

Oral Questions

have acknowledged in the budget my view about the medium-term economic situation as one which does not give any cause for satisfaction. The solution proposed by the New Democratic Party is to inject a "stimulus" into the economy by increasing the deficit at this particular time. In my view, that prescription is likely to fail and will prevent this country from participating fully in an economic recovery which will likely take place in the second quarter of next year. That is why there has not been an effort in this budget to run up a deficit, which is very large already, and make our problems in the medium term more difficult. That is the stance taken by the government in the budget.

The hon. member talks about jobs. Apparently he is interested in jobs, but he has not understood the impact of the budget. In the economic development envelope this particular year we are increasing expenditures by 22 per cent in order to support activities in the economy which we think will make a long-term contribution to improved productivity and growth. In addition to that, we have provided a special amount of \$350 million in order to deal with the important problems of restructuring and manpower adjustments.

Finally, the hon. member talked yesterday about industrial strategy. His concept of industrial strategy or development is very limited.

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

An hon. Member: He is not answering today's question, he is answering yesterday's.

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THE BUDGET

CONSIDERATION OF TAX CREDIT FOR COST OF HEATING FUEL

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, I sat through the budget on Tuesday night and a 50-minute—

Some hon. Members: Question, question.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): It is coming, it is coming. We had a 50-minute "question period" yesterday and another 17 minutes of gobbledygook from the minister today—

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): —and never was a meaningful word heard on behalf of the Canadian consumer. This budget leaves the consumer far worse off than the previous budget of my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's West.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Since this budget potentially permits a 75-cent per gallon increase in home heating fuel by 1983, why did the Minister of Finance not consider a

tax credit for home heating fuel or at least an increase in CHIP?

Mr. Lalonde: What about GIS?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I want to repeat a statement I made yesterday. It throws a good deal of light upon the difference between the impact of this particular budget on Canadian consumers of oil and gas in comparison with the impact of the budget which my hon. friend supported last December. The schedule of price increases of oil and gas over the period up to and including 1984 saves Canadian consumers \$40 billion in comparison with the budget presented last December.

Some hon. Members: That is not true.

Mr. MacEachen: If my hon. friend wants to get some facts, I would ask him to read the speech given yesterday by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. Crosbie: Pinocchio.

Mr. MacEachen: In it he demonstrated very clearly that the price of gasoline, natural gas and home heating oil will be considerably lower under this budget than the one the hon. member supported last December, and that is why we are not providing an energy tax credit.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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POST OFFICE

INQUIRY RESPECTING INCREASE IN POSTAL RATES

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, it just proves the point I was trying to make, that obviously the government cares nothing about the average consumer.

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): I have read enough speeches by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and I think other Canadians have read enough too.

My supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs wearing his hat as the Postmaster General. The budget indicates that there is no planned deficit in the Post Office. His own estimates show a deficit of \$400 million which will require a minimum 10-cent increase to consumers in the price of first-class mail.

Mr. Crosbie: At least.