

Government Orders

salary, a forever benefits and so on and so forth. Each department has been asked to look at that, but in the process we said we would protect our employees and the numbers I have given you indicate that we have done so.

We have abolished many positions, thousands of them, cutting money, but we have done it through attrition and we have not done it by firing people. We have been very careful to manage well and I am very proud of our record in that respect.

Mr. MacLellan: Mr. Chairman, you would swear that the government was the saviour of the Canadian economy. I have never heard anything so completely nutty in my whole life.

The debt has more than doubled since this government came to power and it had good economic times. Not only has the debt more than double, but in 1984, when the debt was approximately \$180 billion, only 17 per cent was being financed outside Canada. Now it is over \$400 billion and 38 per cent is being financed outside the country. We do not even have control over our own economy.

This government has to sell Treasury bonds to keep the country going from week to week or we are out of business. He has to give a high interest rate and that is the reason the Canadian dollar is high. If we did not have the high interest rate you would not sell the bonds and the country would be out of business. It has put us on the rocks economically. It is blaming poor public servants and the inflation rate. I have never heard anything so full of hogwash in my life.

Mr. Loiselle: Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member takes the time to look at the numbers, he will understand that the deficit has not doubled. It is much below what it was with a much larger economy. The debt of course is higher, but all of it is interest on the debt you left. We have cut. We could not even pay the salaries when we came in with the situation you left us with. We had to borrow \$16 billion to make the payroll. You had a \$38 billion deficit plus a \$200 billion debt. We started trimming down, being opposed every step of the way by people across this room. Now we have, this year, a \$14 billion surplus and we intend to continue trimming governments for the great protection of our own employees.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): As you know, Mr. Chairman, I am at this point but the first of the three amigos to come in the next 20 minutes.

If I may, I just have to start by calling to the memory of this House a commercial that used to air on television.

An hon. member: Slow down so that the interpreter can follow you.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): That was too fast, my apologies.

Several years ago on television there was an advertisement for a candy called Certs. In it there were two people, one of whom insisted that Certs was one kind of mint and the other insisted it was another kind of mint. I am remind of nothing so much as that tonight, watching the Liberals and the Tories trying to determine precisely which has been the most disastrous for Canadian public finances when of course in fact, as the line in the commercial had it, "stop, you are both right, you have both been entirely disastrous for the Canadian public finances".

Moving from that, I owe the House an apology because when previously I was going through my list of questions dealing with the various clauses of the bill before this committee I omitted two clauses. This is an omission I would like now to make up.

Taking in turn clauses 4 and 3, I would note that clause 4, which of course is that section which binds the Crown, is in some senses unique and would only ask in that regard: how is it that most often the government excludes itself from legislation, for example, pay equity and human rights, in its practice at least but in this case deems itself bound by the legislation? But more substantially with regard to clause 3, which is the section that creates the entire regime of the act in terms of forcing the terms of employment on its employees, I would ask the following questions:

• (2140)

(1) Why is there an inclusion of those not involved in job action?

(2) How many workers are to be affected by this bill?

(3) How much is this bill going to save the government?