

*The Budget—Mr. Blair*

taxes will never be greeted with enthusiasm, it is my belief that this budget will be accepted by the Canadian people as an obvious and essential first step in our country's march forward in the next four years. It is but the first step.

The restoring of financial stability and balance is necessary to lay the basis for necessary and important tax reforms based on the recommendations of the Carter royal commission, which the government intends to place before the house early in the new year. In a new context of stabilized government finance, which I suggest will have to be paralleled by similar action by provincial governments, who with the municipalities now account for the far greater proportion of total government expenditure in Canada, the nation and this parliament can address itself to the important question of tax reform. The aim of this reform must be, as stated by the Carter report, to achieve greater equity in Canada's taxation system.

In a much broader sense this budget will provide the stable base required to ensure the expansion and continued growth of the Canadian economy. It is only through the growth of our capacity to produce goods that we can enjoy a greater prosperity. Through this growth the present level of government expenditures in all jurisdictions can be more easily absorbed, and as our economy expands new and necessary programs can be undertaken. This budget, therefore, provides the essential foundation for the nation's expansion during the life of this parliament.

It is about the immediate future of this nation that I wish to speak. My constituency is in many respects like a miniature Canada. It presents the challenges and the problems which are faced by many areas across this country. It includes the rapidly expanding suburbs of Ottawa, industrial towns on the St. Lawrence such as Prescott, Maitland, Iroquois and Cardinal, and the farming areas in between. But tonight I can speak of only a few of the concerns of my constituency as they relate to the major problems faced by this nation and this parliament.

A recent special report in an Ottawa paper indicated that the Ottawa area was the most rapidly expanding urban area in Canada. It is expected that its population will exceed one million people by 1985. A very large part of this expansion will occur in Nepean township, which forms part of my riding. Urban expansion in any part of Canada presents a major

problem, but in this region it presents particular problems which must be the special concern of this parliament.

The federal government is the largest landowner and by far the largest employer in the metropolitan Ottawa area. It must be involved in the proper development of the area. Hon. members will be aware of the controversy which is now taking place about the planning of the development of downtown Ottawa concerning restrictions on building heights. What this controversy and problem clearly indicate is that there is an over-all defect in the planning and governmental structure in the capital area.

The emergence of a new regional government in this area on January 1, 1969, is a forward step; but it is not enough. The premier of Ontario, speaking recently in Ottawa, pointed out that the structure of the new regional government permitted participation by the federal government in the planning and development of the Ottawa region. Officials of the three governments of Canada, Ontario and Quebec, are now studying in detail the co-operative action which must be taken by them to govern and develop this capital area in the future. A proposal made in the last parliament for the creation of a special joint parliamentary committee to study the operations of the National Capital Commission is also an important step. I hope that this committee will be appointed and commence its work at an early date.

● (9:20 p.m.)

The final result of all of these deliberations, in my judgment, should be the creation of an effective but not domineering federal presence in the governmental structure of the Ottawa area. This will enable the federal government to play a positive and definitive role in the planning and development of this area. This role should not be limited, as it has been in the past, mainly to the creation of great national assets, such as buildings, parks and driveways, but it should be positively directed toward the improvement of the quality of life for all residents.

The task should not be undertaken to create a national capital as a great national monument, but rather as a metropolitan area which will stand forth as an example to all of Canada and will enhance the pleasure of living here for the people for whom the federal government should have a special concern, namely its own employees. In my opinion, we have in this parliament a magnificent opportunity to develop in this capital area all that