

*The Budget*

What Canada is about to undertake could otherwise be known as planning its own future. It could be known by some as being able to prepare ourselves as to where we want to go. A famous quoter from years ago made the following comment: "If you do not know where you are going, chances are you are going to wind up somewhere else". I would submit to the House that is precisely where Canada was until 1993 and until the budget more recently.

In this economy we have seen the view that deficits are not as important as growth or jobs. I take a different view. In the country over the past few months we have seen the faces of many people who have lost their employment, businesses that have gone underground and companies that have simply shut down. That is no longer acceptable in this great land. We have designed a policy which we believe will help Canada not only renew itself but the people within it.

People do not want to live on UI or welfare. Canadians want to work, to earn a living and to obtain the respect that having a job brings. They want to talk about the personal experiences they have in business, how to run one and how to maintain it in periods of difficulty.

This is an area which the budget has addressed. It has recognized the importance of small business. My riding, perhaps unlike other ridings, has a higher number of people working in the private sector with small businesses, companies of 10, 15 or less. It is important for the government to appreciate the role it has in terms of access to capital. It is one of the reasons I commend the hon. Minister of Finance for his tenacity in ensuring that a code of conduct was instilled in the budget.

• (1755)

If we did not have such a code of conduct banks would be basically able to make suggestions as to where they were going to prioritize their lending priorities and small businesses which are creating wealth in this economy would simply pack up and leave or go underground.

In order to address the subject of the underground the budget focused on the GST. The finance committee has been charged with the task of amending or changing what is perceived as the most hated tax in modern times in Canadian history. We believe the GST if changed could help make a new economy. It could help make business work once again.

Parliament has an obligation to the people of Canada to put forward some sound fiscal policies and to restore faith in our political institutions. We have a duty to reform Parliament and do away with the perks and privileges to which ordinary Canadians do not have access. We must be an example for Canadians. Parliament is in no position to ask Canadians to make sacrifices if it fails to practise what it preaches.

That is one of the reasons as a younger member of Parliament I would certainly support an initiative at some point that would

redress the great and grotesque imbalance Canadians rightly perceive between what is taking place in the real world and what is taking place in the House of Commons.

Ontario riding has a population of some 200,000. Its size is one of the most daunting tasks confronting me as a member of Parliament. It is not one I am prepared to take lightly. Daily we receive letters from all sorts of constituents addressing any number of issues at a given time. I do my best to respond to them.

In the period leading up to the budget I noted two or three issues that the constituents of my riding asked me to ensure were taken into account by the Minister of Finance. The first was that there be no charge for the benefits of dental and health care. That is something the government delivered on. It listened, it acted, it delivered.

Another area was to try to stimulate the housing industry through the use of RRSPs. I note that policy initiated by the last government on a temporary basis was actually a ripoff of the Liberal Party policy in 1988-89. It was a good policy then. I am pleased the government decided to adopt it on a temporary basis, but I am even more proud of the Liberal Party for deciding to make that permanent. It recognizes that the construction industry is not a simple cog in a wheel as far as this economic situation is concerned. It realizes it is one of the fundamental keys in our economic picture.

The budget process is an ongoing additional budgetary measure that we should believe will be examined in the course of time. It should be brought forward in a few months to allow Canadians, certainly people in my riding, an opportunity to discuss its many important attributes.

I am looking right now at an opportunity for my constituents with whom I have had an opportunity to discuss the budget last week to become more meaningfully involved in the overall decisionmaking not only of a member of Parliament but of the actual budgetary process. It is a great tribute to the government that it has taken upon itself the opportunity of ensuring there is before Parliament a chance for public input.

Canada is benefiting as is my riding from the infrastructure program. Some \$47 million has been allocated to my riding that will result in over 1,000 people being employed who might otherwise not have had an opportunity to work. I could put that into another perspective: a 1,000-job investment in infrastructure, sewer and water upgrades, will help the economy.

I am pleased to support the budget. I thank the residents of Ontario for their support.

• (1800)

**Mr. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this occasion to speak on the budget debate and the concerns of Miramichi riding in New Brunswick. Speaking in this Chamber on behalf of all my constituents is an honour, a privilege and a