

Supply

We keep saying we are controlling spending, that we are cutting spending. We are only cutting the spending on the public's purse-string. We are not controlling the public that is spending, and I mean this House of Commons.

Consider the total loss of jobs in Canada. Fifteen per cent, or 319,000 jobs, have been lost in the manufacturing industry. To get things rolling again, to create jobs and get people back to work, where are we going to find these jobs? The manufacturing industry has gone. In that same period the United States only lost 7 per cent of its manufacturing jobs. So much for this north-south deal we are supposed to have.

I cannot help but agree with the chief government Whip when he says this budget is a disgrace. Indeed it is.

Hon. Alan Redway (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words today with respect to this opposition motion concerning the budget.

The motion and its wording could best be characterized as mischievous. It is an attempt to poke fun, an attempt to have some fun and games at the expense of one of the leadership candidates of our party.

The budget is a very serious matter and Canadians want to see it discussed in a very serious way. That is the way they want all of the business of this House to be treated. I was interested to note that the Leader of the Opposition has indicated publicly during the past few weeks that if he had the opportunity to form a government he would make sure that the business of Parliament, the business of the country was conducted in a very serious way.

I am surprised to find a motion of this sort, which is really a mischievous kind of a motion and one that does the Leader of the Opposition no credit.

The subject matter of the debate is the budget. I believe that the Minister of Finance got it right in this budget. He was right on when he said that Canadians want less government borrowing. They want lower taxes and they want more jobs.

In this budget the Minister of Finance did not lower taxes but he did not announce any new taxes or any tax increases. A year ago, in his budget of February 1992, he

actually lowered taxes. That is what Canadians want. As the parliamentary secretary said a short time ago, there is only one taxpayer in this country. Whether we are paying federal, provincial or municipal taxes it all comes out of the same pocket and the same person. Canadians want lower taxes.

The only Canadians who appear to not want lower taxes are those who run the Canadian Bond Rating Service. When they made their comments which respect to the budget and their credit ratings on Canadian government borrowing and financing they were asked what they would have proposed and they suggested that perhaps we should have had a 2 per cent increase in the GST.

I do not think that is representative of what Canadians want. What Canadians want is exactly what the Minister of Finance said: Lower taxes.

If we are going to get lower taxes it is important that all of the levels of government in this country, and in fact all Canadians, get together on this and do not act at cross purposes. Unfortunately that is the sort of thing that has been happening in this country and happening for too long.

• (1220)

We saw a prize example of that last year. One will remember that in the February 1992 federal budget the Minister of Finance cut personal income taxes by reducing the surtax from 5 per cent to 4 per cent effective July 1, 1992 and down to 3 per cent effective January 1, 1993.

He did this quite clearly to do the sorts of things that some of the opposition members have been talking about today. He was trying to put some more money in the hands of Canadians, have them spend that money, cause them to buy consumer goods and inspire the private sector to invest, expand and create some of those jobs.

What happened with that kind of a tax cut that was put into effect by the Minister of Finance in his 1992 budget, part of which took effect January 1 of this year? As one may remember, about two months after the federal budget the province of Ontario brought down its own budget. Ontario did not hold firm on taxes or lower taxes but in fact it raised the Ontario personal income tax surtax from 54.2 per cent to 55 per cent.