

The Budget—Mr. Mazankowski

cent. In other words, we are going to kill VIA Rail passenger service for the sake of digging Canada up and shipping it out so that other people can use it.

The arms budget is going up 17 per cent or 18 per cent this year. At that rate that will mean nearly \$40 billion in five years, or about \$1,600 for every man, woman and child in Canada—for death.

The food industry is being geared to exports, while our prices rise and the farmers quit. Manufacturing is to be slighted. The minister is rejecting protectionism, and that is his phrase. He is carrying on a dialogue with the major Canadian corporations in which he does not mention the unions. He has handed over the textile industry to a set of financiers who have no interest whatsoever in protecting the jobs of textile and shoe workers. The minister has killed the Foreign Investment Review Agency or, at least, chloroformed it. He has said that foreign capital and technology will continue in Canada. In whose interest? What he says in his budget is that the Government of Canada is fully committed to promoting the mobility of resources—money and workers—and that is the clue. The minister wants to remove all protection from those who are not among the strongest. He wants to be able to hand over our natural resources and our labour to the strong so that they can dig Canada up and ship it away.

A few years ago the late John Diefenbaker said that Canada was becoming a banana republic. He was partly right. The trouble is that we are becoming a banana republic, but we will not even have the money to buy the bananas.

We are left asking whom the minister serves. Is it the New York money lenders who dictated these political terms, as they dictated the wage freeze of 1975? In one of his booklets the minister hints that if wage demands go too high we may have to do something about it. It is a very gentle hint, but we will hear more about that in the months to come.

This budget is something the late General McNaughton warned us against 30 years ago when he said we would become hewers of wood and drawers of water. In fact, this budget goes hand in hand with the constitutional package the Prime Minister brought to us two weeks ago, which is an attack on the fundamental rights of Canadians and most blatantly those of women, the French community in Canada and the native peoples. This is a budget for using cheap labour and for using those three groups to undercut the labour of those who are not in those groups. In other words, this budget is a male budget; it is a white budget; it is an anglo budget. It is an affront to the people of Canada, and it should be rejected by this House.

● (1730)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by saying that in my thirteen years as a member of the House of Commons I have never witnessed a situation where a budget has been so universally condemned. I think it is fair to say that this budget takes from the poor to help those in financial distress. I would have hoped that the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Bussières) would have attempted to clarify some of the points contained in the budget. For exam-

ple, I hoped the minister would set out to explain what is meant in the budget by “firms in financial difficulty” and “farmers in financial distress.” In the government’s defence of the continuation of the Small Business Development Bond, those riders are crucial. As of today, I understand that banks are sending out notices to the effect that the Small Business Development Bond, as of November 12, will not be issued until there is further clarification.

In this budget the government has treated inflation as public enemy number one, yet at the same time it sets out to blame everyone but itself and asks everyone to share in the burden of restoring sanity with regard to inflation. It does not address itself as a major contributor, nor does it address itself as one that can aid in assisting the decline of inflation in this country. The budget was expected to set a new course for economic recovery, economic strategy, if you like, to renew confidence in the business community, to stimulate production and thereby generate wealth. If one examines the document “Economic Development for Canada in the 1980s”, one would observe that it consists of a recitation of rhetoric and bureaucratic jargon.

Canadians expected this budget to address the very critical issues that face the average Canadian from coast to coast, namely, the problems for home owners of mortgages and high rents, the problems affecting small-business men, which is one of the most important components of Canada’s economy, the farmers, the low-income sector, senior citizens, the unemployed, particularly those unemployed as a result of an inadequate housing policy and an inadequate industrial strategy, the construction industry and the manufacturing and oil sectors of our country. In other words, there was nothing in the budget for the average Canadian. It did not really address any of the major problems that face Canadians.

In the name of restraint, this government increases its spending by 22 per cent. In the name of equity and fairness, it squeezes another \$1.4 billion out of Canadian wallets; and in the name of economic renewal, it does not do anything. It is not even a clever budget. It is a deceitful budget. Upon close examination of the budget, one will clearly see that it will impose and inflict further hardships upon the average Canadian. It really is a cop-out. In my view, it is a budget which will be destructive, as we examine it in more detail.

Now we have the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) repairing and tinkering. As far as I am concerned, no amount of repairing and tinkering will make this budget an acceptable document. What I recommend to the Minister of Finance is that he withdraw this budget and send it back to the drawing boards—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: —so that he may reassess the precarious state of the country, and then introduce a realistic budget that will address the economic needs of the average Canadian. When one studies this budget and examines the situation that faces the Canadian people from coast to coast, one can only conclude that this government is hopelessly out of touch.