

Government Orders

The government recognizes the seriousness of the large growing public debt. Since 1984 the government has taken action to bring the debt problem under control.

We have some new members in the House elected in the 1988 election. They should be made aware of the climb in spending from \$12.3 billion in 1968 to \$109.2 billion in 1984. That is an average of 14.6 per cent per year. The deficit of the federal government climbed from \$400 million in 1968 to \$38.3 billion in 1984. That is a 96 per cent increase. The national debt climbed from \$18.1 billion to \$199.1 billion, an increase of 1,000 per cent.

It is interesting to watch Question Period time in and time out. I had the opportunity to be a member of the opposition between 1982 and 1984. You would almost think that on September 5, 1984 that this debt was something like a mushroom. All of a sudden, those who had been in power for 17 years or so had were not willing to tell Canadians at that time that there was this type of debt.

We also hear claims about government financial structuring being in dark economic times. I think it would be worth while to put on the record and refer back, if we are talking about dark economic times, to figures indicating that unemployment climbed by more than a million, from 358,000 in 1968 to 1,384,000 by 1984. The unemployment rate climbed from 4.5 per cent to 11.2 per cent. Turning to inflation, items that cost \$1 in 1968 cost \$3.22 in 1984, an increase of 222 per cent. We have been hearing a lot about interest rates in the last number of weeks, that they have sky-rocketed and out of control. However the Leader of the Opposition never refers back to 1981 when the Bank of Canada rate climbed to 21.24 per cent, the chartered bank prime climbed to 22.75 per cent, and a five-year mortgage to 21.75 per cent. We never hear these figures.

It seems that every time we try to indicate to Canadians that there is a very serious problem, there are still people who would like to say that the problem only started in 1984. Really, the problem that we are dealing with is the mismanagement of the economy prior to 1984. That is the problem with which we are faced. It would be interesting had we had the opportunity to come in here in 1984 with a zero deficit and had been able to move forward with all the programs that we would have liked to.

There is one other area I want to make comparison to. It indicates the way that the policies of this government are working correctly. I want to review the employment and the unemployment statistics for northern Ontario. This is only up to December 1989, but it gives a reference in this regard. In 1984 the rate in north eastern Ontario was 14.9 per cent and the annual at the end of 1989 it was 8.1 per cent. This is a change of minus 6.8 per cent. In north western Ontario in 1984 the unemployment rate was 9.7 per cent and the annual in 1989 was 5.9 per cent. That is a minus 3.8 per cent. The total unemployment in northern Ontario was 13.6 per cent in 1984. The annual average in 1989 was 7.5 per cent. That is a difference of 6.1 per cent.

For those individuals who want to say that this government has not been able to control or look after the future of this country, I think those figures indicate that the policies put forward by this government are the correct policies.

I would like to add a little good news, because we continue to hear day in and day out about the negative stuff. They say that the country is headed down the shooter and that since 1984 this government has done everything wrong. It is funny that we keep coming up with figures such as 1,604,000 jobs have been created since September 1984 and 966,000 jobs have been created for women. The national unemployment rate has fallen from 11.6 per cent to 7.7 per cent. The youth rate has fallen from 18.2 per cent to 11.9 per cent. Business investments in new machinery and equipment has climbed by 103 per cent since the 1984 election, and 215,000 new homes have been built in 1989 compared to 135,000 in 1984. The number of Canadians living below the poverty line has fallen by 757,000 since 1984, including 259,000 fewer children and 229,000 fewer adults.

It is very interesting to hear all the negative information that is given, but the reality is that this government is moving forward in a lot of ways to ensure that there is a stable future in this country.

Let us look over what the federal government has done in the province of Ontario to ensure stability there. I would just like to look at a few of areas. Again, we never hear about the good things that are going on. I think it is only right when talking about a borrowing bill and fiscal management that we look at the way in which the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have