

*Estimates**[English]*

The Government recognizes the need to use its resources to meet productively the needs of Canadians and to continue to develop ways of doing this more efficiently and more effectively. The track record of the last five years that I reviewed earlier clearly shows that we have made major inroads into controlling the growth of program spending and managing our resources judiciously. The Government is determined to sustain this progress.

The Main Estimates I am tabling today confirm our resolve to manage prudently while positioning us equally well to deliver on our priorities, which are a stronger, more competitive economy; preservation of the environment; a caring, compassionate society; and a stronger cultural and national identity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to congratulate the Minister for keeping the Estimates secret prior to the lock-up. I must say, however, that I suspect he was looking at different Estimates than those we are seeing. Certainly the numbers are different.

Yesterday the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) attempted to show, somewhat lamely, that he was the victim "of a breach of trust". Subsequently the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) demonstrated quite clearly that a breach of trust had been perpetrated on this House and on the Canadian people by the way in which the Government dealt with the Budget leak.

Today I would like to remind the House of a third breach of trust, one that occurred some six months ago when Members opposite in the Government said that the deficit was under control and the kind of harsh measures set out in these Estimates were not necessary. They promised child care. They promised regional development. They promised enhanced social programs. The cost would be zero, according to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). In retrospect, he was right. When one does not live up to one's promises, it does not cost a penny.

The Government has misled Canadians. These Estimates create two Canadas. It erodes the building blocks of fairness on which we have built this country. It does what no other Government would attempt. It tries to solve its financial problems on the backs of the disadvantaged while, in the process, concocting a recipe for recession hitherto unknown.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates are much more than accounting exercise. It is also in a way a means of judging the government's priorities and even the quality of life in our democratic country.

[English]

These Estimates indicate the kind of Canada that the Tories would create. They have left the \$100,000 capital gains tax exemption intact and at the same time have written off huge segments of society. They have given the lie to the priority on the environment and sustainable development. The Government is spending no more this year than was spent in 1984.

It has made massive cuts in a number of areas, including, for instance, \$27 million in areas such as conservation and alternative energy initiatives.

What is the end result of all this chicanery? What are the values of the Government? It says that it will now close up to 14 military bases across the length and breadth of this country. However, it does not mention the human face of these cuts. It does not say that it will be taking the heart out of a number of communities and leaving them as empty shells.

This Government has cut spending on foreign aid by over 15 per cent. It has reneged on its commitment to the developing world. It has walked away from a phenomenal opportunity to be the bridge between the haves and have-nots.

The Government promised us a new child care program but now refuses to live up to its obligations to the Canadian family. It has cut those obligations by over \$200 million a year, and the number is going up. Canadian children, one out of every five of whom lives in poverty, will suffer enormously because of the callousness of Members opposite. Prairie farmers are shocked to learn that the Government is backing away from its commitment to crop insurance, a program fundamental to their income maintenance. The Tories have cut over \$225 million out of western grain transportation, and it is no coincidence that these programs for transportation, regional development and unemployment insurance are on the list of things the Americans seek to attack in the free trade negotiations under the definition of an unfair subsidy. Typical of this weak-kneed Government, it has already hoisted the flag before the battle has even begun.