

I think the Hon. Member better read Mr. Laxer again. Frankly, I do not agree with Mr. Laxer either, but I think he is a little closer to the seventies than the present rump of the New Democratic Party which we have here.

The Hon. Member decries the fact that we make funding and tax concessions available to large corporations. Who works for these large corporations? It is the ordinary person who is making a salary, building on a pension and has a steady job which will be more secure as a result of the concessions made to corporations. I welcome the moves made by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) rather than decrying the fact that as the Hon. Member would suggest, not as much was done. In fact, much more was done.

When I hear the Hon. Member saying he wants to be fair, I think that is fair, I think that is fair as compared to good and excellent. He may have reached fair, but his speech certainly did not reach good and was a long way from an excellent critique of the Budget. I thought we would have something in more positive vein from the Hon. Member, something that we could listen to and maybe even adopt. We have not been shy about adopting good ideas in the past. We have the Conservatives so worried that they will not come out with any policies. They are afraid that if they find a good one we might take it over, and so we have no policy from them.

The economy in Canada is in recovery, Mr. Speaker. We have come through a great recession. Fortunately, neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals listened to what the socialist hordes were telling us about interest rates. If we had, the Hon. Member for Lethbridge-Foothills (Mr. Thacker) is correct in what he said about the Canadian dollar. Heaven knows where the Canadian dollar would have stopped. He talked about 65 cents or 60 cents. If we had given in and allowed our money to flow out of the country because of higher interest rates in the United States, I suggest we would have seen an increase in the cost of the product and fewer companies able to compete. That would have meant significant layoffs. Canadians would be trying to buy imported goods with a 40-cent, 50-cent or 60-cent dollar. We certainly did not accede to the request of the NDP and I am happy that the Conservatives did not either.

● (1230)

Presently we have an inflation rate that is approximately 5 per cent. Who were we told was being hurt the most when inflation was at 16 per cent? It was the ordinary Canadian. The best thing we did for the ordinary Canadian was to get the inflation rate down to the level it is today. They are the people who are helped the most by this invidious factor of inflation. We have done a great deal for the ordinary Canadian.

The fact that unemployment is rising because fewer people are working is something that is of real concern to every Member of the House. It is encouraging now to see a slight reduction in the unemployment rate and in fact there are 400,000 more people working today than were working last year. I suggest that 1984 will see an even greater increase than

400,000 more jobs. I think it is encouraging to the unemployed person to see that there are jobs available.

There is almost a backhand form of compliment in that there is greater participation in the labour force. People are coming back into the labour force because they have confidence and are building confidence in the economy. As a result of the increased participation rate it is very difficult to get the unemployment rate down overnight. The Minister of Finance was quite correct when he said that no government, whatever the political stripe and the best intentions, can get that unemployment rate down overnight and then try to overheat the economy by throwing money at it, as the New Democrats would have us do. I think we are moving in the right direction at the right time.

I think this Budget is appropriate for the circumstances. We are not in a circumstance in which the recovery is on us and we are moving toward a greater growth in the GNP. We are on the road to an economic recovery in Canada. When we reach that stage more money will be available for social programs, for senior citizens and those on the guaranteed income supplement.

We chose a priority. We said that there will be a raise for those in need. There will be an increase of \$50 a month to people who are drawing the guaranteed income supplement. I think that is to be welcomed.

I hear the socialists saying that nothing is being done for the unemployed. With a casual wave of the hand they wipe out \$8 billion that was spent last year to help unemployed Canadians. They have talked about Canadians whose unemployment benefits have run out. Let us not forget that many of those people had those benefits at a time when they needed them and are back at work. Unfortunately, there are Canadians whose benefits have expired and we must find training programs and other projects to help them get back into the labour force. Since a great deal is being done there should be confidence among the unemployed. The economy is at a stage where there are 400,000 more jobs than last year and I suspect there will be many more this year.

It is fascinating to watch the Budget process. The Opposition Parties have automatically made up their minds to oppose all or some of the items in the Budget. The Government Party Members place their confidence and faith in the Minister of Finance that he will bring down a budget that they can not only defend but promote. That confidence was not misplaced, either in April or in this particular Budget. The Minister of Finance has been fiscally responsible. The Budget is one designed for a Canadian economy in recovery. It is interesting to see that some critics consider it so good that they are calling it a pre-election Budget. That is what I would call praise.

It is not a stand-pat Budget. The moves in the immediate and short term are geared to the economy as it is today, recognizing that we have come through a difficult recession period.

The Budget provides the action and what we are receiving now is the reaction, some of it of a knee-jerk variety by the