

Cost of Living

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. MacInnis) rises on a point of order.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise on this occasion, as I have on a number of occasions previously, with respect to the reading of speeches. Where the member is reading figures or statistics from a prepared document, that is all right; but if he is reading some nonsense that somebody else put on paper for him, then I think it is time we used the rule that speeches should not be read in this House.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I rise on the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. MacInnis) should apply the same rule to the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, may I ask what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) wants me to do for him? Does he want to get up on the point of order that I raised, or does he have some that he wants to raise himself? I am raising the point of order with respect to the speech that is being read now.

An hon. Member: "Respect" is a good word.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Thank you; "respect" is. Respect of the rules would mean that he should put aside the paper that somebody else prepared for him, and not read it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. The hon. member has raised a point that has been raised many times in this House, and I think it is a valid point. Hon. members are entitled to refer to notes they have made. I think the point is quite valid.

[*Translation*]

The Chair would ask the cooperation of the hon. parliamentary secretary if possible, and suggest that while referring to his notes, he abide by the rules and address the House without reading from a text.

I recognize the parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Comtois: Mr. Speaker, I willingly accept your comments, but allow me to read these few notes in English for the simple reason that I wanted the opposition members to understand what I was going to say. And if members of the opposition want to make speeches in French, I shall gladly listen to them even if they read their speeches.

I should also like to refer to my notes. Of course, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) handed me a few notes in order that I may complete the remarks that he wanted to make. When one wants to quote figures and statistics accurately, it is important to refer to notes instead of saying just anything in the House.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue, if possible. The Conservative leader and members of his party also thought that was a joke. They doubled up with laughter when the Minister of Finance warned that there was a risk of the economy overshooting the target and aggravating inflation, a risk that was considered worth taking.

[Mr. Comtois.]

Throughout the course of this year there has been very substantial growth of national production, of jobs and in the real income of Canadians—but the Conservative opposition rejected the forecast of these developments. They proposed a further substantial increase in government spending, further tax cuts costing another \$700 million or more, an increase in the federal deficit of 2½ times, with the cash requirement doubling to \$4 billion, and a continuing massive increase in the money supply.

For the particular benefit of the Conservative leader, let me outline some of the major steps adopted or proposed by the government over the past 16 months to maximize supply and minimize the impact of inflation.

● (1750)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, let me proceed with my remarks in French.

Through budget measures we have reduced personal income tax by the equivalent of 12 to 13 per cent in February and we have also granted a special exemption of \$650 to \$1,000 to the blind and disabled people. Thanks to all those measures we have increased the so-called weekend take-home pay.

We have abolished the sales tax on all children clothing; we have also abolished the sales tax on soft drinks and food. Moreover, we have abolished the excise tax on certain toilet articles and cosmetics. We have also imposed a temporary reduction in tariffs of roughly \$1.4 billion on many products. In addition, by adjusting the equalization formula \$190 million have been made available to the provinces which enable them in many cases to reduce their school and property taxes. We have indexed the old age pensions and the guaranteed income supplement since January 1972. In October those pensions will be significantly increased.

In October, the family allowances will be also temporarily raised to \$12 a month, not taxable, for each child and, in January, to \$20 even though it will be taxable. The Canada Pension Plan will be fully indexed as will be all federal civil servant pensions and others paid by the federal government.

Moreover, several provinces have granted or are considering granting soon a significant increase in their payments for social welfare and it should be remembered that the federal government pays 50 per cent of all social welfare plans in Canada.

We have reduced taxes for manufacturers, thereby creating many jobs, an unprecedented number of jobs during this and last year.

The government established a Food Price Review Board and we hope that it will bring about very good results.

We have imposed temporary controls on exports of beef, pork and a few grains in order to prevent any increase in prices and, overall, a shortage of these products in Canada.

We also increased the subsidy to wheat production from \$1 to \$1.75 in order to prevent a rise in the price of bread, which was unavoidable. We will pay subsidies of 5 cents by quart of milk to all the provinces that will accept to maintain or reduce the price of milk for a period of at least one year. We asked the oil industry not to increase the cost