

The Budget—Mr. Malépart

● (2140)

There are other aspects of the budget that I should like to touch upon. The Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cosgrove) spoke about the housing program, but, Mr. Speaker, to date every program he has brought forward has fallen well short of his projections. Now we hear about a \$3,000 grant for first time home buyers and, on the face of it, it is a step in the right direction. It could increase house building, construction jobs and jobs in the subtrades. But let us analyse this, Mr. Speaker.

A family in Winnipeg buying a basic house at a cost of approximately \$60,000 would have to put 10 per cent down under this plan. With their \$7,000 and the \$3,000 grant, they are left with a mortgage of \$50,000. It does not take long to figure how much interest that young couple must pay, at 18 per cent. In the first twelve months, when they receive the \$3,000, their interest payment, taxes and upkeep will amount to \$9,000.

The government is in charge of one of the richest countries in the world, Mr. Speaker. We can turn this country around but, first of all, the government must come clean with the people. It has perpetrated a disaster on the country. The next election will put it back in its place and that is, out of office. Unfortunately, future generations will have to shoulder the deficit it has created.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to take part in the debate on the budget brought down yesterday by the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen). Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe, considering the difficult economic situation facing all industrialized countries, that the budget tabled by the Minister of Finance is a good budget and a realistic one, because it pursues two important objectives, namely to fight unemployment and inflation. The opposition parties, both the Progressive Conservative and the New Democratic Party, will say that it is not enough or that it is too little, too late, but if we look at this budget, still bearing in mind the economic situation and from a realistic rather than a political point of view, we must admit that it is a realistic budget, and I am confident that the measures announced in this budget will make a positive contribution towards helping Canadians who are facing problems at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, looking at the measures announced in the budget that will provide assistance to the unemployed, homeowners who are being squeezed by high mortgage rates, farmers, fishermen and small businesses, we shall see that the programs have met the expectations of Canadians. In fact, the government will spend \$1.4 billion on financial assistance for these groups and on job creation.

And just how, Mr. Speaker, does the government intend to fight unemployment? First of all, the government will inject \$200 million into local development programs which are

extremely important, not only for job creation but also for the kind of services they set up for Canadians in ridings across the country. In addition, the government will spend \$300 million on economic development programs in the private sector for the creation of permanent jobs. Both types of programs will ensure that additional jobs are created quickly and targeted especially to areas which have been particularly hard hit by the recession. Mr. Speaker, the government has decided to fight unemployment by creating jobs through housing assistance programs. The minister has announced five major measures to respond to the needs of the housing sector, while at the same time creating employment. The following is a passage related to the first program, and I quote:

The government will provide grants of \$3,000 to all purchasers of new houses on which construction starts before December 31, 1982, and to first-time buyers who purchase an existing house before that date. It is estimated that 100,000 purchasers will be eligible for this grant. The total cost of this new program is \$300 million.

Under the second program, the government will add an additional \$30 million allocation to the home renovation plan, thus increasing it to \$60 million. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday I had an opportunity to meet with Montreal representatives of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and city of Montreal officials, and I can assure the House that the program is greatly appreciated by the people of Montreal and that there are many applications, and I congratulate the minister on having given this program his special attention.

The third program also recognizes the needs of low-income Canadians. Under the program, the number of co-operative housing units will be increased by 2,500, thus raising the total number from 25,000 to 27,500 in 1982, in recognition of the housing needs of low-income groups. To demonstrate the importance of co-operative housing programs, Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote a letter from a member of a co-operative in my riding. I must say that in 1981 I saw 843 housing units under construction and, recently, I had the opportunity to attend the opening ceremonies of a co-operative which has managed to recycle or use an abandoned school and convert it into housing units. I can assure the House that the 31 families now living in those units built under the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation assistance program have nothing but praise for the minister's decision. I should like to quote a letter from someone in my riding who belongs to the co-operative movement:

Sir:

As a voter in the Sainte-Marie riding, Mr. Malépart, I want to congratulate you for supporting the co-operative formula. I should think that you will gain more support if additional units are built. Having lived through that experiment in the past two years, I can assure you that the formula ought to be put forward. Unlike the low rental housing alternative, it gives tenants a sense of autonomy; people residing in co-operative units talk to each other, contribute to the chores to be done, which promotes dialogue and security. The units are very well maintained and the rent is reasonable, which is why I joined the movement because I have a small income and I could hardly make ends meet. This housing unit formula was just what I needed and I am sure I was not the only one in that predicament. I am a member of a Quebec association for the protection of the