

The Budget

government transfers \$3.5 billion to the province of Quebec through the equalization grants.

When are they going to start acknowledging these things rather than talk like a broken record and say that the duplication of federal-provincial programs seems to be the problem that faces the country? If we repeat that statement often enough people will start to believe it, but the point is that there are many positive things.

Will he recognize that we in the House make a positive contribution to Quebec and every other province in Canada?

[Translation]

Mr. Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, this is already the second time I have the opportunity to discuss directly with my colleague from St. Albert on budget issues and, each time, I am under the impression that the hon. member for St. Albert does not listen carefully to what I say.

Duplication was mentioned as one of the factors behind the lack of budget efficiency within the federal system; other causes could have been indicated. So, if he wants, I could meet with him in private or simply make a speech on the factors inherent to the federal system that are responsible for the staggering costs to the country as a whole.

You suggested—and I find it a little sad—that the Official Opposition only knows how to criticize and never has anything positive to suggest. I cannot help but think that you must not have been present in this House very often to say that, since the Official Opposition has not ceased, these last few months, to put forward several budget proposals which the government has not taken into consideration, as I have already mentioned in my speech on the budget.

Moreover, the hon. member has also suggested that Canada is a great country and that it had to be acknowledged that Quebec receives a lot from the federal government in the way of transfer payments. I will put to you that these transfer payments are in the form of unemployment insurance and social assistance benefits and that one does not congratulate oneself on receiving from a federal state investments which are not going into research and development or a job creation program, but which only reveal the poverty of Quebec society within this federal system.

The Deputy Speaker: By the way, I ask you to please address your remarks to the Chair and not to the hon. member, even though you sit close to one another. Debate.

[English]

Mr. Larry McCormick (Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak about such an important measure as the federal budget. I consider the budget to be a historic document

which lays the necessary framework for a renewed, prosperous and just Canada.

As this is my maiden speech, I take the liberty to point out that my great privilege to be speaking today is also a historic occasion. I am the first Liberal representative of Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington since David Wright Allison defeated Sir John A. Macdonald back in 1883. It is a privilege to be given the trust and good wishes of one's constituents. I will work to ensure the government represents the concerns of my riding.

Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington extends from Lake Ontario in the southwest and Algonquin Park in the north to the Thousand Islands area in the southeast.

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As I travel through the riding and stop in places like Bancroft, Madoc, Marmora, Stirling, Napanee, Arden, Sharbot Lake and my own village of Camden East, I receive many words of encouragement. I also receive general advice and specific suggestions about the issues that face our rural communities. I value this input and I thank the people of Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington for their support and wise counsel.

I give thanks to several hundred people who gave so freely of their time during the recent campaign. Today I am proud to be representing all of the people of our riding.

I would also like to publicly thank my wife Reta, and Kayla Rebecca, our daughter, for their love and support.

One of the messages I receive over and over again is that people want to see the government come out with an open and transparent game plan for economic and social renewal. My constituents expect no less. This is what the 1994 budget sets in motion, a framework for social and economic renewal.

Our objective is clear: to stimulate growth by targeting our spending without imposing new taxes. Just look at how quickly the government has set about funding initiatives which were promised during the campaign. In this party we take our platform, the red book, seriously.

The national infrastructure program has had a speedy start. In my riding alone 44 local level governments and five school boards are busy preparing their proposals. There is no doubt in my mind and in the minds of rural residents that there are many worthy infrastructure projects.

I received copies of proposals from a number of municipalities in my riding. My riding has the most miles of roads of any riding in Ontario. I have seen proposed projects for road improvements. I can attest that there are many heavily travelled arteries which have yet to be paved. The benefits of these proposed upgradings are many. Besides the prospects of jobs in road construction, there is the added benefit to the local tourist economy. Good roads get residents and tourists to and from their destinations quickly and safely.