

*Taxation*

adults in 1968. Today, the youth unemployment rate stands at an astounding 15.8 per cent, which is twice the rate for others.

**Mr. Riis:** And they do nothing.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Those are the people to whom we said, "Get your education. Go to school. Learn a trade. Take your degree. Become apprenticed to someone. Work on a farm. Do these things and work, and the world is your oyster." However, what do we give them? We give them a grand opportunity to enjoy unemployment insurance as long as it lasts. When one speaks in terms of percentages, one does not think of people, but there are people behind the percentages. Then, after UIC has run out, we give them another marvelous privilege. We put them on the municipal welfare rolls.

If I find fault with the Minister of Finance, it is not that he is the Minister of Finance, because I get along well with him on a personal basis; rather, it is because he is such an out-of-touch Minister of Finance. I rather like the guy and my heart goes out to him, but he is very out of touch with the real world. He has never met a payroll in his life. He never held a job outside of the university or the government. However, the government put that man in charge of finance in combination with Ian Stewart, the deputy minister of Finance, and this combination has proven to be lethal to the business sector of Canada. That is the problem.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** There are some brains in the Ministry of Finance and some good public servants who understand the ways of the world. However, when the government wanted to find a minister who would work together with such a deputy minister in order to trot out all the little pet theories which have gone on and on, someone who would soak it up like a sponge, they found him in the man from Cape Breton who never met a payroll in his life.

I will tell Your Honour that I am learning, you are learning, Mr. Speaker, your friends are learning and my people are learning that that combination is lethal for the country, and that is the problem. It is only pride. I know many of the backbenchers in the Liberal Party well. I cannot believe that those people have not urged the minister and pleaded with him to withdraw that budget. I see them smiling. They are recalling their conversations with the minister, their letters and their prayers to the minister. Candles have been lit in every cathedral in the country so that he would withdraw the budget.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** They still want that.

**Mr. Nielsen:** They do it every Wednesday in their caucus.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** They should continue to urge him to withdraw the budget. However, it would be very effective if some of them were to get on their hind legs and speak in this debate in the House of Commons and say, "Withdraw the budget, Mr. Minister of Finance". That is

what we must hear. That would make it happen. I want the people who elected my friends in the Liberal Party to understand that their silence, their blind support, maintains in effect the worst budget since confederation.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** That is the situation we are in. Equally, I want them to know that if those same people in the back benches of the Liberal Party who showed courage and a streak of independence when it came to the Constitution debate would show that same streak of independence now, we could rewrite the history of this country. We could give some new hope to some of the people to whom I have referred. It is important, as we reopen this debate, that we remember that.

Some people in the United States say that their inflation rate is coming down. I do not know if any hon. members have accompanied their wives to—

**Mr. Blenkarn:** The negative rate.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** My hon. friend says, "The negative rate".

**Mr. Blenkarn:** It is 15 per cent in Canada.

**An hon. Member:** It is the same interest rate, Don.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** I take it from a source in the cabinet that the inflation rate is making quite a difference in the United States, but I will illustrate the situation in Canada. In 1968, when the Prime Minister took office, the inflation rate was 4.2 per cent. It is now 11.6 per cent. Our current account deficit is growing. Our interest rates have doubled in that period of time. Tell me, Mr. Speaker, is there one good inscription in economic terms that we can carve on the political headstone of the Prime Minister? There is not one. That is the history through which my friends in the Liberal Party are living and which they are blindly supporting. Some of them may survive, but many will not.

I do not support the Western Canada Concept, but hon. members should speak to the people of western Canada as I have done. I was in the city of Lethbridge not too long ago and I spoke to some of the people there. What do they say? They say that the government has no respect for them, that no one listens in Ottawa and that no one seems to understand their problems. They want to build their provinces. The cutting edge of the development of Canada is out there. They want to build. They want policies which will induce investment. They do not want the drilling rigs to leave. They also say that no one in Ottawa will listen to them in economic terms. That is why that political phenomenon is developing in western Canada. I hope it has been nipped in the bud in Saskatchewan. I say that I sincerely hope that what has happened in Saskatchewan will nip it in the bud in Alberta, British Columbia and wherever it is occurring.

This country is much greater than any person in the House of Commons, no matter what kind of halo he or she has around