

The Member from Hamilton who just spoke was crying about things like the CBC. He said we will hurt the CBC.

I looked in the Blue Book. I am really worried about the CBC. It will only get \$58 million more this year. There will be a cut-back of \$20 million, but is it \$20 million from \$58 million or \$20 million less than it would like to have.

If we go through one budget item after another in the Blue Book we will see that department after department has more money this year than last year. The reason is that in building this budget the Minister of Finance had to tread a very quiet and careful line.

He could have done the hard-nosed thing and ripped through those expenditures, to cut them down in a vicious fashion. However, he did not do that. He carefully cut things that could be cut without causing too much damage to the economy. He carefully increased taxes where he could increase taxes without causing too much dislocation and damage. He was worried, like we all are, about setting off a recession or doing something that will unbalance the fragile economy we have.

The problem is that this country presently has some \$320 billion worth of debt. It is growing very rapidly, and by this time next year it will be over \$350 billion. It is an enormous problem. It will not be solved by us wishing it could be solved, or by picking the trees behind this building that are covered with money.

There is only one way to solve the problem when there is a shortfall of money. It is to take more money in, which means taxing more, or to spend less. In both cases, we are taxing more and spending less. We are trying to reach a responsible balance. That responsible balance is shown in this Budget, and it ought to be supported.

Earlier today in Question Period there was a question concerning VIA Rail trains, on the basis that this was the day the last spike was placed on the CPR. I thought about that and the fact that perhaps passenger trains as we once knew them would soon no longer be running the way we knew them.

The Budget—Mr. Blenkarn

I wondered what would have happened if someone had stood up in the House of Commons on the day the last spike was driven, to say that we should have a new agency called "VIA canoe" because we put the canoe route out of business, or "VIA stagecoach" because we put the stagecoach out of business. Would we have continued to sponsor and subsidize those forms of transportation because new technology had taken place, because the automobile, the bus and the airplane have taken passengers who once went by train and trains today are no longer economic, or are we to keep everything that we have had in this country and not cut anything?

In closing, I want to read from an article in *Maclean's* this week. It is an article by Peter Newman, who quoted Mickey Cohen:

"We won't solve our fiscal problem until Canadians perceive that we are in a real crisis", he says, "and that won't happen as long as the deficit issue remains a debate among the elite. Some political leader is going to have to stand up and say, 'Look, the cupboard is bare, there is no more money for welfare payments, no more funds for most of the things governments do'". Then Cohen turned seriously pessimistic: "This issue isn't going to be resolved merely by cutting out universality. That is only the beginning; that is only the painless stuff. It simply won't be enough to take money away from the people who don't need it.

You are going to have to get at the people who really need it as well. That is not so much a question of political courage as having the stomach to do it, because it is going to be very, very painful".

I say to Members of the House that unless this Budget is successful, and we better hope it is, it will be very painful.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Speaker, talking about pain, let me assure the Member, the chairman of the Finance Committee, that Members on this side have been in pain for the last 20 minutes. The Member has the audacity to ask what is so unfair about the current tax system and the tax measures that have been imposed by the Conservative Government for the last five years.

• (1710)

If the Chairman of the Finance Committee and an individual from the government side does not know why it is unfair then I worry about the direction, not only of that committee but indeed of that Government. When we have in this country, after five years of Tory rule, a Canadian who earns over \$100,000 in income paying 8 per cent in increased taxes versus an individual on the poverty line, which is estimated at approximately \$26,300, paying 60 per cent more in increased taxes since 1984, we suggest that we do not have to ask what is so unfair about that.