

*The Budget*

I would like to take the opportunity to outline some of the measures contained in the budget, some of the red book programs that are being implemented. For instance, the establishment of the national infrastructure program that is already in place, the restoration of full funding for the national literacy program, the establishment of the youth service corps, the establishment of the youth internship and apprenticeship programs, the insurance of access to capital for small businesses in replacement of GST, the reinstatement of the residential rehabilitation assistance program, the establishment of a prenatal nutrition program, the establishment of the aboriginal head-start program, the establishment of a centre of excellence for women's health, the restoration of the court challenges program, the restoration of the law reform commission, the establishment of the Canadian race relations foundation and the establishment of the national forum on health.

I suggest that it is indeed hollow rhetoric to suggest that this was written by a former Tory minister. What this budget contains in addition to the implementation of these red book programs is hope.

• (1635)

[Translation]

If we want to give voters hope in our political institutions again, governments must keep their promises. Canadians have had enough of governments that say one thing and do the opposite. With the former government, this country got the habit of not respecting politicians because of broken promises. Just think of universal social programs, which were a sacred trust for the former government. We are keeping our word with this budget. We are doing exactly what we promised to do.

[English]

Past efforts by Tory governments in deficit reduction overlooked the expenditure side of the financial statements. Tory minister after Tory finance minister used to indicate that the forecasted deficits were not attained because there was not enough revenue. They were able to control the spending but there was not enough revenue. That is why I submit that what we have in this country is an income crisis, not a spending crisis.

Government like businesses must be prepared to promote and intervene in economic activity to create revenues. That is something that has been lacking in the last few years and it is something that is contained in this budget that is before the House.

This budget also was delivered following unprecedented consultation.

[Translation]

The pre-budget consultation process begun by the Minister of Finance gave many people an opportunity to express their views

on the policies which affect them deeply. The government has created an important precedent with these consultations. I hope that we can go beyond the four cities that were visited by the advisory committee for next year's budget. Through the debates in this House, I was able to share the concerns of my constituents in Simcoe North.

[English]

The measures contained in my prebudget debate speech that received favourable review in the budget include the need to prevent tax avoidance through offshore affiliates of Canadian companies, a review by the parliamentary committee of family trust rules, partial preservation of business expense deductions, no reduction in RRSP contribution limits and implementation of a permanent RRSP first time home buyers' plan.

In addition, this government will be undertaking a complete tax review in the very near future. As a matter of fact it is already before committee. That will include the replacement of the GST.

[Translation]

I already said in this House that Canadians have an unprecedented lack of confidence in our taxation policies. If we want Canadians to respect the law, they must feel that the law is fair and equitable.

If we want our economic recovery to succeed, people must feel good and contribute to the economy. I can say with full confidence that the measures in this budget will restore the confidence of Canadians. Canadians can now count on this government for greater fiscal fairness.

[English]

This budget has been well received by the international monetary markets. I am aware that the Canadian dollar was indeed up yesterday, the day after the budget was announced. The budget also received favourable comment from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It realizes that the UI premium reduction provided for in this budget was in fact a tax on business and jobs and that this measure will indeed help in job creation.

• (1640)

[Translation]

This budget shows that this government is taking a radically different approach from the one the former government took. Some people want us to give up our search for a just society. As the finance minister said, this is not the time to move away from our values; on the contrary, it is the time to return to them.

The mere fact that the opposition parties claim on the one hand that we have not cut enough and on the other that we have cut too much is a perfect indication that this budget is balanced.