

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, April 25, 1983

The House met at 11 a.m.

• (1105)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### THE BUDGET

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from Thursday, April 21, consideration of the motion of Mr. Lalonde that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government; and the amendment of Miss Carney (p. 24689).

• (1110)

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, you will remember that last autumn before unemployment reached the present unacceptable level of two million Canadians, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) treated us to a series of television homilies in which, above all else, he appealed to the Canadian people for trust. I have gone back over newspaper reports with such headlines as "Trudeau urges Canadians to show trust", "Lower prices through trust, Trudeau asks". That is from *The Globe and Mail* of October 21, 1982.

In his speech on October 20, 1982 he said:

I dwell on the need for trust because what we have achieved so far is young and fragile. We must strengthen our trust in each other because trust is the only bond that will allow us to unite our efforts and combine our strengths to meet the challenge we face.

That is what the Prime Minister said six months ago—that we were to trust him and his colleagues to exercise the kind of leadership that would be necessary to overcome our economic ills; we were to work together; we were to have faith in him and to trust him. Here we are six months later, six tortuous months later, hundreds of thousands more Canadians are without jobs, the deficit has soared to astronomical levels and the Government brings down a supposed, cure-all budget. I will deal with some of the budget measures in a few minutes.

First of all, I want to draw attention to the Prime Minister's latest musings or, I could say diatribe, about the word "trust". What he has had to say is far from philosophical. In his press conference on April 22, just last Friday, again he dealt with trust between Canadians. Turning his back on his appeal of six months ago for trust among Canadians, he lectured, he berated them, because he does not think they can be trusted to spend their money as they should.

Look at the headlines that followed that oration by the Prime Minister. "Can't trust the public with tax cuts, the

Prime Minister said", as reported in the *Montreal Gazette* for April 23. "Canadian buyers can't be trusted to spend at home, Trudeau says" is highlighted in the *Kingston Whig Standard* of April 23. The Prime Minister says that the budget did not provide for sales tax breaks to consumers because they would not spend money at home; they could not be trusted to spend money unless on imports or perhaps on travelling abroad. He went on to say that he did not give a tax break to manufacturers because they could not be trusted to pass on the extra revenues to consumers. He did not want to see the Provinces getting any additional moneys because they could not be trusted to do anything but pocket the funds.

There we have the Prime Minister's current view of trust between Canadians and their Government. It is quite a different view from that which he expressed six months ago.

What does he say now? Canadians cannot be trusted to act in the best interests of the country. They would be liable to spend any additional money travelling abroad. This, sir, from the Prime Minister who, when he was travelling through Southeast Asia earlier this year, commented that he was not particularly concerned about the plight of Canadians because they would probably all be sunning themselves in southern climes or would be out on the ski hills having themselves a good time.

• (1115)

The Prime Minister's understanding of ordinary Canadians, indeed, sir, "passeth all understanding". He thinks that Canadians cannot be trusted, that given the chance they will goof off somewhere. The real problem with the Prime Minister is that he insists on applying his own personal standards to other Canadians. Nothing could more clearly underline how out of touch with reality he really is. How can he believe that two million unemployed Canadians would be out cavorting on the ski hills? How can he imagine that home owners, farmers and small-business people, who have gone through the agonies of loss of their homes, their businesses and their families' farms, would now be lolling on some beach somewhere in the knowledge that their financial problems are all a thing of the past?

The Prime Minister is out of touch and Hon. Members of the Government's benches are out of touch, and I say that to the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Evans) if he believes what the Prime Minister said in his press conference of last Friday about having no trust in Canadians, about Canadians not being trusted to do the right thing by their