticed in the last nine years. Almost every day for the last nine years I have been getting letters from Canadians. I recently received one from the president of the national downhill skiing association meaning the national alpine ski team. This is typical of the kind of letters that I have been getting almost every day for nine years. Recently I had a letter from every one of our national amateur sporting teams. I had a pile on my desk about a foot high as a result of these letters and they were all very similar.

This one is from Mr. James Miles who is the president of Alpine Canada. He says: "Dear Mr. Redway: As a taxpayer I am concerned about the deficit. As president of Alpine Canada I am concerned about the proposed cuts outlined in the Minister of Finance's mini budget. While I recognize the need for responsible government action, spending on sport and fitness is an investment that pays dividends. I urge you to support the effort to maintain the current levels of spending on Canada's sports programs".

That is typical. I am afraid that that is an example of why it is so very difficult and easier said than done to cut back on all these expenditures we hear about and that are complained about constantly.

• (1230)

In fact when I read an article in *The Toronto Star* on April 22 of this year by the national affairs columnist,

Carol Goar, it reminded me of this letter I just received from Mr. Miles from the national alpine ski team. The headline on that article stated that almost half a million dollars was being spent for the table tennis association. She has a great question mark on it. That certainly would cause a question mark in my mind. It quickly brought back the pleas of Mr. Miles and all of those young people involved in all these good activities across the country who are devastated by the fact that we would have to cut back on expenditures because of the deficit and the national debt.

In this article Carol Goar goes on to refer to a number of other examples. She refers to the Fur Institute of Canada for example, which is an organization that gets money from the Government of Canada to help promote the fur trade and the livelihood of native Canadians who are trappers and who are in peril of having their livelihood cut off as a result of the European fur ban which may go into effect in 1996.

That is the reason for support of that kind to the Fur Institute of Canada. I suspect one could imagine the concerns that would be raised if we cut that off. We would hear it from the people who are concerned, and rightly so, about natives in Davis Inlet who are isolated and have no economic resources and no basis for an economy. They would be wondering why we were destroying the only livelihood that these natives have. That is what money to the Fur Institute of Canada goes to assist. It is that sort of thing.

Ms. Goar refers as well to the Consumers' Association of Canada, the International Federation of Library Associations and the Planned Parenthood Federation. All of these are causes that I suspect a great many Canadians support and would be upset about if their funding was cut, as they have. I suspect that soon I will be getting letters like the one from the national alpine ski team referring to those kinds of cuts as well.

Ms. Goar also refers in this article to the Canadian Labour Congress getting a substantial amount of money. That I know because the Ontario Federation of Labour is in my riding. I know that that money goes to promote literacy in the work place. This is something that all members of this House would get very upset about if suddenly we cut it off, I suspect.