

The Budget

policy requires that the inmate's classification be reviewed and confirmed or amended. Case managers must use their professional judgment, in conjunction with available assessment tools, in reaching a final conclusion as to the appropriate security classification.

In addition to the individual inmate's classification, institutions are also classified by security level. Beaver Creek Institution, in Parry Sound—Muskoka, is classified as a minimum security prison. The new institution, to be located on the Beaver Creek reserve near Gravenhurst, Ontario, is expected to be completed in 1997, and will be classified as a medium security prison.

The rationale for placement of all federal inmates is found in section 28.i.(e) of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, which states that the Correctional Service of Canada shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the penitentiary in which the person is confined is one that provides the least restrictive environment for that person, taking into account: (a) the degree and kind of custody necessary for (i) the safety of the public, (ii) the safety of that person and other persons in the penitentiary, and (iii) the security of the penitentiary; (b) accessibility to: (i) the person's home community and family, (ii) a compatible cultural environment, and (iii) a compatible linguistic environment; (c) the availability of appropriate programs and services, and the person's willingness to participate in those programs.

When the new institution is opened, only those inmates who have undergone careful assessment and meet the criteria for placement at the medium security level will be transferred there.

Public safety is the paramount factor in any decision relating to the management of inmate cases.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: The question enumerated by the parliamentary secretary has been answered.

Mr. Milliken: I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the notice of motion for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from February 28 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government; the amendment, and the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, Reform members will be splitting their time today.

I cannot say I am honoured but I feel responsible to join in this budget debate and to speak against both the budget and the amendment on the floor. I remind the House that it was only one year ago that we in the Reform caucus were saying several things about a budget which had just been tabled.

Those things were that the targets contained in the budget—the target of a 3 per cent deficit to GDP—were not good enough. Even if those targets were to be achieved they would add billions of dollars in cuts to deal with the accumulated interest payments that would be realized as a consequence of adding to our national debt. In so doing, we were assured time and time again that the targets and the measures laid out in that budget were good enough and that they could be achieved with no additional budgetary action whatsoever.

What we have this week is a budget with spending cuts of \$12 billion and tax increases of \$1.5 billion, all in a period of exceptional economic growth, even above what was foreseen in the previous budget.

• (1545)

It is in order to achieve the very targets that we started out with, the very targets that are inadequate and that we were supposedly going to be able to achieve with no cuts whatsoever. Why? Because on this particular budget path we have added interest payments of \$12 billion.

The interest costs on the government's debt will rise in this same period from \$38 billion to \$50 billion. We are cutting \$12 billion in spending now to achieve what? It is to achieve a stable debt-GDP ratio at the top of an economic cycle, so that it will do nothing but rise when we face the inevitable downturn. It is called an achievement. It is the government's belief that this is its ticket for re-election.

This reminds me so much of what the Progressive Conservatives did in 1988. They reached exactly the same point, except at a much lower level of debt and then said all was well.

What do we say now? We say that this is not adequate. We say that this path will continue to add interest charges that will come out of program spending. What are we told? We are told that