

Income Tax

Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), it was thought that his successor might prove to be better at financial forecasting. There was also the consideration that it was perhaps embarrassing for the Right Hon. Prime Minister of Canada to ask the then Minister of Finance to resign because his budget, his budgetary forecasts and his general administration had proved to be a complete failure. However, I would have thought that the present Minister of Finance would come up with sounder proposals and better planning so that Canadians in general and businessmen in particular would have some idea of where the Government is going.

There has been no improvement, however. Today, some pertinent questions were asked about Petro-Canada which is once more about to make the Government renege on its promises regarding oil prices and the world market price. Yesterday, the Minister of Finance announced he was very disappointed that the deficit would be even greater than expected, that he would have to borrow, several more billion dollars, and so, that government spending is increasing more and more. And today, the Minister of Finance is telling us once more that he will have to find new sources of revenue. Where is he going to find them? According to him, he has no choice. He was unable to accept some of the cuts in Government spending.

To err is human, I understand that. On the weekend I read in the paper that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Caccia) refused to recognize and, in fact, disclaimed any responsibility for a mistake which is costing his own department a million dollars because of commitments made to certain employees. As I see it, Canadians will not be able to tolerate that sort of thing much longer. I think it is important to remind Canadians of the mistakes being made in various departments, the mistakes made by the Minister of Finance and the changes he was obliged to make, not because the Government was reluctant to introduce these new taxes, but because the Opposition did its job, and because on this side of the House, we fiercely defended the interests of Canadians, who in turn helped us by their response to various surveys which indicated that this Government's popularity was declining. Of course, some Liberal Members, although secretly and never in the House, expressed their concern about the Minister of Finance and finally forced the Prime Minister of Canada to get rid of the Minister who is now Secretary of State for External Affairs. That did not help matters, Mr. Speaker. It did not improve the situation very much, it has not reassured Canadians, and today, the present Minister of Finance is already demonstrating an incredible lack of direction. I agree with the Auditor General that this Government has lost control over its spending, and I think it is absolutely necessary to bring out all these facts and to show the Canadian people the unmitigated mess this Government is making of governing the country.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear from this piece of legislation that the Government is again going to rob the poor, Canadians who are looking for work and who are waiting for the Government's

miracle policies to create jobs and give hope to the unemployed and especially to young Canadians who are getting desperate in a way they have never been before, because of rising unemployment. The Bill before the House today, and I want to make this quite clear, clearly reflects the Government's poor administration, its erroneous forecasts and the truly incredible mistakes made by people who are supposed to be running the country and give Canadians a set of positive economic policies.

However, there are no such policies, and instead, we have had forty-eight so-called remedies. I think it is important to remember that in less than three years, the Government has had to introduce forty-eight changes in its four last budgets, because they contained incredible mistakes—mistakes that were made by the present Minister of Finance's Cabinet colleagues and which he has had to correct, and worst of all, Mr. Speaker, the present Minister of Finance was a party to these forecasts and mistakes when he was responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources. In Cabinet, he endorsed so many erroneous decisions that would seem incredible to the average businessman who must be wondering about the manner in which we are being governed. Mr. Speaker, you know as well as I do that administrators with this record of incompetence, and I think the word is rightly chosen, would be hard-pressed to find a job in the private sector today. Mr. Speaker, that is why we are demanding more and more room for the private sector, but unfortunately, that is not the philosophy of this Government. Through the measures before the House today, this Government is directly competing with the private sector, which has demonstrated that it can provide far more effective management than the Government has been able to produce to this day. In the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to remind Canadians about the poor management and government this country is getting, and to express the hope that Canadians will soon be asked to pass judgment on this Government, and I sincerely hope that this will happen, Mr. Speaker.

• (1530)

[English]

Mr. John Gamble (York North): Mr. Speaker, one of the handicaps of the new Rules as they apply to speeches in the House is that within a brief period of ten minutes, a topic of the kind confronting us today, namely an examination of the provisions of Bill C-139, must be discussed. Even general comments are difficult in connection with this extensive piece of legislation which is 292½ pages long and covers a statute which, with its accompanying explanatory notes, as some of my colleagues on the other side would recognize, would stand in the CCH compilation, two feet high. It would require the steady attention, I submit, of a Member of this House who wished to understand the provisions of the Income Tax Act, during a two-year sabbatical from this place spent in a monastery where he was not confronted with any kind of distraction.