

The Budget—Mr. Evans

The second question is, given that there was a clear lack of consumer confidence and therefore lack of consumer purchasing, what measure in the budget addressed that question other than for the select few individuals who happen to have RHOSPs and who are now to be enticed to purchase furniture rather than houses?

The final question concerns a very narrow area.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. The Hon. Member recognizes that several other Hon. Members stood to be recognized. I ask him if he would wait for a second turn for other questions.

Mr. Deans: One final question. Recognizing that the major problem now confronting the majority of people in Canada is the threat of unemployment or unemployment itself, and that this budget speaks about increasing—certainly holding the line if not increasing—the numbers of unemployed while recognizing there will be fewer jobs between now and 1986, how in heaven's name does this budget begin to meet employment, overcapacity and lack of stimulus for the consuming part of the economy?

Mr. Evans: Mr. Speaker, there is so much misunderstanding in those three questions and in the previous statements that it almost boggles one's mind to respond. There is excess capacity, Mr. Speaker. Much of it is redundant, much of it is not productive capacity in the sense it is world productivity. As a result, some of that capacity will never come back onstream but will be replaced with new, innovative, creative types of productive capacity.

Mr. Deans: Permanent unemployment, right?

Mr. Evans: That is why we put investment incentives in place, to encourage industry to bring on that new creative capacity which makes us competitive in world markets and enables us to create jobs.

With regard to the other point about there being less jobs by 1986 than there are now, if the Hon. Member would read the statement the forecast indicates that there are going to be 600,000 more jobs in 1984 than there were in 1982. The numbers the Hon. Member is using are typical of what we have had in the past from him and the NDP; they come right out of thin air. There will be job creation, Mr. Speaker, as a result of investment in new, effective plant and equipment, research and development, and new technology.

If we are not world competitive, then we are going back to the cave, which I think is precisely where Members of the NDP would like to see us go. We could all be out there with our stone hoes, digging our row to plant corn and grinding it by hand. In that way we would be employed full-time, doing things which are the next best thing to useless. This country has too much potential to fall for that kind of claptrap from the NDP.

Mr. Blenkarn: A year ago the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Evans) was running around the country telling us how tremendous the budget of November 12, 1981 was. He is now telling us how tremendous this budget is. He will recall

that the growth rates shown in the 1981 budget were in the 2 per cent to 2.5 per cent range for the 1980s. The current forecast, now that we are well into a depression, is at 4.4 per cent, 5 per cent and so on. The Hon. Member says that is not even optimistic enough. Where in the budget is the thrust that will push this country in the 1980s to growth of 4 per cent or 5 per cent in real terms? Where are his grounds for optimism?

Mr. Evans: Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting that the Hon. Member has again done what the Conservative Party tends to do in this debate, going back two years and looking at a budget back there and saying: "See what happened back there? Look at those figures back there." I know the Hon. Member agrees with me because I know him well; we are on the Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs together. I have heard him speak and we have talked about these matters. The investment incentives are there, Mr. Speaker. Investment means growth, new jobs, competitive industry in world markets, higher profits for industry and higher wages for workers. That is where the growth is going to come from and if the Hon. Member was on this side of the House and he was able to talk honestly about this budget, he would be saying much the same as I am today. It is a darn good budget and the Minister should be commended for bringing it down.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my friend from Ottawa Centre (Mr. Evans) and I cannot believe some of the things he is saying. I want to ask him a question because he seems to have what he thinks is a grasp of the economy of Canada. I would encourage him and some of his colleagues to go out and have a look at other parts of Canada in the weeks ahead and see how people are reacting to the budget. I had a phone call last night from a miner who has been laid off work for 14 months. That means he has been on welfare for the past two months. The company he worked for feels it is not in their interest to participate in the NEED Program or the bringing program under Section 38 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, for a variety of reasons. This individual had noticed that the newspaper headlines were that this is a good budget for business. He said he is not a business person, he is a steel worker, and was there anything in the budget which should make him optimistic that he will be able to save his home in the next few weeks? Is there anything that he can be hopeful about in terms of a job? I want to remind the Hon. Member: fourteen months out of work.

Mr. Evans: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, because I think the problem the Hon. Member has raised is precisely the one this budget was designed to deal with. If it is not profitable for that business to continue to employ people, it will not do so. To be profitable there has to be new investment, and it has to be world competitive. It seems to me that it is time we stopped pointing fingers at one another and saying "if it is good for business, it is bad for labour; if it is good for labour, it is bad for business". Let us start asking the question: What is good for Canada? What is good for Canada is something which will generate growth, because growth is shared between owners and workers. Let us stop condemning one side or the other; it is