

out of crises, so trusting in Government to apply the same principles of reason and responsibility to their accounts, and so accommodating in their contribution to the common weal, have themselves in anger deluged my office with objections to a Budget that they define as a blueprint for disaster.

I would have preferred that it had not been so, that the Ministers of our Government might have erred here and there. After all, we cannot accuse them of being more than mere mortals. But so pernicious is the all-pervasiveness of fault in procedure, thought and in context, that my constituents of Eglinton—Lawrence no longer want me to merely criticize the Budget but rather to work to bury it.

What other end could be expected of a document that is so without indication of planning for the country's future, so bereft of courage in addressing the challenges of tomorrow, so senseless in its direction or so mean in its spirit? My constituents, who can be best characterized as having a self-help approach to problem solving, are asking if this reactionary—and I mean it in a social and economic sense—Conservative Budget has as its only purpose the demonstration that a Government incapable of comprehending larger social economic goals is still petty enough to say: "We won the election. Now we will rub your noses in it".

We have seen ample examples of this cavalier small-mindedness by the Government over the last four years when Canada has experienced some fortuitous, even if localized, healthy growth in the economy. Some would even call it unprecedented growth.

Of course, there was an accompanying windfall in government revenues, as more Canadians entered the labour force and were gainfully employed in their own enterprise or in the enterprise of others. At the same time, there was a diminution of people who were dependent on social programs. A reasonable individual might have expected that the Government would have seized the opportunity to use good times and profits to alleviate the disparities and to invest in Canada's future. Not so. Instead, Tory myopia set in.

Employment training decreased by 27 per cent over the last four years from \$2.2 billion to \$1.6 billion. Tory

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support for R and D, so vital to international competitiveness, actually decreased over that period of time.

However, what could we expect of a Conservative Government that sat back as self-interest in the marketplace generated a concentration of wealth so unchecked that mergers and takeovers increased by some 48 per cent and, now, the top 25 firms control 35 per cent of Canada's economic assets?

Could one expect any less of a Government that saw fit to increase taxes on lower-income and middle-income families by some 62 per cent while inflicting—and I choose the word guardedly—families with annual incomes of over \$100,000 or more per annum with a mere 8 per cent increase in taxation? Instead of planning for the future the Tories attempted to solve short-range financial problems by pillaging our earnings.

I know that Hon. Members, colleagues on both sides of the House, wonder and ask themselves would that the Tories had applied such meanness evenly. Unfortunately, the middle and lower-income groups, as we have seen, have borne the brunt of tax increases while corporate earnings were only taxed by some 28 per cent during the same period. In fact, these same businesses which pay roughly \$11 billion to \$12 billion in income taxes received almost \$9 billion in subsidies, grants and tax write-offs in 1987 alone.

Thinking Canadians in Eglinton—Lawrence, as elsewhere, are aghast when they learn that corporate income taxes as a proportion of GDP have actually decreased by 4 per cent under the Tory Government while personal income taxes have increased by 24 per cent—the highest tax increases in Canadian history. For what purpose? The Government certainly did not address the debt and, if we accept the figures of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) himself, not even the deficit.

The public debt of \$177 billion that represented 45 per cent of GDP in 1984 has ballooned under these great managers, these all-seeing visionaries, these all-knowing builders, to \$321 billion, and 55 per cent of GDP in 1988, and growing. A \$29 billion deficit forecast for 1989 is still \$1 billion higher than it was last year, even after tax increases.

[*Translation*]

Why didn't the Minister of Finance and his Government address the major problems of the Canadian