

Borrowing Authority

Not only will this huge blank cheque result in an unimagined transfer of capital from the private sector to the public sector, but it will also revolutionize the Canadian political system. Its impact could extend far beyond the borders of this country, bringing serious, adverse international repercussions. In light of the Right Hon. Prime Minister's proclaimed "new society", it is not too far-fetched to suggest that this abridgment of our freedoms through excess taxation could shift Canada overnight—from 1981 to 1984—into a totalitarian nation having a one-party rule instead of the previous system where we prided ourselves in our freedoms and our democratic traditions.

One might say that my views are far-fetched, that I am exaggerating the situation, but I call in defence of my statements and my claims the words of the present Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance as delivered to a luncheon meeting of the Canadian Club at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto on Monday, February 2, 1981. Among other things, the Minister of Finance stated on page two, the third paragraph:

The same men and women who operate our factories, staff our offices and teach our children make up the society we are so determined to preserve. The economy is not simply an engine of production, not just the source of GNP. It is the mechanism for meeting the material needs of society. And by the same token, the expectations and desires of society must not exceed what the economy can realistically produce.

I repeat that the expectations and desires of society must not exceed what the economy can realistically produce. I wish the Minister of Finance were in the House at the present time, but I say to him, neither should the expectations of government, for when the government's desires exceed what the economy can produce, the end result is the same.

What is the end result? For the answer I turn to the fourth paragraph on page two of the minister's speech wherein he said:

When this connection is forgotten or neglected, all dialogue loses its meaning, and as both history and current events throughout the world so vividly demonstrate, dire consequences often result. All too often when the demands of society are at odds with the ability of the economy is protected from society or society is protected from the economy, and, in the extreme, capitalistic fascism or revolution is the result.

If one simply substitutes in the Minister of Finance's speech the words "the demands of government" for the "demands of society", then the conclusions he reached are identical, namely, freedoms within the economy are repressed and the end result is revolution. These men who lead the country, they know the answers, and sometimes in veiled statements they are making them in speeches in places other than this House.

At page three the Minister of Finance went on to say:

Within a democracy we cannot protect ourselves from ourselves.

He could also have added, "or from excessive government expenditures and actions", and again his conclusions would have been the same.

After reading the speech of the Minister of Finance, I could not help but be appalled, as I am certain all Canadians who read it would be appalled, at the manner in which on pages four and five by direct statements and innuendos he pitted one

province against another and he pitted the east against the west, which does little or nothing to bring about unity in the country.

Obviously members of the present government are all candidates of the Dale Carnegie course on "How to Win Friends and Influence People", for the type of comments made by the Deputy Prime Minister in Toronto does absolutely nothing to bring about the unity within the nation which is required at this time.

The Minister of Finance's double-talk continued throughout his entire speech. On page seven he stated:

The gradual tightening of government expenditures was in part designed to remind Canadians that attitudes must change. As we strengthen our economy, we must not ask more from it than it can provide.

This statement leads me to ask: Why is he doing just that? Why is he asking more from our economy than it can obviously provide? Surely in defence he cannot claim that he and his colleagues have strengthened the economy of Canada. If so, they are obviously unaware that as a result of the national energy policy, 60 drilling rigs and 16 service rigs have left Canada, nearly all bound for the United States. Since the National Energy Program was announced on October 28, I understand that 60 more rigs are committed to leave Canada by April 30. How can this government claim a strengthened economy by mid-1981 when a spokesman for the Canadian Association of Oil Well Drilling Contractors states that the equipment that will have left Canada or which will be sitting idly in Canada will amount to more than half the Canadian industry's ability to drill and service oil and gas wells in this country? When Canadian oil companies cut back their planned 1982 expenditures from earlier anticipated levels by as much as 40 per cent, as a result of this government's taxation and energy policies, surely it is time the cabinet re-examined its policy, not only its national energy policy but its spending policy as well. The energy policy is as harmful in Atlantic Canada as it is in western Canada, which leads me to ask in Nova Scotian terms: How many storm signals are required by this government before they alter course? As I previously mentioned, disunity is rampant throughout the entire nation, for one reason or another.

● (1640)

An hon. Member: Even in the Conservative Party.

Mr. Crouse: The dream of self-sufficiency in energy continues to elude us. Our true unemployment picture today is in excess of one million Canadians. Our inflation rate is at an all-time high. The purchasing power of our dollar vis-à-vis that of the United States is at an all-time low. Sir, there are times when I hope—and there is someone mumbling opposite, surely in the next three weeks to a month he will have an opportunity to make a speech and I guarantee you one thing, Mr. Speaker, I do not make a habit of interrupting anyone. I will not interrupt him and I will ask him to do the same while I am endeavouring to put before this House the desperate needs of the Canadian people, especially of my people in Nova Scotia.