

The Budget

• (1740)

What this country needs is an end to food banks, to homelessness, to soup kitchens. We need a fair taxation system where upper-income Canadians and profitable corporations pay their fair share.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. McLaughlin: What this country needs is a government that moves toward social fairness. There should be investment in our people through higher education, job training, employment flexibility and child care. A substantial and immediate cut in interest rates would take billions off the deficit, would assist our farmers, assist small business and get this economy moving.

We need a budget that has a plan to develop and sustain our regional communities. We need to see a budget that has a strong, concrete, specific commitment to the environment.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. McLaughlin: We need a budget that will ensure that no matter where you live in this country, from coast to coast to coast, you will have the opportunity to have a job, to have dignity, to stay in that community to build a strong country.

[*Translation*]

We have to get rid of the Conservative program. Cupidity is not a virtue, compassion is not a vice. We have spent too much time and a lot of effort building a just and humane society, we simply cannot let the Conservatives destroy it now.

I am saying to members opposite that Canadians from coast to coast cannot stomach the Conservative government's lack of vision. They reject free trade, they reject the GST, they reject this budget. They are tired of broken promises. They can no longer stand being losers all the time.

[*English*]

The voices of Canadians are going to be heard. There is a movement growing in this country. The so-called little people are standing up and they are increasingly speaking with one united voice, which is thundering across this country, where people from every background, every social group, every community, every

region are getting together to oppose this government's policies. It is a united voice that is saying: "Enough is enough, we are going to take Canada back".

An hon. member: Hear, hear!

Ms. McLaughlin: We in the New Democratic Party say it is time the voices of Canadians were heard. It is time this government listened to Canadian concerns and heeded their advice. The people of Canada can show the way. They have a vision for the future.

To the Minister of Finance, to the Minister of the Environment, to the Prime Minister, I say: Listen to the people of Canada before it is too late.

[*Translation*]

The Canadian people can show the way. They have faith in the future. There is one thing I want to say to the Minister of Finance to the Minister of the Environment, to the Prime Minister: Listen to the people of Canada before it is too late!

[*English*]

This budget is yesterday's budget. This budget presents not one new idea, not one vision for the future. Therefore, I move:

That the amendment be amended by adding the following words:

- (4) for failing to protect the environment;
- (5) for failing to provide support for Canada's farm communities;
- (6) for failing to share the burden of taxation by closing tax loopholes which permit profitable companies to escape paying taxes;
- (7) for failing to provide aid to Atlantic Canada; and
- (8) for failing to provide a national program of child care.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finances)): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to participate in this important debate.

[*English*]

The motion before us today to approve, in general, the budgetary policy of the Minister of Finance deserves the full and wholehearted support of all members of this House. Approval of the motion will mean acceptance of the goals set out in the budget; deficit reduction and putting the economy back on the road to sustainable growth.