

*The Budget—Mr. Parry*

of this sales tax credit, and it illustrates the way in which the Government is giving with one hand to those who need it and taking with the other from a large proportion of those who do in fact need it as well.

I think it is a good measure to introduce a prepayment of the child tax credit. We have already, I believe, put a stop to most of the abuses of the income tax system and the delays to which refunds were subjected, but I think this is another measure that is worth while, the increase in the child tax credit similarly so.

I can support the introduction of an investment tax credit for Atlantic Canada, but I would like to ask the Government if it has ever heard of British Columbia, and if it is aware that the unemployment levels in many centres in British Columbia are higher than comparable centres in Atlantic Canada. As well, there are communities in other parts of the country, including the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, where there is localized unemployment, and by localized I mean that there is unemployment in one particular job market in a community from which people cannot travel hundreds of miles on a daily basis to get to work. I would like to ask the Government why it is not tailoring this tax credit to the needs right across the country rather than concentrating on a particular region.

The elimination of minor deferrals of tax such as those on investment tax credits, the elimination of deferrals on salary compensation and the elimination of the rather farcical situation in which it was possible for those who married on December 30 to claim one spouse as a deduction for the entire year, are not measures that I or my Party would criticize. Similarly, the reduction of the small business tax is not something we would criticize. Again, they are not measures worthy of widespread condemnation, but they are indicative of a misunderstanding on the part of the Government of the true objectives of a Budget, and more particularly of what small business in this country needs.

The problem facing small business has been described time and again, and I am surprised the Government, with the great lip service it pays, has not yet gotten the message. The difficulty is in starting small businesses and getting them off the ground. It is not the profitable small businesses that need this sort of incentive or assistance, but those having difficulty getting on a profitable basis. I am surprised the Government does not realize that.

There will be funds for the adjustment of older workers to employment and funds for people to make the very difficult transition, as it often is, particularly for single-parent families headed by women, from the home to the workplace. If these measures are put into effect in a humane and practical way, and not in the kick-them-in-the-rear-end fashion that the unlamented Social Credit Government of British Columbia as it styles itself has tried to use, these could be beneficial, as could be the farm assistance, the Atlantic Enterprises and the housing deductions for people in isolated posts and northern communities.

However, in this area the Government has thrown a cat among the pigeons. Apparently it does not know yet which

isolated posts it is talking about, and that is something that needs clarification. Flexibility in Registered Retirement Savings Plans is something that has been requested for a number of years. The cutoff at the age of 71 was not something that was practical or fair.

It may come as a surprise or shock to some of the people who have been travelling around the country over the weekend to hear this, but I am not even going to criticize the publicity strategy the Government is using in relation to the Budget. I think Government Members have the right, if they truly believe in the Budget that has been tabled, to sell it to different parts of the country. I think they even have the right to talk to their local media rather than the national media. I think it is not a bad idea for the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) to go to Kitchener, Ontario, to talk about his Budget. However, I do not like what I hear after all the advanced preparation, intelligence and application of human and financial resources which went into preparing Government Members so they could go out to sell and defend the Government.

● (1250)

[*Translation*]

Then a Member comes into the House and reads his speech from beginning to end. That, Mr. Speaker, is a shame. If a Government Member is so convinced that it is a good Budget he should be smart enough to defend it without reading a speech which he has learned by heart and which was probably drafted in the office of the Minister of Finance.

[*English*]

If they cannot defend it without notes, I wonder what they are doing defending it at all.

I should like to turn to the real objectives of the Budget as I see them. We know that the 1985 Budget was tailored to the satisfaction of the demands of Bay Street. In 1986, the Government added Wall Street to the itinerary and tailored the Budget to the demands of Wall Street and Bay Street. There was a magic number. The Government was aiming to get the deficit down below \$30 billion, which has been done on the backs of Canadian people. The Government did not do it by eliminating tax breaks, introducing fairness into the system or by going through expenditures and pruning out those which were inefficient. It did it by blanket cuts, and on the backs of ordinary Canadians. It has done it while preserving almost all tax breaks or incentives. It does not matter what one calls them, they are there and the people who are getting them know what they are. They are breaks designed to help wealthy taxpayers minimize their tax commitment or exposure. Again it does not matter what one calls them. They know that they are being helped by the Budget.

What has been substituted? It is principally a raid on the purses of middle-income groups. We have come up with a figure. Since the Government came to power, the average Canadian family in the middle-income range is paying an extra \$1,305 in tax to the Government. It is a telling criticism