

Supply

Under this present government we have had the biggest tax increases in history. From the period 1984 to 1988, this country had the largest increase in revenue in history. What did the government do with it? It blew it.

I circulated just recently a questionnaire on the economy in the constituency of Nepean. Questionnaire after questionnaire was returned to me. People are anxious, people are cynical about this government. They have had tax increases that they cannot carry. They have their young people that they can no longer educate. Our young people cannot get jobs. This government does not have one thing to hold its head up high about.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret the hon. member's time has expired. Questions and comments are now terminated.

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting debate today.

I want to talk specifically on the motion put forward today that calls for an election and holding the Prime Minister to statements that he made from time to time when he was in opposition. Not a whole lot has changed. I guess that is the role that we play when we are in opposition, reminding government of some of the things that it said when it was in opposition.

We know and you know it is constitutionally set out that we have elections every five years in this country and we are going to have another one. There is no question about it. I guess if I were a member of the Liberal Party I would be calling for an election.

Some hon. members: Now, now.

Mr. Thompson: They are saying "now, now". It is coming, as the Prime Minister has noted. If I were leading in the polls, I would certainly want an election now as well.

The reason the election is not going to happen now is simply because the support that they are receiving now is rather shallowly rooted.

• (1340)

There are reasons for that. Obviously one of the reasons the support is going to other parties than ours is simply because of the tough times we are going through.

No one questions that. We are going through some pretty tough times.

I want to point to an election south of the border in the last couple of weeks in the United States of America. What did they do? We know what they did. They turfed out the incumbent president, did they not? They turfed him out for a number of reasons. They were not satisfied with what was happening. We can understand that because that is how it works.

The point to be made is that if we had an election today, the very same thing could happen. In the U.S. there were signs that the American economy was starting to pick up. In fact the U.S. had six consecutive months of growth in their economy. We can argue that it was not strong enough and we will all accept that. Obviously the American people did not think that it was strong enough.

I wish to point something out in the November 16 edition of *Business Week*. There is a weekly article called "Business Outlook". I just want to read from that because I think it puts it in perspective. "The sign in President-elect Bill Clinton's campaign's headquarters in Little Rock says it all. It is the economy, stupid". That note kept Clinton's election bid focused on the key issue, which he rode all the way to the White House.

No mistake there. He did the right thing. I do not blame him. I would do the same thing if I were running for office there. After the election they say: "Now comes the hard part. What makes the President-elect's task unusually difficult is the long-term nature of many of the economy's problems and Washington's diminished power to do anything about them. The limitations placed on both fiscal and monetary policy by record federal deficits and other structural impediments only complicate the job at finding solutions that everyone can live with, especially the financial markets".

That is not unlike some of our problems. The previous speaker from Nepean focused on the debt and I will have to step through that as well. The world is locked into some pretty tough economic times. The U.S. obviously is and Canada obviously is. We are a product of many, many years of mismanagement. It would be unfair for me to blame just the previous Liberal government. It is easy for me to say that because most of them over there will admit that they made mistakes. All governments in the western world in the last 25 to 30 years have all