

Mortgage Tax Credit

measure of affording our municipalities and our home owners some relief, in support of tax—

An hon. Member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Does the hon. member have a question?

Mr. Stollery: No. He is just a guy who has nothing else to do but shout at you.

Mr. Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Thank you. I thought the hon. member had a question. If he has a question, I would be glad to answer it.

When this bill is in committee, I know it will receive close scrutiny by members of this House. If anything, I think a sunset clause should be considered if we are not to have this kind of bad legislation for the rest of our lives. We must look at taking some measures which at least give some hope that some day this inequity will be terminated.

There are more important alternatives to this kind of fiscal approach. It is absolutely irresponsible for anybody to entertain the thought or to try to tell us on this side of the House that this is a housing measure. It is not a housing measure. It will not build one house. It may be a tax measure. It reduces the taxes for some people, but the question begs itself: who is paying for this? I maintain that at this time in our economy we cannot afford this kind of tax credit bill.

● (1540)

Mr. Peter Stollery (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate this opportunity to speak on Bill C-20. This is a particularly unattractive and, I might say, pretty madcap proposal in the current economic conditions of this country. It is a plan that is presented to the House of Commons as a sort of rehash of a totally inoperable program or proposal put forward by the Conservatives about a year ago. I must say it was particularly difficult to take this crazy scheme of a year ago, when it was first put forward, very seriously because it seems to have come from the tortured brains of the former and, I guess, current economic adviser to the Prime Minister, Mr. Jim Gillies, and his other tortured friend, formerly from Ottawa Centre, Mr. "de Cutback", who I think worked for the disgraced President Nixon as an economic adviser. He proved so inept here as a Canadian MP that his electors wisely threw him out after six months. These are the kinds of tortured, perplexed individuals who have given us this tax scheme which we all know is totally inequitable, unfair and uneconomic. This is a policy that will put into the Canadian tax system the inequities we all know are glaringly evident in the U.S. tax system.

Many of us resent the kind of nonsense that goes on over on the other side when they try to fool the Canadian population into thinking we have the U.S. tax system. They have taken a few little parts out of a tax system from another country and implied that that is the system we have in this country. Those people opposite think that if you take the attractive bits and pieces out of a bunch of tax systems and present them to a

population made up of people who are not, after all, tax experts, they will accept them. That is what they think.

I read the speech by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Crosbie) when he proposed this bill last week. I noticed at the time he made that speech that he was reading from an article by David Greenspan. That was an article written last year on the original proposal which the government has now withdrawn. The Minister of Finance did not mention that the article he was reading referred to a proposal that is not before the House of Commons but one that the government has withdrawn.

I noticed also that the minister did not mention, and maybe he did not know, that our friend "de Cutback", before he was so wisely turned out by his electorate here in the city of Ottawa, worked with another Greenspan. I remember when the other Greenspan was made president of the council of advisers to the President of the United States. I remember that Greenspan and I would recommend to the Minister of Finance that he look into his background because it is very interesting. He is the only person I have ever come across—this is the other Greenspan—who in the 1970s was a friend and supporter of Ayn Rand. He was a close personal friend of Ayn Rand and a proponent of her theories on how nations should be run. He was actually made the president of the council of economic advisers to the then U.S. president, Mr. Nixon. I think it would be interesting for the Minister of Finance to read some of the comments of the *New York Times* at that time. I was pretty shocked that this could happen in a country like the United States with the economic problems it faces.

Here we have another attempt by the Minister of Finance, who seems to be a reasonable fellow. He must have had a terrible time trying to stop the government from doing some of the more goofy things it seems intent on doing. One can only credit the Minister of Finance, or possibly the officials in the Department of Finance who saw the inequities and the impossibilities of the unfair system proposed a year ago.

The government has now come up with Bill C-20 which is really a pretty short bill. The minister has actually attempted to persuade us that Bill C-20 is consistent with a plank in the Tory platform during the last election. I am sure that for many years Canadians will be reflecting on the convolutions and the contortions of this government. Plasticman could not have invented some of the devious and manipulative schemes this government has come up with over the last few months. After six weeks or two months we have yet to see any kind of an economic program for Canada, but we have these convoluted, plastic proposals which are totally inconsistent with the times we live in, and they are supposed to hoodwink the Canadian electorate into thinking this government is consistently giving them what they were promised during the election campaign. I recommend to hon. members when they are addressing themselves to these kinds of programs that they look up the definition of "nostrum" in the Oxford dictionary. It is, "a medicine prepared by a person recommending it, a quack remedy, patent medicine, a pet scheme for political or social reform, or a panacea". I like "quack scheme" the best, because if ever there was a quack scheme presented in my time this

[Mr. Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier).]