

The Budget—Mr. Guy LeBlanc

extent necessary to carry the extra load, but we must also devise ways by which to ease the increasing pressures of government so far as the tax resource dollar is concerned. We cannot afford to aggravate further the situation which is developing between the federal government and the provincial governments. The outcome of the tax conference now being held, the outcome of the policies announced in the budget and since, will simply be that contention and dissatisfaction between the two major levels of government will increase, and this at a time when we have probably made some gains in the direction of greater understanding of the need for constitutional reform.

We must also adjust the tax load so as to relieve some of the pressure points which exist for certain segments of our people such as the senior age groups. Again, the credibility gap grows. Present financial policies are inadequate. The responsible policies which we expect are not there. The picture is not hopeful and I can only trust the government will wake up before it is too late.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy LeBlanc (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, too often we are inclined to forget that in spite of everything, the Canadian economy is one of the most dynamic in the world. Our living standard is quite high compared to what other people enjoy throughout the world. We owe this standard of living, on the one hand, to the initiative and work of the Canadian people and, on the other hand, to the management of the federal government and to the economic measures it has taken in the last six years or so.

I believe that even now we have all the elements necessary to continued vigorous and sound economic progress. Following the financial statement of the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson), we see that the new Liberal government is taking the means, at times with the required firmness, to promote actively the stability and growth of our economy, by planning the overall and full development, for the short and the long term, of our natural and industrial resources, and especially our human resources.

Economic, financial and fiscal problems are becoming more and more complex; now, no one would dream that so complex an economy could progress and improve without encountering difficult problems. There is no easy solution to complex problems. Faithful to its program, faithful also to the principles

stated in the speech from the throne at the beginning of this session, the present government wishes sincerely and strongly to study and solve those problems and to use its authority, its power and the knowledge of its members so that our fellow-citizens can enjoy true and increased freedom which will enable them to demonstrate efficiently their initiative while trying to achieve sound economic objectives.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. LeBlanc (Rimouski): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian society is dynamic and prosperous.

However, social disparities do exist but through the Minister of Forestry and Rural Development (Mr. Marchand) who will soon become, if I am not mistaken, the Minister of Regional Development, the government has taken serious steps, in co-operation with the provinces, to eliminate such disparities. Within five years or less, we will certainly be in a position to note the results of certain programs, for example the five-year plan which was the object of the co-operative agreement to carry out the development program in the lower St. Lawrence area, the Gaspé peninsula and the Îles-de-la-Madeleine signed in Rimouski on May 26, 1968 by the Minister of Forestry and Rural Development at that time (Mr. Sauvé) and Quebec Premier (Mr. Johnson).

By the way, allow me to point out that we hope that the officials of the various federal departments will get used to that program or will continue getting acquainted with it, in order to facilitate the interdepartmental co-operation one one hand and, on the other, the federal-provincial co-operation in the best interests of our fellow-citizens living in that pilot area.

The Canadian society is concerned about the fate of the underprivileged, the oppressed, the sick, the disabled and the poor all over the world. All honourable members, to whatever political party they belong, are deeply concerned about the welfare of the Canadian people and our brothers in the world.

I have in mind now legislation such as the Canada pension plan, the Canada assistance plan, the supplement to the old age security pension, the youth allowances, the loans to students of which, unfortunately, the Quebec students could not take advantage.

• (5:20 p.m.)

I am also thinking of the increasingly substantial assistance given to universities,