

The Budget—Mr. Nielsen

greater efficiency and the reallocation of priorities within the limited resources available. To put this issue in the sharpest perspective, it is not individual public servants who have created these problems, it is the environment within which they try to function to the best of their abilities which is at fault.

As I reviewed these issues through so many of the study team reports, I was struck by the need to improve the system of management control and accountability if we are to improve productivity within the Government generally. As I mentioned earlier, if we are to correct the many problems identified by the study teams, we must first develop a system for proper management accountability.

All Members of this House are aware of some of the decisions which have been made by this Government that have arisen directly out of the work of the study teams. These have been announced over the past year, beginning with the May, 1985 Budget tabled by my highly-esteemed colleague, the Minister of Finance.

I do not propose to list all of these decisions today or identify all the Government's actions which have arisen, directly or indirectly, out of the work of the 19 study teams involved in the program review process. Decisions in the areas of agriculture, job creation and training, and services and subsidies to business were announced in this Government's first Budget. Subsequent announcements dealt with the Canada Assistance Plan, veterans' programs, housing and real property management. Personally, I announced a major initiative with respect to a national strategy for regulatory reform just two weeks ago, which was the subject matter of the remarks of our House Leader just yesterday. These major announcements are but the tip of the iceberg of activities which are a direct result of the program review process. The study teams, in simply doing their work, have raised the awareness of both politicians and bureaucrats on issues that need resolving and problems which have to be addressed.

The impact is pervasive. There will be very few Government decisions announced over the next few years which have not been influenced, positively or negatively, marginally or totally, by the reports that the study teams laboured so intensively to produce. Sir, the first stage of the process of program review that has just been completed is a credit to the people from both private and public sectors who worked so diligently throughout the past year. They have captured a snapshot of the federal Government for which there is no parallel. I believe that the storehouse of information which has been placed on the public record will keep public administration and political science academics, as well as the general public, interested for many years to come.

If you examine the basic themes of the Budget as put forward last week by my colleague, you will find that we want to restore fiscal responsibility, we want to bring the deficit down to manageable proportions, and, ultimately, eliminate it completely. We want to improve the current taxation system while at the same time restraining government expenditures.

We want to help those who are in need today as well as protect our ability to help those who might be in need tomorrow.

• (1730)

In this regard, I believe that the stellar accomplishments of the Minister of Finance have had fundamental support in the work of program review as pursued by the 19 different study teams. If we can create programs that are flexible, that meet real needs, and that are responsible to their clientele, then we have done something that no Government over the past two decades has been able to accomplish.

While that may be a credit to this Government, it is a bigger credit to the people from the private sector and the public servants who worked so diligently during the past year on the production of these study team reports. The decision-making process that was designed to deal with the findings and options presented by the study teams assures the prerogative of Government to act independently and responsibly. By tabling these study team reports next Tuesday, it is my hope that our Government can provide all Canadians with a further opportunity to think about and to influence government decisions in an open atmosphere, where mutual respect is the order of the day.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions or comments? The Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Ms. Mitchell).

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I did have a question, and I would certainly like to acknowledge from the Minister's report the tremendous volume of work that has gone on in these 19 study team reports. I would like to ask him a question related to the process. I assume there were 19 committees of some kind established. He refers of the private sector. I wonder if he could tell me who were on these committees, and I am particularly interested of course, this week being International Women's Week, in whether or not there were 50 per cent women on the committees?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Hon. Member would not expect me to name a full response to her question today. There were 122 members of the private sector. All of that information in detail will be part of the published volume that will be tabled next Tuesday at 11 o'clock. I assure her that the composition that she is inquiring about now is addressed in explicit detail.

Ms. Mitchell: Could you not give me an idea of how many women?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria).

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, a question on the same topic as the Hon. Member from Vancouver. Would the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that in the case of the agricultural study team there were no members from East of Montreal, no members from West of Toronto, no women and no youth, and