

*The Budget—Mr. Crosbie*

of the effect inflation has on the revenues and their balance sheets, and they are taxed on that. I hope the minister will take a deeper look at the question of capital gains tax and business taxation generally.

I went into housing assistance last night. I will not go into it again. Because I want to have this mentioned in the main body of my address, let me just point out there is nothing for the home owner, nothing for the tenant, no shelter allowance, no mortgage interest and property tax relief. There is not one iota of help for people now buying homes who are paying rates of 15½ and 16 per cent. There is not one element of help for them.

Apparently these people do not deserve help anymore. Why not? Because the Liberal party is in government. They deserved help when the Liberal party was out of government, but they do not deserve it today when the Liberal party is in government.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Crosbie:** It is only the MURB. This year the MURB is going to cost the government \$15 million. The MURB will be some help in having a few more multiple unit residential dwellings built, but essentially it is a tax relief. It is a tax device which assists those with higher incomes while incidentally helping to build a few more housing units.

Why did I stop it last year? I stopped it because of advice from the Department of Finance. What was the advice? That MURBs are no longer needed. The advice was that the provinces are responsible for housing, property and civil rights and many of the provinces have policies that interfere with and do not give incentive to the building of housing units. Some of them have strict rent controls. They are discouraging investment in housing, apartments and the like. All this MURB business is doing is trying to offset things which the provinces are doing that they should not be doing to give disincentives for housing.

If the Department of Finance gave me that advice ten months ago, how can they now be giving different advice to this minister? The answer is, they cannot be. What is the answer? The answer is this. The minister said to his department, "Gentlemen, there is nothing in this budget for housing. There is no assistance for housing. I have to have something, no matter how tattered. I need to have something to put in for housing so that I can pretend I am concerned about the housing situation in Canada."

We have had the lowest number of housing starts year after year for the last four or five years. I believe this is the worst year ever. Is that correct?

**An hon. Member:** Right.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Thank you. Therefore, the minister came up with a MURB. Resurrect the MURB. If anything needed to be resurrected, that was not one of the most important. The MURB might help this year. It might attract certain wealthy Canadians to put some money into building apartment units

and condominiums in certain areas of the country. For example, it will be very useful in British Columbia. There is a strong demand there for the MURB.

It is not even a flea bite in dealing with the housing problem, with the people who occupy houses or who are tenants in this country today. Where we were going to give the home owners this year \$575 million in assistance, what are they offering the home industry? They are offering a \$15 million deduction in revenue for MURB. Where we were going to give \$1.2 billion next year to help the home owners of this country, they are going to give \$15 million in MURBs. Enough said. I won't go into that.

I will give just one quotation because I am sick of showing what was said by members opposite when they were in opposition as compared to what they are doing now. One more little plank in the coffin. The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) in the House of Commons on November 19, 1979, said:

The government could have started where the real problem lies and could have provided something for rental assistance.

Did the Minister of Employment and Immigration, once he was in power, go to the Minister of Finance and say that the real problem is there and something should be provided for rental assistance? He spent all his time in the couple of brief months in opposition saying that to us, that what was needed was assistance for the renters in Canada. Now this minister has not done anything.

There are a lot of other areas I could cover. I suppose we do want the members of the New Democratic Party to get on today so that they can move their subamendment. They are so good at subamendments. Their last subamendment—what an excuse for an opposition party that was over begging the government for favours.

● (1650)

The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent), just like a trained seal, went over begging for a scrap from the Prime Minister. He says: "Give me a scrap. Give me a scrap to help me in my problem. I have dissidents in my caucus. My caucus is all westerners except for a little, tiny pink rump here in Ontario. The Ontario rump is three people and the western rump is a big, healthy, steak-like rump. I have a dispute in my caucus and the western people in my caucus are very, very agitated about what you are doing in the energy field. They do not like this constitutional package and I have got to try to get them quietened down because I am from Ontario, from a district in Ontario. I am seriously worried that my position is going to be in jeopardy in the next election. Please help me, Prime Minister. What can you do to help?" That was the Leader of the NDP in his conspirators' meeting with the Prime Minister a week or ten days ago. And the Prime Minister said: "Don't worry about this, Ed. I offered to take you in with me after the election, you refused me, nevertheless, I, in my wisdom, am going to help you, Ed. I am going to give the right of indirect taxation to Saskatchewan and I am going to pretend that I am going to help you in the resource area, when