

Federal-Provincial Relations

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Deachman) rises a point of order.

Mr. Deachman: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, because I believe there has been some misunderstanding regarding the division of time. If there is unanimous consent, I wonder if the hon. member who now has the floor might be permitted to continue until not later than five minutes to ten in order that he may finish his speech, inasmuch as his party moved the motion which the House is debating.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. members have heard the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Deachman). Is it agreed that the Chair shall see the clock at 9.55 p.m.?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Latulippe: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. members for having complied with this request, and having been fair enough to allow me to proceed.

If a province is not permitted to make laws for the distribution of the accumulated production so as to meet the needs of all its people, how autonomous is it?

And if the province can only correct the situation by taking something away from some people to give it to others and letting glut go to waste, where is its autonomy? It is a simple matter of money, as some people may say, but we are not responsible for making it so, the system is.

If the government responsible for the common good only had to face the facts, the only requirement would be to meet the needs of the people, and the question of money would not arise.

However, financial regulations complicate the whole situation and cripple the provincial governments most set on autonomy as well as the federal government. Mankind has needs because the Creator wanted it so, and as long as a government is short of money and is unable to cope with the problem, there is no autonomy for the crippled government, for the deprived family, for the individual, who must accept anything or die from hunger.

This afternoon, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) asked us to open our eyes and to quote figures to prove that this government has done much to balance the economy in a normal and satisfactory fashion.

So, I have before me a copy of the estimates from 1953 to 1973. You can see all the deficits accumulated over that period by the two parties which have in turn been in office, that is the Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals. In 1955, there was a first deficit, and this has lasted until now. In fact, we will have a deficit of about three billions in 1973. And for the last score, we have had deficits 18 years out of 20. But they will tell us that we have a sound administration, that we should produce figures and get down to bed-rock. This is precisely what we are doing.

[Mr. Latulippe.]

Can we go on governing with deficits? Can we go on leaving all the provinces reduced to beggary in our deficit system? Are we right to want to develop a financial system capable of bringing our economy back into balance?

The hon. Minister of Regional Economic Expansion asked us to give him figures. I shall give him figures, and they are the government's own official statistics.

Here is a list of deficits for the past twelve years: 1961-62, \$791 million; 1962-63, \$692 million; 1963-64, 619 million; 1964-65, \$38 million; 1965-66, \$39 million; 1966-67, \$422 million; 1967-68, \$795 million; 1968-69, \$576 million; 1969-70, \$393 million; 1970-71, \$370 million; 1971-72, \$750 million; 1972-73, \$800 million.

The net debt on March 31, 1970, was \$16,943 million, and on March 31, 1971, of \$17,360 million. On March 31, 1972 it was \$17,922,400,000.

The net debt increase was \$421 million in 1967, \$794 million in 1968, \$576 million in 1969, \$392 million in 1970, \$417 million in 1971, \$552 million in 1972. This is the type of administration considered as being fine, condensed, balanced, and honest by the minister.

Mr. Speaker, the interest on the debt—

An hon. Member: You distort the facts.

Mr. Latulippe: I am not distorting facts; these are official figures.

The interest on the debt in 1970-71 was \$1,880 million, or \$5,150,684 per day; in 1971-72, it will be \$2,030 million or \$5,561,643 per day; in 1972-73, it will be \$2,260 million or \$6,191,000 per day. These are figures that the minister should know and study.

The minister should go a little further into things because his logics are definitely lacking when he asks that we provide him with statistics. These statistics that I am giving him are authentic because they come from Statistics Canada.

Mr. Speaker, if we had a creditiste government in Ottawa, it would see to it that money and credit issues be proportional to available goods. Instead of using these issues itself it would distribute them in block to the provincial governments proportionately to the population, leaving these governments free to dispose of them as they wish.

Provincial autonomy would be respected as well as family and personal autonomy. It would be respected in social credit provinces but ignored by the Socialist provinces. It is up to the citizens of each province to look after their own future.

Mr. Speaker, the main responsibility of a government is to remove any obstacles in order to allow the lower level administrations to handle their own affairs. This, the government is not doing now. The main obstacle is a financial one and the main responsibility of the government is to have that obstacle removed. Thereafter, its interventions will no longer be required often. The members of the Social Credit party do understand it because, their idea is that the financial obstacle is unjustifiable—