

*The Budget—Mr. Coates*

**Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North):** Mr. Speaker, before commencing discussion of the budget proposals put forward by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) I should like to take a moment specifically to refer to the events in relation to our 108th anniversary which took place on Parliament Hill yesterday, and which as far as I know was still Dominion Day regardless of how many people who tried to insist that it was a day with a different name. My purpose in making mention of what transpired on Parliament Hill yesterday is not from the point of view of arguing over the name of the day so much as to offer to all government officials who had something to do with making it the event that it was my personal compliments.

May I also say to members of all parties in the House that if they want to be inspired, if they really want to appreciate what Canada is all about, to see what makes Canada strong when sometimes we think it is weak, all they needed do was to observe the group of individuals who last night covered every patch of grass on Parliament Hill to join together, regardless of colour or creed, to enjoy the culture of this nation and the magnificent fireworks display. That will be indelibly imprinted in my mind as one of the significant things that brings us all together and makes us proud of this great nation of ours, giving us the assurance that it will continue to be a great nation and grow to be an even greater nation as the years pass by.

● (1510)

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Coates:** Having said that, I should like now to make some specific comments about the budget or the non-budget produced by the Minister of Finance which we are now debating and which will prove to be very meek in many ways. By far the most significant aspect of this debate has been the lack of support indicated in speeches delivered by members of the minister's own party. That much has been clearly shown already. While those speeches contain strong objections to the budgetary proposals, or the lack of them, when the votes are recorded those who have spoken against these proposals will vote for the package that has been presented.

Instead of attacking the double problem of inflation and unemployment, the minister has stoked the fires and there is less likelihood now that either will abate than before the budget was presented. This budget has been described as the worst in memory. Words such as, "heartless" and "cruel" fit the bill, but do not go nearly far enough. This budget puts us firmly on the road to self-destruction from an economic point of view. It is not that we were not on that road before the budget, it is just that the minister has made certain there is now no way to detour.

I should like now to pay special tribute to the member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), particularly for his dedication, determination and the work he put in trying to come forward with alternate proposals to those of the budget.

**An hon. Member:** Unworkable proposals.

**Mr. Coates:** How would anybody over there know whether these proposals are unworkable when they are  
[Mr. Speaker.]

members of a government which has produced sweet bugger—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**An hon. Member:** Only the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) can use that kind of language.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Coates:** I guess "nothing" is the proper parliamentary word. The hon. member has spent a great deal of time and effort in bringing forward alternate proposals. He has just a great deal of time and effort, first of all, in determining the symptoms of the problem, and secondly in producing cures for those symptoms. I do not see how hon. members opposite can suggest they are unworkable when they belong to a government which has brought forward a 10-cent tax on gasoline that will place the burden directly on the backs of the workingmen and poor in this country, and just about nowhere else.

This government has put forward a rebate scheme that is so complicated we will probably have to double the size of our public service in order to administer it. When it is administered we will probably find that we will not realize enough from the 10-cent tax on gasoline to pay the salaries of the extra civil servants who will form part of this new scheme the government has produced.

It is the members of that government party who are telling us that our proposals are not workable, but I suggest that our proposals are realistic, practical and based on commonsense. Members of this government do not know what will work and they have not known for a long, long time.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Coates:** We have been witnessing a breakdown in the collective bargaining system of this nation. Wage demands and strikes have had a material and disastrous effect on our external trade. We are no longer a dependable nation when it comes to meeting international trading commitments. In my hometown of Amherst, Robb Engineering, a firm that has been in continuous operation for 125 years, has faced its first strike. It is a sign of the times which have been created by this government to a far greater degree than by either management or labour.

At the same time, we cannot allow ourselves to become the captives of big labour in this nation. One only has to either visit and see or read about the terrible problems in the United Kingdom to realize what happens when big labour becomes more powerful than the parliament of a nation. This could happen here and many will contend it already has. Instead of producing a budget that would have given the ordinary union member some reason to ride heard on the union executive, we have a budget that guarantees an increase in the cost of living and heavy extra burdens for the workingman from a transportation point of view.

Instead of more realistic demands, there will be a sharp increase in the percentage increases demanded in labour contracts, as well as demands for shorter and shorter contracts, thus creating still greater instability in the market place. No doubt we can anticipate more irresponsibility