

*The Budget—Mr. Turner*

Toronto perhaps he or she should consider moving to places like Winnipeg, Montreal, or Moncton.

The Parliamentary Secretary further stated:

The Government has been involved, through CMHC, in what is called social housing programs where there is a subsidy for those individuals.

That is the financing through transfer payments to the provinces, Mr. Speaker.

The Parliamentary Secretary further stated:

That also comes under somewhat of a misnomer because it is called affordable housing.

I do not know where the Parliamentary Secretary gets his ideas about how society has been provided affordable housing over the years. Governments at all levels have had a long history of being involved in constructing affordable housing, for very good reasons. It not only fills a social need, it is also a major creator of jobs in this country. For every one job that is created in the housing construction, there are an estimated three to four additional jobs created in industry in providing the materials and the other goods that go into housing. Housing not only involve some type of action on the part of Government to fill a social need, it is very much an important part of our economy. When the Parliamentary Secretary ignores that, and makes those kinds of stupid statements, it is far beyond me why he is in that job—it totally escapes me. He would be better transferred to something that he knows something about, because he certainly does not know anything about housing or its place in the economy of this country.

Yesterday I spoke about how the Government had managed, through successive Budgets, to look after those who have, and to take even more away from those who have not. Rather than improving a situation, the Government has actually made it worse.

Much of the debate on this Budget has centred on regional disparities. The Government has argued that indeed it has been concerned about disparities in the various regions of Canada, particularly in the West and in the Atlantic provinces. But what the Government has not spoken about is what it has been doing to the transfer payments to those provinces, which has put them in a bad situation.

I see that you are signalling that my time has expired, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I will have an opportunity to pursue this matter at some other time.

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, this has been a day full of activity in the House and, despite the distractions of other matters, I am glad to have the opportunity to speak during this Budget debate. I believe it is the role and the duty of the Opposition, our critic, the very capable Hon. Member for Laval-des-Rapides (Mr. Garneau), and the Leader of the Opposition to address what, after all, is the most important item on any parliamentary calendar, the review of the expenditures and the review of the taxation policies of a Government. The reason that Parliament is a

Parliament is to debate the initiatives of the imposition of tax and the expenditures of a Government. No greater purpose do we have.

Without any reflections on any area of the House, I rather regret that in this televised age during a debate of this importance we have so few Members contributing to the deliberations before Your Honour.

The speech delivered in this House on the afternoon of February 10 by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), carried live by television across the country, was not a Budget. It was the longest single free time political broadcast in Canadian history. Just as we would expect from the Government, it did not meet minimum Canadian content rules. The Minister was too busy plagiarizing, particularly some of Ronald Reagan's old nautical rhetoric. He announced proudly to the House of Commons and the country that we are "staying the course". That is great if you are rich enough to own a yacht. It is great if you know where you are going and can get there on that yacht, but for the millions of men, women, and children who are living close to the poverty line in this country, staying the course means lining up once again at a food bank, lining up for shelter, hoping for food to get by, or hoping for some money for clothing. There are fewer and fewer opportunities in this great Tory world symbolized by the Minister of Finance.

For the people who cannot afford to stay the course, the Government is using another one of President Reagan's discarded theories; that is the trickle down philosophy. If you throw money at the wealthy by way of enough tax write-offs, by way of enough tax incentives, by lower tax rates, then over a period of time enough money will trickle through the fingers of the rich to fall into the grateful hands of the poor and those less able to pay their way in this country.

Over the break I was reading a little Darwin and a little Malthus. This was a Darwinian Budget. This was the survival of the fittest theory. The Tory theory is that if you leave the disadvantaged alone, you will force them, the handicapped, the aged, the unemployed, and the homeless, to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, as if there was a moral issue in being unemployed, or something wrong in being handicapped. What the Minister did not tell us in his speech is that even here the Government put a tax on the bootstraps.

The Minister's speech was less a plan for the future than a very selected recapitulation, regurgitation of the Government's record since 1984. It was a free time political broadcast at the expense of Canadians, at the expense of parliamentary time. It was a dry run for the next election campaign. As speeches go, it was very dry indeed. The Minister gave us his own version of the economic Olympics, a series of charts, graphs, studies, and numbers by which he attempted to show that the country is doing better than any other of the industrialized world. As a diversionary tactic it is an impressive step. One must admire the public relations skill. It paints a pretty picture. If the whole story were in the Minister's documents, it would be very appealing, indeed, for Canadians. The fact that it is now being