

Income Tax Act

1986 and, second, the eligibility to receive a child tax credit payment in 1987. The pamphlet provides an address to which to write with any concerns.

A further explanation of the child tax credit prepayment will accompany the normal family allowance cheque. The letter sets out in great detail what will happen and I commend the Government for ensuring that this program will be understood. I am sure it will be well accepted.

Unfortunately, in spite of the great strides the Government has made to increase the economic income of most Canadians, there are many people who, particularly since the recession in 1982, still live at or below the poverty line. It has been estimated that between 700,000 and one million families will receive this payment. There are over 10,000 families in my riding who will participate in this program.

The payment will be made in November, at a time when these families experience a great deal of additional costs. While the weather in my riding is rather nice, these families must still clothe their children for the winter. Families in other ridings must outfit their children in winter clothing and this payment in November is essential. We should not overlook the added expense of Christmas. These families will find this payment a great benefit and certainly much better than receiving it at the end of the tax year.

My riding is experiencing difficulties. It is true that many areas of the country are undergoing economic growth, but, as was pointed out in the Throne Speech, the economic turnaround has not been directed evenly among all parts of Canada. There are certain sectors which have and are still suffering severely. Unfortunately, one of those is my riding of Okanagan North. I can assure the House that those qualified families in my riding will welcome the child tax credit prepayment with open arms.

The forest industry which accounts for 60 cents of every dollar in my riding has been on strike for four weeks. Consequently, the lack of money being circulated has left many small businesses in difficulty and this legislation is important to those families who run those small businesses.

Last month the unemployment rate in my constituency was 14.7 per cent and it is expected to increase to 14.9 per cent this month, compared to an unemployment rate of 10 per cent last year. Unemployment claims in Okanagan North totalled \$3.4 million last year while this year those claims totalled \$4.2 million. Not only are we not holding our own, we are going backwards. Through this legislation, the money that we can afford to give back to people goes to those who need it the most. In my view, people in my riding will greet this legislation with open arms because they need the money.

We now have a threat of a 15 per cent countervailing duty on the lumber industry which cannot but have an adverse effect on my riding. Therefore, it is most important that the Government carry out its intention to diversify and ensure that those regions which have not fared so well under the Government's recovery program will be able to do so. Certainly,

economic diversification of western Canada is high on the Government's list of priorities. It is a major concern to all westerners because we believe that we have been the engine of growth for this country in the past.

British Columbia is a particularly resource-based province, with coal, wood and precious metals. There is a surplus of these resources around the world, which means we are feeling the burden of having to bear the impact of a decrease in demand and price for natural resources. That is why I commend the Government for this program and its intention to diversify the economy in the future. Indeed, the past performance of the Government has indicated that it will do exactly that. The \$1 billion that it promised to western farmers certainly should be of great benefit.

The fruit industry in my riding has been in difficulty. My colleague, the Hon. Member for Okanagan-Similkameen (Mr. King), can confirm this because he has led the fight in the House and in our Party for that industry. We have received a great deal of encouragement and help with diversification programs, such as the grape program. I am sure we will continue to get the necessary funds from the Government to ensure that our province continues to thrive economically.

● (1230)

The only reason we are able to offer programs such as this "good news" legislation, which offers this money to people who need it, is that the Government right from the beginning has attempted to set a path which would solve, not all of the problems but most of the main problems left to us by the previous Government. We in effect have done that, although one would not know it from the reports of the Parliamentary Press Gallery in this city. However, there are other authorities who have assessed the performance of our Government and I think it is important that we hear what they have to say.

The C. D. Howe Institute, a well recognized and respected institution which has no axe to grind, said:

The Government's policies, therefore, should be assessed in terms of their contribution to achieving the country's long-term growth objectives. Judged in those terms, says Peter Bartha, the institute's Fellow-in-Residence, the Government has made a good start in dealing with Canada's priority economic issues. The fiscal plan, the trade talks, tax reform, and the Government's search for more effective approaches in regional policies all zero in on areas where action is needed.

I say "Amen" to that. I feel that is the kind of message this good news legislation before us today should carry across the country.

The latest issue of "*How Ottawa Spends*", the publication of Carleton University's School of Public Administration, another institution which has no axe to grind, said:

Absolutely the most important element in the Tory strategy for economic renewal is to stop and then reverse the growth of annual federal deficits.

Is that not exactly what we have been doing? Is that not exactly what the Speech from the Throne tells us we are going to continue to do? I say to you, Mr. Speaker, with those kinds of policies, we can assure the people of Canada that we will