

Supply

ask again: Is it not a question of priorities in how we put people back to work?

Another thing in the budget is the GST tax credit. This tax credit goes to the poorest people in our country. It is paid out four times a year, every three months, as agreed three years ago in legislation in the House. The government is going to change that and pay the tax credit to the poorest people not four times a year but twice a year. Do you know what it saves? It saves \$7.5 million a year.

Mrs. Sparrow: It is the same amount of money. It is called efficiency.

Mr. Nystrom: The government saves \$7.5 million and the people get the same amount of money, but for the poor people who need a cheque every month or every three months it will now not come every three months but every six months. That is why the Whip is right when he says this budget is a disgrace. That is why members on every side should stand up with us in the opposition and say that this budget is a disgrace. It lacks in vision and lacks a plan as to where this country should be going into the year 2000.

We need a jobs plan. Our party said about two months ago, which the Liberal Party has still not said, that we do have a plan and a vision of how we can put the Canadian people back to work. Our leader announced this plan about two months ago. We are saying first of all that our government should be investing to build a stronger infrastructure in terms of transportation and communication. I also think of the sewage being dumped in lakes, rivers and streams in this country. I believe a lot of municipalities are dumping raw sewage into the waters of Canada.

These are the kinds of things we should be doing: investing in the infrastructure, building a stronger country and putting people to work. When people have jobs they pay taxes. They will be off unemployment insurance and welfare. That is something we should be doing and yet there is nothing at all in the budget about infrastructure.

Second, as a party we are saying that we should begin a national investment fund so that we have a pool of capital in which to make some equity investment into businesses, small businesses, co-operatives and different businesses across this country. That is something we are lacking today.

We are suggesting that this should be an investment fund that is funded not just by the federal government but by the provinces and the municipalities so that we have some kind of a national investment plan and a national investment fund where we can put Canadian entrepreneurs to work to create jobs and build a stronger Canada.

Third, what our leader said in this plan—and it is all in detail here if you want to have a copy, Mr. Speaker—is that we should start spending more money on research and development than we have in the past. In fact, looking at our figures and statistics, you will find that we spend less on research and development than almost any other industrialized country in the world.

• (1135)

We spend as a percentage of our Gross Domestic Product about half of what the Japanese spend, half of what the Germans spend, half of what the French spend or the Swedes spend. Of course a large part of that is the private sector. One reason the private sector does not spend much in research and development is that so much of our economy is owned and controlled by foreigners and they do the research and development in the United States or elsewhere.

We are going to have to spend more in research and development. If we invest in research and development we will do the innovation in this country. We will create the goods and products that are now being created elsewhere and imported from the United States, Japan or western Europe.

We have to spend more money on training and retraining of our workers. Again, if you compare our country with western Europeans, the Japanese and the Americans, on a per capita basis we spend less money on training of our workers for the jobs that lie ahead and for the new technologies.

Finally, we have to say to the Canadian people what our party has said, that if we want to regain control of our economy, regain control of our country and the sovereignty, we need to make our own decisions, the time has come to abrogate the free trade agreement with the United States. I say to the member across the way, if she goes out and talks to the ordinary people in this country, they will say we should abrogate the trade deal. They agree that the government has sold out our independence, sold out our sovereignty and has given away too much for too little. You hear that when you talk to the Canadian people.