

What needs to be said is that the promises of the Government to the people during the election campaign have not been lived up to in its performance. The Conservatives in office are a much harsher and meaner group than they were in the election campaign. In the election they promised jobs, they promised employment. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said that there would be tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of jobs created overnight if his government were elected. They held out the promise of economic renewal and a hope for a better future to all Canadians. They said they could reduce the deficit by cutting out waste rather than cutting out needed programs. They said that they would be compassionate. Now that they are in office, the first thing they do is to question the universality of social programs.

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They continue to say that day by day in this House when they are questioned about where those jobs are. The economic statement that they introduced really focuses upon the deficit. If they had said during the election campaign what they were going to do and had Canadians known what they were going to do thus far as a government, there is very little doubt in my mind that they would not have been elected to govern. They certainly would not have the number of members they have in the House today. They misled, whether deliberately or unconsciously, the Canadian people.

Their economic policy focuses upon the deficit. All of us in this House and all Canadians are concerned about public expenditures. When a government follows the simplistic formula, that reducing public expenditure leads to deficit reduction and in turn to increased employment, we are in trouble. There is much in the experience of this country that tells us that that sort of approach to economics, public expenditures and job creation leaves much to be desired. It deserves to be questioned.

A study by the Department of Finance, which the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have refused to make public, questions the efficacy of this economic policy. It questions whether the economic policy which the Government has adopted will in effect create jobs. That economic analysis which the Government refuses to make public states that their economic policy will lead to job losses. Rather than having increased employment and fulfilling the hopes of people, the hopes of people will actually be shattered. There will be more people unemployed as a result of the economic policy that this Government is pursuing.

It increases the cynicism in the public when the Government refuses to make available hard data about its economic policy. This Government promised to be open. It is fair and reasonable to measure a government's performance on the basis of the criteria that it established for its own performance. They said that it is important for a government to be open, important for the democratic process for information to be shared. However, when it comes to a piece of information that would be valuable for the present debate, and it is an important debate, this Government simply refuses to make that informa-

tion available. They are a closed government. They are stonewalling us. That is completely contrary to the image that they projected to the Canadian people during the election campaign.

We have a good notion about what the secret studies say about their economic policy. A private agency has also analysed the impact of their economic policy. This organization, Informetrica Limited, has come to the conclusion that the economic statement which the Government brought down will cost the economy 50,000 jobs next year. Rather than the creation of tens of thousands of jobs overnight, we will have the loss of 50,000 jobs as a result of the actions of this Government.

There are other reasons to question seriously the economic approach of this Government, the simplistic notion that if you cut public expenditures, deficits will fall and employment will rise. All we have to do is look to the West Coast and the experience in British Columbia. The people there have experienced what is a Conservative government under a different label. They call themselves Social Credit, but in fact they are a Conservative government, a Reaganite, philosophical cabal.

That government too promised employment, freedom from want and a better future. The experience has been mounting unemployment and increased deficits rather than lower deficits. This has brought a great deal of misery to the people. It has meant that important social programs have been cut. At the same time, the amount of debt that people have to bear has increased.

This contrasts quite startlingly with the experience in Manitoba. The Manitoba Government has chosen not only in the promises in the election campaigns, but in the administration of its affairs on a day to day basis, to make employment the number one priority. Through the creation of the Manitoba Jobs Funds and through devoting public expenditures to that objective, we have the result of Manitoba having the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

We in this House should learn from the experience at the provincial level. We should learn from what has gone on in Manitoba and in British Columbia. Rather than following its ideological beacons and wearing blinders with regard to the economic facts of life in this country, this Government should re-examine the direction in which it is taking this country.

I want to note as well that while this Government focuses all of its attention upon the deficit and its hopes of reducing that deficit, and while I am concerned that the public dollar be taken care of, I want to raise some questions about the notion that somehow a deficit is necessarily a bad thing. If we take notice of the fact that Japan has an unemployment rate that is much lower than ours in Canada, we see as well that it has a larger deficit. That should give us pause to question the strategy that this Government has adopted.

The United States has a Conservative government, at least in rhetorical terms, certainly in terms of social policy and defence policy, yet when it comes to public expenditures and