

in Victoria, British Columbia. We are talking of what happens in western Canada and what happens in some of the ridings in northern Canada. The fall comes pretty early there. We want a budget because the people of Canada want to know where we are going.

As the hon. member for York-Peel pointed out earlier today, this country has not had a proper budget, a proper plan, a proper direction where the statutes proposed were passed by this House, for the past 33 months. It has not been a question of election after election; it has been a question of the impossibility of this government getting down to brass tacks. Even in the three months that we have been sitting in this Parliament we have not been presented with the budget measures involved in the budget statement of November, 1978 or in the statement made by the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) on April 21 last.

Mr. Chénier: What about your budget?

Mr. Blenkarn: We have had nothing but drift, indecision and incompetence from this government. This government's attitude is to ask for a Chargex card so that it can go out and spend money. I say to you, sir, that this government knows how to spend money. It does not know how to budget or to control money, but this government knows how to spend it.

The trouble with this bill is that it gives the government a blank cheque; it allows it to go out and spend \$12 billion. This is more money than the ordinary person can even begin to contemplate. The spending of this federal government this year will be in order of \$60 billion. The deficit this year will be in the order of \$14 billion. We are not sure because they are not sure. The debt outstanding right now according to Bank of Canada figures for July 5 is \$74.489 billion. It keeps going up and up. It is forecast that it will be very close to \$84 billion by the end of this fiscal year. Where are we going? That is what the people of Canada and this party want to know. We must have some direction from this government.

● (1540)

Total government spending this year would be enough to buy a new home valued at \$70,000 for every household in British Columbia. The interest that this government is going to spend will be enough to buy every household in Calgary a new house valued at \$70,000. The interest is going to cost every taxpayer \$1,187. That interest alone means that the entire income tax of every person who pays personal tax and earns \$20,000 a year or less will go to pay just the interest on the debt that this government has incurred.

What we have from this government is nothing but pious hope that they can somehow save a billion. That is what the Minister of Finance said in his April statement. Somehow we will get a blender in terms of the oil price agreement. Somehow we will make up some money somewhere and with that blender and pious hope maybe we can somehow, some day, reduce the deficit. The minister said in committee and I quote:

In my April 21 statement I said that it was our intention to reduce the deficit as jobs and economic growth resumed in the economy and that is my intention. I

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think I made it clear yesterday that in light of the current economic circumstances, with a weakening of the Canadian economy that it is my view this year may not be the year to attempt to cut the deficit.

In the election campaign the Prime Minister said it was their intention over time to reduce the deficit. How much time? When is the time up? When do we get the direction? It will never be the right time for this government to balance its budget and reduce its deficit. It will always be jam tomorrow, never jam today. "Alice in Wonderland" would feel at home in Canada with this government.

The whole question of where we are going came up in committee. I want to read into the record a question the hon. member for York-Peel addressed to Dr. Stewart, the deputy minister of finance. I quote:

I take it then when you have reiterated the statement that expenditures will not exceed the growth of the GNP that indicates a change of policy from Mr. Crosbie's position where he contemplated a zero growth as far as federal government spending was concerned, you in effect are saying as long as you do not go up any faster than inflation plus real growth you are happy—over a three or four year period your expenditure level could easily end up 10 or 12 per cent higher than was anticipated over the Crosbie budget?

Mr. Stewart replied:

I guess that is the consequence, sir.

They have no intention of doing anything but spending more, building a larger and larger bureaucracy, complicating the affairs of Canada more and more and creating more and more wasteful programs. I draw to the attention of hon. members remarks made by Cliff Pilkey, president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, reported in the *Toronto Star* of June 21 last, headed "Is our economy managed or is it mangled?" I quote:

If governments "simply throw the money into the air" in their attempts to improve the wishy-washy economy, the results might be as good as those now obtained . . .

The attempt to run economies in the closely supervised way in which we run corporations and personal affairs has had many crashing failures. Yet we demand that governments keep trying.

The disasters are well-documented. In some cases, industrial and employment support programs laid out \$4,000 or more annually for each job preserved.

This week, a couple of economists told the Canadian Council on Social Development that the nation spends billions of dollars every year on income security programs which mostly just reshuffle money within the middle class. Many other studies discover much the same thing.

What's the point? Think of the rake-off needed for administration and operating costs of moving money around to little purpose. More important, effort is diverted from necessary and productive programs.

This government operates very much like Parkinson's law—"expenditure rises to meet income". In the case of this government, we are going to see expenditure rising to meet borrowing authority. This Parliament has been manoeuvred into approving borrowing for undisclosed, non-budgeted and hypothetical expenditures. We are being forced to approve today a pig in a poke with no real explanation, notwithstanding what the minister just said. Notwithstanding the vague outline given to us, what we had was a non-budget, a Mickey Mouse budget. In fact, when my secretary was imprudent enough to ask for a copy of the budget of the Minister of Finance of April 21, the minister's staff said it was not a budget. It certainly was not.