

future of those whose livelihoods have long depended upon the fishing resources.

It is clear that the Prime Minister's word is worth nothing. On December 13 and again on January 22 the Prime Minister made a commitment to Atlantic Canadians. He made that commitment to this House and to the people of Canada to provide programs as generous as those made available to prairie farmers.

The budget was his opportunity to demonstrate that he was prepared to assist these people. He has refused to go to meet them, and he is not prepared even to fulfil the commitment that he intends to support them.

Indeed the deep cuts to health care, post-secondary education and the myriad program cuts in the budget will have tragic consequences on Atlantic Canadians already suffering under a crisis.

When is this government going to listen? When is it going to keep its promises? When is it going to care for Atlantic Canadians?

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THE BUDGET

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, my riding of Nipissing along with other northern Ontario ridings took full advantage of regional development grants. To cut incentive grants to business makes it even more difficult for northern communities to compete with our southern neighbours. We have already endured cuts to our transportation infrastructure by losing Air Canada and VIA. This is just another blow by a callous and indifferent government.

At a time when the Minister of Finance himself projects a higher rate of unemployment, incentive grants are essential for the economic development of the north.

Also of concern in my riding is the elimination of postal service review committee. At a time when many of my constituents are faced with the impact of franchising postal service and closing of rural post offices, a service review mechanism is essential. This just demonstrates that the government's only commitment to postal service is to deliver a profit and not deliver the mail to satisfied customers.

Oral Questions

Our veterans, contrary to what the Minister of Finance said, will be affected by the cuts in the budget. They will pay \$3,000 more a year for care in veterans homes.

Our veterans paid their dues when they walked into battle. When the government starts using these people to save money it has gone too far.

Now is not the time to dissolve our principles but rather to resolve our difficulties.

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THE BUDGET

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, this government continues to provide the leadership we were elected to give. The government will reduce the deficit to \$28.5 billion in 1990-91 and to \$10 billion by 1994-95.

To continue to build a secure future for all Canadians, we must continue to reduce the deficit. That is exactly what we did.

In our latest budget there are "no new taxes". Spending restraint is the key to deficit reduction.

The measures in this budget together with those announced in December will produce cumulative savings of more than \$19 billion over the next five years.

Program spending was restrained to 3.6 per cent over the last five years. That is well below the rate of inflation, and it beat the performance of all 10 provincial governments.

There is no painless way to restrain spending, but we in Alberta are willing to do our share. The expenditure reductions outlined in our budget are tough, but they are necessary.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

MAIN ESTIMATES

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the President of the Treasury Board on the Main Estimates, quite apart from the procedural matter I understand the Chair is considering.