

*Government Orders*

● (1715)

This shows a lack of respect toward Canadian voters who want this budget to be implemented immediately, as the hon. member for the riding of Ontario said it so eloquently.

Canadians want this budget passed by the House.

[English]

Earlier today an official from the Department of Finance was telling me it would cost millions of dollars a week if we did not have the bill passed by the end of June. Millions of dollars a week would not be saved. Millions of dollars a week which we promised Canadians we would save would not be realized if the House does not adopt the motion today.

That is what the Bloc Quebecois is asking us to do, not to read the bill now and to do so six months hence; not to save the millions of dollars we want to save, not to have the cutbacks in expenditures we want to make and not to reduce the deficit in the way we are trying to do. That is what it wants. It does not want us to succeed. It wants us to fail.

Why does it want us to fail? I do not understand. Why would any hon. member in the House not want the budget to go ahead? I cannot understand it at all.

[Translation]

As for Reform Party members, they want the budget to include more cuts. As you know, they also wanted to eliminate old age pensions. You cannot trust these people. We, Liberal members, want a budget which is realistic, fair and equitable. It was not easy to draft this budget and it will not be easy to implement it either.

However, Canadians realize that this budget is fair. They are saying: "We may have to tighten our belt, but so will everyone else, including the government, the private sector and others. Since this is a joint effort for the good of our country, we are prepared to do it". So, everyone is prepared to make a sacrifice, except Bloc Quebecois members, who want to table a motion to put the Minister of Finance's budget on the back burner.

I say to the members of the Bloc: go to your ridings and ask your constituents if they oppose the budget tabled by the Minister of Finance in this House, on February 27. As I said earlier, the overwhelming majority of Canadians will tell you that this is a very good budget.

Let me give you a few statistics about the budget. Again, this is from Gallup Canada. Just listen, you will see how positive the reaction was to this budget. "In 1985—during the Mulroney years—28 per cent of Canadians felt that the budget would get the economy back on track, while 47 per cent did not think so". In other words, Canadians opposed that year's budget in a proportion of two-to-one.

Let us now go 1989, for example, when the Leader of the Opposition was a Conservative minister. In 1989, 26 per cent of Canadians felt that the budget of that year would get the economy back on track, while 53 per cent did not think so. Did the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean vote against that budget? Of course not. He supported it, even though more than half of all Canadians opposed it.

Today, 49 per cent of Canadians feel that this budget will get the economy back on track, while 38 per cent do not think so. There are a lot more Canadians everywhere who think that this budget is good. It was well-received, even in the riding of the member opposite. Yet, what does the Bloc Quebecois propose today? It proposes a motion which, again, reads: "That Bill C-76, an Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 1995, be not read a second time but that it be read a second time this day six months hence".

● (1720)

It seems that some members of the Bloc Quebecois feel they should support a budget if the public is against it and condemn the budget if the public supports it. Does that make sense to you, Mr. Speaker?

This is Bloc logic. They do everything in reverse. Just Bloc logic. Well, I think the hon. member should listen to what Canadians are saying, and I see there are more and more of them who seem to be interested in what is being said this afternoon. More and more people are showing an interest, not necessarily in what I am saying, but in the provisions of Bill C-76. I am willing to bet that many parliamentarians are here to find out why the motion presented by the finance critic for the Bloc Quebecois is wrong, and no doubt they are going to say why hon. member should vote with the government to obtain speedy passage of this bill.

Let the finance critic for the Bloc Quebecois rise in his seat immediately to tell me if I am wrong. Mr. Speaker, as you can see, we have yet to hear from the hon. member, as I speak. Nothing. Complete silence on the other side of the House—

**Mr. Dubé:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. We know the Chief Whip for the government is quick on his feet but I think he knows perfectly well that we cannot refer in this House to the absence of another member, even in jest.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The hon. member for Lévis has certainly raised a very important point regarding the customs and practices of this House, and I am sure that considering his experience, the Chief Whip is very familiar with this rule. He may proceed.

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I would never mention the absence of a member, and I would certainly not belabour the point. I will now continue my comments, and I would urge hon. members to listen carefully, because as they probably know, the