

*Senate and House of Commons Act*

programs. We have been trying to do more with less. That is the management credo we are using.

Each Department of Government is examining its operating and management practices to eliminate waste, duplication, and inefficiency. The Government has initiated a program of selling surplus assets and privatizing Crown corporations which are no longer serving a public policy role. All Crown corporations are forced to be more efficient in using taxpayers' dollars.

I should also like to point out at this time that when the Government sold de Havilland, there was a great hue and cry on the part of the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party. Since that time de Havilland sales are booming. It has never had such a big order book. Quite frankly, those people buying aircraft have more confidence in an aircraft company being behind an aircraft company than in the Government of Canada being behind an aircraft company.

We have launched a comprehensive program of regulatory reform to lift the burden of unnecessary economic regulation. Be it in energy, transportation or communications, we are establishing a new environment which will encourage improved services and more competitive prices. This is a strong record of accomplishment, but we realize that more needs to be done.

**Mr. Boudria:** You don't actually believe that.

**Mr. Lewis:** Certainly. The Minister of Finance has embarked upon a major process of tax reform to simplify and streamline a tax system which became so complex under the previous Liberal administration as to be incomprehensible to the average Canadian.

The tax system is based upon trust. Such trust will only exist if Canadians believe that our system is fair and equitable. It is our purpose to ensure that the tax system no longer acts as a road-block, but serves to promote investment, job creation and growth on the road to economic renewal.

● (1750)

In all of these initiatives we faced some tough choices, especially with respect to expenditure reduction. We did not shrink from these decisions. As a Government, we were elected to make such decisions. We have made them, and we will continue to make them. We recognized, in order to gain support and understanding for these initiatives, that we must set a good example and practise what we preach. Accordingly, in the November 1984 Economic Statement, the Minister of Finance announced a voluntary decrease in the salaries of cabinet Ministers, including the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). The Prime Minister himself took a cut of over \$20,000 for his first two years in office. The rest of the Cabinet sacrificed almost \$10,000 per Member in order to assist in the maintenance of fiscal restraint.

In February of this year we had the budget address of the Finance Minister. In this Budget, the Minister of Finance asked all Members of the House and the Senate to accept a

reduction of \$1,000 in their salaries this year. It means that the Prime Minister and all of our colleagues in Cabinet will have \$1,000 less at the end of this year in addition to the other reductions to which I referred previously.

As long as our Government must correct the problems of 16 years of mismanagement of the economy, we will have to take measures such as this from time to time.

Bill C-20 implements the measures introduced by the Minister of Finance. I urge all Members of the House to support our leadership in fiscal restraint and deficit reduction. Although sacrifices have been made, such is done to correct problems of the past and to create more hope for the future. It is for this reason that we, as Members of Parliament, have been asked to make a sacrifice of our own to continue assisting the positive effect the Government has had on the economy.

I want to give credit where credit is due, Mr. Speaker. We have done this because we have a Finance Minister who knows how to manage the economy and a Prime Minister who foresees the importance of planning for the future. For the second year in a row the deficit has gone down. Even recently *The Ottawa Citizen* said that the Minister has:

A good forecasting record for any Finance Minister managing a \$111 billion a year budget.

I remember sitting here in the past listening to Liberal Finance Ministers come up with projections on how much the deficit would be. At no time in my experience in Parliament was any Liberal Finance Minister anywhere near correct in predicting the size of the deficit. Time and time again the deficit was far greater, and I mean billions of dollars greater, than was predicted by the Liberal Government's Finance Minister. Those doubters who now sit, and deservedly sit, in opposition always stated that the country needs a responsible Government to get it rolling. I suggest to you, Sir, that our Government is giving the country responsible Government, and we have proven by our record that we can do that.

I just want to give a few ups and downs for my friends across the way. Unemployment is down since we took office to 9.5 per cent from 11.7 per cent. We have created 600,000 jobs since 1984, 328,000 of which were for women. I point out to my hon. friends opposite that we have appointed more women to positions than the Liberals ever did during their years in office. I remind members of both opposition Parties that time after time they said that if we brought in our deficit reduction measures it would cost us jobs. It has not cost us jobs. It has given 600,000 Canadians an opportunity to work, which is more than the Liberal Government ever did.

I want to talk about another item, that of interest rates. They are down to 9.75 per cent, the lowest level in eight years.

**Mr. Gauthier:** What about the Bill?

**Mr. Lewis:** What does the Hon. Member mean, the Bill? The bill that the Liberals left for the Canadian taxpayers will be very difficult to pay.