

I would like to concentrate for a moment on the government's record. It is asking for \$24.7 billion and Canadians have to ask why. For what reason is this government yet again asking for more money?

Since the 1989 budget there has been a 16.5 per cent increase in government revenues. To all intents and purposes that means that there has been a 16.5 per cent increase in taxation, because that money has had to come from some place, keeping in mind that we are in the middle of a recession.

During that same period, my colleague from Thunder Bay—Nipigon and others on this side of the House will recall for everyone present and all of those who are following this debate that the national debt has increased by a further 27.3 per cent.

So when the government asks for money, there must be a reason for that money, for its utilization. For what purposes do we collect taxes unless we are going to put them to use for our citizens? But as my colleague has indicated, that purpose is not altogether clear.

Before I go on to some of those analyses, it is important or at least instructive for those present to recall that from the time this government came into power in 1984 until this last budget, income taxes have increased by 64 per cent. Sales taxes have increased by 236 per cent. Gasoline taxes, one of the big inducements to cross-border shopping, have increased by 479 per cent. And yet we still have a debt. We have a burgeoning debt. It has gone up by 27.3 per cent over that same period.

Most Canadians might be able to stomach that increase in taxation, all that money. We would say yes, we are willing to contribute to the greater need of our country. But for what purposes has that money been used? Has it been used to redress the regional inequities in this country?

Let us just think for a moment about the population distribution. Atlantic Canada, as one example, houses 8.6 per cent of Canada's population. Yet that population is only able to pay 5.8 per cent in income taxes to our general revenues. When we consider both provincial and federal revenues, they pay 5.7 per cent.

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One might stop and say that is unfair, that they should be paying more. They are incapable of paying more because over the course of the last two Parliaments the government has been unwilling to address a crying need, that is regional disparity.

I will continue again with Atlantic Canada, just to give an indication of how remiss the government has been in addressing the needs of Canadians. When that population, that 8.6 per cent of Canada's population, files its income tax returns, 57.6 per cent of all its net revenues include UI, old age security and family allowances. The people of Atlantic Canada depend on the largess—and that is not a very nice term—of Canadians elsewhere.

By comparison, my own province of Ontario has a much lower distribution or contribution to those types of programs. Despite the fact that the people of Ontario comprise 36.7 per cent of Canada's population, they are contributing 45.7 per cent to national revenues.

We have not addressed the inequities we see through both revenue accumulation and revenue distribution by this government. Even worse, have we addressed the areas where Canadians can grow? Have we addressed the imbalances we see in the economy of the country?

You know as well as others, Mr. Speaker, that about 30 cents out of every dollar earned in Canada comes from international trade. We have a negative balance of trade with Japan, with the European Economic Community, with other OECD countries, and with all other countries. The only country with which we have a positive trade balance is the United States. This in itself is a cause for shame for all of Canada, because we do 75 per cent of our business with the United States. No other country in the world is so dependent on one client, on one market as Canada.

Is this government using the resources it is asking Canadians to contribute for the purposes of redressing these kinds of imbalances?

Even in our trade with the United States we have a negative balance in all areas except that which my hon. colleague from Thunder Bay—Nipigon indicated, and that is in the primary resource area. Imagine, the only positive component of our international trade which contributes 30 cents out of every dollar earned in Canada comes from our primary resources.