

The Budget—Mr. Langdon

It is a bad news Budget even for those who have some sacred belief in reducing deficits. The deficit which is now projected for the end of this coming fiscal year is \$29.3 billion. Anyone who has some historical memory can go back and ask what the projection was which was made by the great Minister of Finance a year ago in February. His projection was that the deficit we would be facing, not in a year, but now, would be \$29.5 billion. But it is \$32 billion because of mistakes and because of increased tax loads on Canadians which have decreased economic activity and have brought down, as a result, a much higher deficit than was forecast. This is exactly what some of us predicted last year.

It is frankly a Budget which the Government has blown. Yet it has a magic trick which somehow is going to make it look good. It is the magic trick of accelerating income from taxes. By accelerating it, it will make a once and for all gain of \$1.2 billion. At the end of next year, as a result, it will look as if it is lucky to have a \$29.3 billion deficit. But that will be achieved only through trickery, only through playing with the figures, only through what is in essence a manipulation of a system of receiving income from employers which, of course, will significantly hurt those employers.

• (1710)

That is the supposed good news which is contained in the Budget. More important than that is the tremendous unfairness which exists in the Budget. It is an unfairness which shows itself in there being no action taken on regional development concerns, despite high unemployment levels in regions across the country. I am not just talking about provinces, I am talking about areas within provinces. Frankly, the statistics are frightening. There are parts of British Columbia in which the unemployment rate as of January was 19.6 per cent. There are parts of Alberta, that great area of Tory prosperity in the past, in which unemployment rates in certain areas are 12.8 per cent. There are parts of Saskatchewan in which unemployment rates are 10.7 per cent. The only part of the country which does not have an area, a region, with an unemployment rate of over 10 per cent is Manitoba, which is governed by a NDP Government.

If we consider places such as Ontario we see that in northern Ontario there is an unemployment rate of 14.6 per cent. These figures are direct from Statistics Canada. Recently in this debate someone noted that, surely, we are not questioning figures from Statistics Canada. Even in southern Ontario, which is supposed to be the heartland of prosperity, the unemployment rate in Brant County is 10.2 per cent. In areas such as the area around Montreal the unemployment rate is 12.4 per cent. In other parts of Quebec the unemployment rate is 14.5 per cent and 15.2 per cent. In Labrador it is 26.5 per cent, as it is in parts of Newfoundland. In Cape Breton it is 23.1 per cent. In Prince Edward Island it is 17.8 per cent. In parts of New Brunswick it is 16.2 per cent.

There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in the Budget to deal with those types of regional inequalities which cause tremendous damage to people and which result from these vicious levels of unemployment. All of us know that in fact those official statistics are often under-estimated by significant margins. We are talking about human tragedy.

I wish to talk about some of those human tragedies. For instance, I wish to talk about a woman in my constituency, Mrs. Hahn, who is retired. As a result of measures such as the increase in the gas tax she will no longer be able to visit her family in Toronto. I wish to talk about auto workers, such as Marcel Lemieux, who were looking for action in the Budget to protect the auto industry and to give a fair balance between those who are meeting 60 per cent Canadian value added in the Big Four and those who are getting a free ride in the Korean and Japanese companies which do not have to meet those goals.

I wish to talk about farmers in my constituency, farmers such as Claude Giroux, who has not only faced tremendous squeezes in terms of prices that he is paid against his costs of production, but who is being hit for back taxes. In this case he tried to keep his family and farm together by working off the farm.

I wish to talk about people such as Gloria Seale, a woman in one of the low-income housing projects in my constituency who was offered a job. She felt a tremendous sense of satisfaction to finally have a job made available to her. She found that she could not take the job because day care was not available since the Government has refused to act despite promises in the Speech from the Throne, despite promises from the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), and despite promises from the Minister who deals with this subject. We have seen nothing in the Budget whatsoever with respect to day care, or anything else that might help the women of the country.

I also wish to talk about a friend of mine, Richard Kamau, who lives not in Canada but outside of Canada. He lives in Africa. As a result of the Budget and its attack on the weak he faces a cut, as we discovered this morning, because the money that CIDA will be able to spend on its projects has been cut by \$92 million next year. We saw the details this morning, and they demonstrate that very clearly. What we have is a Budget that is hurting people, not just here in Canada but elsewhere in the world.

I recognize that it is a tough time economically, that we have difficult challenges in front of us. In fact, the previous speaker and I spent far too much time on the same committee. We came to complete agreement with respect to many of the problems that we face as a country. There is a need to rebuild our industry; a need to become competitive; a need to be much more dynamic and effective in our trade activity; and a need to push ahead in our resource sector. There is a need to build up from the bottom new community initiatives which will get people back to work and get the country moving again. The Budget does none of that.