

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): One hon. member tells me that only the Gallup poll understood. Mr. Chairman, in that regard, if you will allow me . . . I do not believe in the Gallup poll. Last week, they said white; this week they say black—

An hon. Member: Or red, rather.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): I trust they do not mean red like in China or Russia: I would really feel terrible about that. Mr. Chairman, in any event, political colours do not mean much to me. I would rather have good old common sense any day. We now have a problem that is crucial, serious, and if the Quebec minister of finance . . . I can see the federal Minister of Finance showing the letter from his Quebec counterpart. He seems to be saying: Victory! Victory! He has given in to their proposals. But if that is true, surely someone was not serious somewhere.

● (2142)

There is only one possibility: either the Canadian government, through its Minister of Finance, was justified in making its tax proposal in the April 10 budget, or the Quebec minister of finance was justified in doing the same when introducing his budget, the date of which I do not remember. Both cannot be right at the same time. It is impossible. When he introduced his budget, the Minister of Finance of Canada made some proposals. He said: "We will grant an income tax reduction to Canadian taxpayers to enable them to increase their income, to spend more on the purchase of Canadian goods, to stimulate the Canadian economy and allow our Canadian industries to market their products, thus creating jobs and reducing inflation".

A week or two later, the Quebec minister of finance stated that the federal formula is unacceptable. The federal government wants to reduce income tax and compel the Quebec government to increase its taxes accordingly. Then it will be able to provide advantages to stimulate the economy.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps I do not understand anything and, in that case, the minister understands too well. He came here to sit in this chair. I asked him to explain clearly how he could possibly reconcile both policies. I would not want Canadians who are watching us on television to believe that we are making fun of their problems, far from it. Mr. Chairman, I want to say seriously that if the proposals contained in Bill C-56 are likely to become an economic solution or to stop inflation and bring harmony within our country, I would be quite happy. But why the discussions for two months between two intelligent ministers of finance, or supposedly intelligent, who were ruling the roost?

The federal minister said, "No, I don't understand anything". The minister in Quebec said: "The federal minister does not understand at all". At one time I for one was inclined to think that neither understood anything. Mr. Chairman, here

Income Tax Act

is the centre of the problem. I made a promise to the Minister of Finance, I will keep my word.

Mr. Boulanger: Now we're going to get it!

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Chairman, I can understand that hon. members who have nothing serious to say make jokes. They have no opinion to voice. They are simply here to vote, to increase their number when it is time to get a majority. But I cannot understand that a sensible man like the hon. member who just made a remark can make silly cracks such as the one we just heard. Mr. Chairman, the problem we are faced with now is one of a financial nature. If there is one hon. member in this House who can claim the opposite, let him rise and I will sit down.

It is a financial problem for the federal government, for the provincial governments, for municipal governments as well as for individuals.

What is a financial problem then? A financial problem occurs when you have more liabilities than you can meet. That's what a financial problem is. And Canada's problem is a financial one. Yesterday—that is quite recent, Mr. Chairman—yesterday the Minister of State for Urban Affairs submitted to us a formula which will allow some organizations to provide families or individuals with housing suited to their capacity to pay. In order to meet this objective, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs announced very happily to the House that the interest rates would be reduced from 8 per cent to 1 per cent, which represents a 7 per cent reduction. Then the hon. member opposite and, after him, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, made the following remark: it is a Socred formula, the same kind that applies to developing countries to whom we provide loans with interest rates equivalent to the administration costs involved.

Mr. Chairman, we have often in the House urged the government to give Canadians in our own country the same advantages it is willing to give to people in underdeveloped countries. For once, Mr. Chairman, I must congratulate the Minister of State for Urban Affairs for realizing that the formula we are suggesting is reasonable and useful. He still has just a little further to go in this direction. How is that? Well, in order to get the necessary funds to provide loans with an interest rate to cover just about the cost of administration, we must take advantage of the bank which belongs to Canadians, the Bank of Canada, our own bank. We will be able to do so if we amend the current legislation along the line suggested in Bill C-390, which I introduced in the House and which has reached second reading stage—and I urge the Minister of Finance to bring back this bill in order that we may resume consideration of it, to help the government get out of its financial slavery.

The Minister of State for Urban Affairs has taken the right step, and I commend him for it. He speaks French and English, so he should have no difficulty making the Minister of