

Mr. Jarvis (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, there are many aspects of this whole matter, but I should like to come back to the issue that seems to pop up from the Liberals time and time again. It has to do with the 18 cents a gallon excise tax increase.

The Minister of Finance on Tuesday evening quoted the price of oil using 1954 dollars and bringing them forward to 1979. I should like to do this exercise slightly differently. I would like to point out to the hon. members of this House and to the Canadian people that if you use a constant dollar—and I shall pick the 1971 dollar—and if you take that 1971 dollar and eliminate inflation and look at what it would buy in 1949, and then bring it forward to 1979, you can get an accurate, graphic measurement of what has happened to the price of a gallon of gasoline.

Taking the month of September 1949 and using a constant dollar, gasoline in this country cost 68 cents per gallon. If you take the same 1971 constant dollar and projected it forward to September 1979, the cost of gasoline in this country would be 58 cents per gallon. It would have gone down 10 cents. As far as I know, gasoline is the only commodity that has gone down in price during this period.

I should now like to take the 18 cents excise tax and add it to the 58 cents. By doing that you come up with a price of 76 cents per gallon, which is still the cheapest price for gasoline in the industrialized world by far. The Americans are now toying with a proposal which will put the effective price as of the new year on their gasoline, in Canadian dollars and using imperial gallons, at over \$2.10 per gallon. Yet the Liberals are still complaining over an 18-cent price increase.

The Canadian people understand that this government was left with massive deficits, over-spending and debts that have to be serviced out of the country and be paid off in time. At the same time they understand that there is a duty and an obligation on all of us to meet the challenge of the eighties and to become self-sufficient in energy.

● (1550)

I am very proud to be associated with this budget. I have no hesitation in saying that this budget is acceptable to the people of Willowdale. I have heard the rumblings. I have read the newspapers. I understand my friends across the floor think it would be a lot of fun to turf us out of office this evening. If that is their course, so be it. However, let me tell them that the people of Willowdale are prepared to re-elect this government with this budget.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Fabien Roy (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, we have to examine and vote on the budget the minister tabled in this House Tuesday night. We have, of course, to make an objective analysis of it because the decisions that will have to be made in the next hours, in the next days, could be critical in many respects. Mr. Speaker, when one has to examine the budget of a government, it is a bit like having to examine the budget of a business.

The Budget—Mr. F. Roy

It is rather difficult to analyse a budget objectively if you do not have the whole picture of the situation. As far as I am concerned, I still have many things to learn but I have very seldom seen company directors examine their corporate budget without having in hand a comprehensive financial statement which will tell them where they actually stand, and by comparing it with previous financial statements, they can see exactly where they were and how far they have gone. This will tell them whether they are going in the right direction. Only then and not otherwise can you analyse fully and objectively a company budget. So I see here, in this Parliament of Canada, we are denied this important thing. We are not provided with any financial statement on the general situation in this country. We are provided with just a brief analysis, more of a political nature than not, instead of being provided with those broad indications, that financial statement, describing exactly where we stand so as to be able to determine in all objectivity what are the decisions that have to be made and how we must correct the situation so Canada can meet the challenges of the future.

Indeed, to be able to assess a budget properly, you have to examine the situation of the economy. The financial statement is obviously missing. The former government did not care much for that either. We have to look at the country and the various regions to be able to determine where the imbalances are. You have, of course, to look at the world and international situations because we have partners not only among nations but also trading partners. We also have to look at the government's financial situation. I can say, Mr. Speaker, that the government's financial situation is nothing to be happy about but I do not have time to make an analysis of all the decisions that have been made in the past which have led to this financial morass in which this country finds itself.

Let us simply recall an historic fact. I repeat, this is an historic fact. For 50 of the last 60 years, the country has been governed by the Liberals.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy (Beauce): I see people shouting "Hear, hear!" on the other side, and I believe they are Liberals. Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder because they have just shown their knowledge and ability, but their complete lack of understanding of the present situation.

Mr. Speaker, we have to outline a comprehensive policy. We need a program for the future. We need major directions. We need comprehensive plans. They only think of voting and of playing petty politics. Mr. Speaker, would you please call them back to order? I do not think that I have interrupted one of my colleagues since I came to this House. I have noted that it is always those who never have the courage to rise in this House to defend the interests of their constituents who keep interrupting me when I have the floor.