

*The Address*

\$200,000 study is currently underway to assess parliamentary compensation and perks.

I am pleased to see the government's commitment to reform the MPs' pension plan. Ending double-dipping however does not go nearly far enough.

Our party has made significant recommendations to reform the pension plan. We would be glad to share the results with the House, certainly at no charge.

Other ideas, like the appointment of an ethics counsellor, sound good on the surface, though I cannot help but wonder at the necessity of adding yet another patronage position. If all MPs simply act as Canadians expect them to, with the integrity the throne speech referred to, there would be no need for a watch dog.

True reform comes from the individual. We cannot legislate integrity. We also cannot hope to create real lasting jobs by throwing billions of dollars at a program called infrastructure. Infrastructure means roads, bridges and sewers. Yet one of the first examples of this spending has gone toward the construction of a civic centre. The government has admitted the announcement was politically motivated. Will this infrastructure program create good, long term jobs? We will see. Be assured we will be watching.

We cannot solve joblessness in this country with more government spending. Anyone who thinks we can is living in a dream world, a dream world we can no longer afford.

As I look around, as one of the more than 200 first-time parliamentarians, I cannot help but be awe-struck not only by the sense of history in these halls but by the responsibility that comes with this chair. I see all around me representatives with many different perspectives on the future of Canada. Though there may be distinct ways of looking at things, no matter how you alter your angle of sight one thing never changes, the bottom line still looks like the bottom line.

If we continue on the path we are on we will no longer be discussing whether the glass is half empty or half full. It will simply be empty. All of the money this government spends will be accounted for and the members of Parliament must be accountable to their constituents.

The Reform Party's constitution states: "The duty of elected representatives to their constituents must supersede obligations to their political parties". To ensure I make good on this pledge we have initiated advisory groups in Fraser Valley West made up of constituents from a variety of backgrounds and political persuasions. Although these groups are just in the formative stage, early indications are that I will be taken to task if I stray from the course they chose.

If we are willing to give members of Parliament more power in the House of Commons let us take it a step further and get the Canadian people involved in the process.

• (1715)

The people I represent from British Columbia are no longer satisfied with the status quo. The federal government has consistently failed to live within its means and my constituents want a direct say in how their tax dollars are spent. These people want guarantees that budgets will be balanced, long term debt will be substantially reduced and expenditures will be necessary and legitimate. It is no longer good enough simply to spend money. We must know where it is coming from, where it is going, why it is going there and why we are not paying our bills first.

Most social programs have merit but that is not enough. In our critical financial state merit is no longer the overriding criterion. Federal spending must be cut to the point where we can once again live within our means. By capping expenditures we will take that first step.

The emphasis on controlling spending is not just for the sake of getting Canadian business going again. On the contrary, every young Canadian should get involved in these decisions. For the first time in our history young people are being told to accept a lower standard of living than that of their parents. This system is unacceptable.

A high standard includes more than financial considerations. It includes our social programs that have come to set us apart as a caring nation. The only way we can preserve the things that make us proud to be Canadian is by ensuring that we can afford them today and will be able to afford them in the future.

Canadian businesses have to live within their means. Canadian families have to live within their means. We must insist that the government live within its means as well. What is prudent for every family in Canada is also prudent for the Government of Canada. There simply is no choice.

In closing I would like to mention an attitude I have observed lately with respect to how Canadians view themselves. Talking to people who have just returned from a trip abroad seems to be one of the few times we hear about what a fantastic country this is. Why is it that Canada looks like such a land of opportunity when viewed from afar but at home we seem to lose sight of the fact?

The Liberals' red book is called *Creating Opportunity*. I hope the creation of opportunity includes a planned program of deficit and debt reduction as the number one priority.

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating you on your new appointment. I would also like to congratulate the member for Fraser Valley West on his maiden speech.