

themselves on the issue of indexation of income tax and pensions. They swallowed themselves as it related to the 18c. excise tax when they promised the people cheap gasoline and it is now five times the amount that we campaigned on.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, the Member illustrates exactly the point I was making. He does not understand what is happening in the House, including when his Leader is present or absent. Of course, my description can apply to only one person in the House, and it is not me nor the Member for Pembina (Mr. Elzinga); it applies to the Member for St. John's West. I very distinctly said, as *Hansard* will show, that my good friend from St. John's West is the bionic mouth not attached to any known intelligent life form. I said that about him, but of course the Member for Pembina would misunderstand that as he misunderstands most things.

I spent the time in my speech showing how the Tories reversed themselves on a number of issues. I documented them. If he wants a full report, he should look in *The Toronto Star*. *The Toronto Star* documented it in 1979. He does not want to hear that because that is reality. He wants to engage in rhetoric.

The people of Canada, whether from P.E.I. or B.C. or the important part east of that are not listening to him, thank God.

Mr. Elzinga: Mr. Speaker, I am truly amazed when I hear an individual talk about reversal. The Canadian public is aware that, as I just indicated to the Hon. Member opposite, the Liberals have consistently swallowed themselves immediately after their election. They are deceitful in their approach and in what they indicate to the Canadian people during that election period. I indicated their deceit in 1972, 1974 and 1980.

I cannot see how an honourable person could be part of a Party that can swallow itself so readily just to be on the Government benches.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order. The Chair has grave doubts that this 10 minute question period was conducted properly. The Standing Orders are very precise about the reason for this 10 minute question period. I would like to quote from Standing Order 35(2)(b). It reads:

—following the speech of each Member a period not exceeding ten minutes shall be made available, if required, to allow Members to ask questions and comment briefly on matters relevant to the speech and to allow responses thereto;

This question period was not intended for mud slinging or the type of speeches that are more at home on hustings during an election campaign. I would like to remind Hon. Members that comments should relate to the substance of what was contained in a Member's speech.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The House is the master of its own fate. Could we have unanimous consent to continue our questioning so that we could come to the budgetary matters in our comments to the Hon. Member? Since he specifically is President of his Party nationally and a very important spokesman, I am sure he would not mind a few more questions about the Budget.

The Budget—Mr. MacLaren

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, it is very unusual for me to rise on a point of order. But in view of what has been happening here in the last few minutes, when the two hon. gentlemen from the other side saw fit to stand and do anything except discuss the Budget speech or the speech of the previous speaker and preferred to cast insults and aspersions on the Leader of our Party, I see no reason at all why we should give unanimous consent for them to continue on that course.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): The Minister of State for Finance (Mr. MacLaren) has the floor.

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, we have before us today a motion which criticizes the Budget in four principal areas. It says that the budgetary deficit is too high, that the Budget fails to lower existing high interest rates, reduce unemployment or introduce meaningful pension reform. In the next few minutes, let me deal with one or two of these questions which have been raised.

In fact, we have a Budget which sets out the deficit for 1983-84 and 1984-85 in quite clear terms. It indicates the estimated level of that deficit for the years ahead.

However, the critics of the Budget tell us that that deficit is too high. The Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), among others, says that the deficit is too large. I question the criticism on the part of the Member for St. John's West, who is the finance critic for the Opposition, because he has told us that he would do the very same thing. He said that if he were the Minister of Finance he would have a deficit that is at least as high as the one that is in this Budget.

Let us not make any mistake about what he has said. The Member for St. John's West said that, "the present Minister of Finance had little choice this year except to plan for a deficit in the \$30 billion range". That is what we have, a deficit in the \$30 billion range. That is what he says he would have done as well.

He went on to say, "A big deficit this year is necessary to encourage economic recovery". That is a quotation from the Hon. Member. That is what we have.

I do not understand how there can be an Opposition motion before us complaining about the size of the federal deficit when the principal spokesman for the Opposition on financial questions says that he would do exactly the same thing.

The reason he would do exactly the same thing is quite obvious. We in Canada have passed through a period of real economic recession. We are on the way to recovery from that economic recession. Indeed, we are on the threshold of substantial growth in the time ahead. The Hon. Members opposite must recognize that during a period of recession there are social programs that must be sustained. The revenue of the Government diminishes during a period of economic recession. Tax revenue is not at the level it would be during a period of great prosperity, so we maintain the essential programs by deficit spending. We do so fully conscious of what we are doing. We do so because we recognize that Canadians must be sustained through a period of recession, especially those who