

The Budget

Last year the unlimited class hydroplane, Miss Canada IV, was returned to Ingersoll to the Centennial Park Museum by Harold Wilson, its owner and driver. Miss Canada IV broke Sir Malcolm Campbell's world speedboat record in the 1930s.

I want to share with my hon. colleagues some of the things I believe about this country. I believe passionately in this country. I agree with the view expressed two weeks ago by one of the hon. members opposite who said there were three founding realities in Canada's past, the aboriginal people, the French and the English.

My hon. friend from the Bloc went on to point out very rightly that now more than one-third of Canadians, 12 million in fact, are neither aboriginal, English nor French, but come from many cultures and races.

I would like to remind all hon. members that 52 per cent of Canadians are women.

I am proud to espouse the Liberal philosophy and to be part of this Liberal government. Our members represent people from one end of this great country to the other, both ways, and bottom to top.

Just look at the diversity along these government benches and across the way in the rump corner. Nearly every one of the ethnic groups which make up this country is represented in this government. We have not yet achieved parity in representation for women. Yet, 37 Liberals out of the 52 women members in this House is a great improvement over the last government.

• (1725)

I believe that Canadians want this government to succeed. They want to help Canadians get back to work. They want an equitable tax system in which everyone pays their fair share.

They want a revised safety net of social programs which is affordable, makes sense, and serves all those who need it but not those who do not. The people want us to govern firmly. They want peace, law and order. They approve of the Prime Minister's multifaceted and firm approach to the tobacco smuggling problem. They want a searching review of the Young Offenders Act and our parole system with respect to serial killers and violent sexual offenders.

This government committed itself in the throne speech to a more open process and more power to the backbenchers on both sides of this House. I would remind the hon. members opposite that provincial governments are just as guilty of overlap and unnecessary duplication of programs as the federal government ever was.

In this first budget presented by the hon. Minister of Finance we have fulfilled another promise from our famous red book.

This budget will stimulate small and medium size businesses to undertake new ventures and test new markets. It will reduce significantly government spending on inefficient and non-productive programs. It will force a thorough review of all our social security programs and our defence department's role to make sure that we can deliver the programs we need efficiently and effectively.

The budget does broaden the tax base and stops up loopholes in the tax system. It collects more taxes from large corporations and the rich. It will reduce the unemployment insurance premiums to help small business expand.

It lengthens the minimal work requirement and lowers the percentage benefit for all except those who have dependents and need.

There are many other provisions which reduce government spending.

In conclusion, I give a quotation from Sir Wilfrid Laurier which I would ask all hon. members to ponder, particularly those in Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition from Quebec.

In 1911 Sir Wilfrid said:

I am branded in Quebec as a traitor to the French and in Ontario as a traitor to the English. In Quebec, I am branded as a jingo and in Ontario as a separatist. In Quebec I am attacked as an imperialist and in Ontario as an anti-imperialist. I am neither. I am a Canadian. Canada has been the inspiration of my life. I have had before me as a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day, a policy of true Canadianism, of moderation, of conciliation.

I honour the spirit of Sir Wilfred and I commend his balanced and zealous view of this great country to all honourable members.

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert): Mr. Speaker, I offer my congratulations to the hon. member for Oxford on his maiden speech in the House. We are delighted to hear about the many facets of his riding and I can see that he has much to talk about.

On the budget, about which he did not have too much to say, he seemed to emphasize the fact that he was proud of his government's attempts to broaden the tax base and close the loopholes and perhaps raise taxes and so on.

I was wondering if he would agree with the previous speaker with whom I took issue who said he thought that we did not have a spending crisis in this country but that we had a revenue crisis in this country.

The hon. member seems to think that we should be raising more taxes. Again, I ask him the same question I asked the previous speaker. Does he think that while Canadians are groaning under the massive weight of taxes in this country, and while we are \$500 billion in debt, we should not look at cutting spending and cutting that spending dramatically rather than trying to squeeze another dollar out of the Canadian taxpayer?