

The Budget

Mr. Attewell: I hear my NDP friend talking. We are certainly at opposite angles to Bob Rae. He is building the biggest hole, the biggest deficit for people in Ontario we could imagine.

Will this budget stimulate the economy? Yes, it will. I would like to ask my colleague about what feedback he has heard. I am sure it is nothing like the rhetoric we have heard on the other side.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member has 30 seconds to answer that.

Mr. Ricard: It is pretty good feedback. I received 17 telephone calls and 15 of them were in favour of the budget. The two others said that they did not yet know if they would support it. That is 93 or 95 per cent support.

Mr. Attewell: That is pretty good.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate on the 1992 budget and to put on the record my views, those of my party and those of my constituents from Victoria.

I would like to first comment on the budget itself. There is some good news in the budget. It is not all bad. I applaud the modest efforts the government has made to improve the management of government and the savings that it expects to get from that. That is always in order and will have support on all sides of the House.

We cannot help but support the decrease in the personal surcharge, but only as far as it goes. The move will only produce \$2 per year for a single parent with two children. It produces something in the order of \$19 a year for the average Canadian family and \$116 a year for those whose incomes are over \$100,000. It is a typical Conservative approach to tax reduction and is simply not satisfactory. However, to the extent that there is any relief at all from personal taxes in the budget it has our support.

As for the RRSP provisions, I think that when people look at them very carefully they will find that it is not the assistance they thought it would be. The repayments to the scheme that are required will be from taxable income. Therefore, the effect is that a person is simply borrowing from one's own RRSP, if one has an RRSP. Generally banks and other financial institutions will make that credit available in any event. There will be a

modest savings in interest payments, but that is all. However, as far as it goes, it has our support.

Let me turn to the fundamentals of the budget. The budget left in the hands of the corporate sector in this country over \$1 billion in business exemptions, primarily for entertainment, lunches and so forth. The government abjectly failed to tackle the issue of corporate giveaways in our tax laws. There is nothing in this budget for those who have already lost their jobs or their businesses as a result of the government's economic policies and the economic transformation this country is undergoing. Right across the country, Canadians are hurting and hurting badly. Whatever else was in this budget, it should have provided fairness and help for those who are suffering as a result of economic dislocation in Canada. The budget was silent.

The budget provided virtually nothing for job creation, and to the extent that it provided anything at all in the way of a stimulus for the economy it was misfocused, misguided and misdirected.

Unemployment will be admittedly left at over 10 per cent of the work force in the coming fiscal year. That figure is probably optimistic if past record is any sign. The government is reducing by \$100 million the funds available to Canadian Jobs Strategy, one of the most successful programs in my constituency in Victoria, and presumably in other constituencies across Canada.

This budget marks no change from the failed economic strategy of this government. In fact, the budget document itself is filled with self-congratulations. We just heard it again from the member who spoke a few minutes ago.

Since 1984 this government has been leading the country to the brink of economic, social and political disaster step by step. It has done so by in large measure following the policies of the predecessor government. Despite all the rhetoric, the fundamental policies of both the Liberals and the Conservatives over the last 15 to 20 years have been in the same direction. This has left nearly a million children in Canada in poverty. In one of the richest lands in the world children are in poverty.

There remain terrible conditions on some of our native reserves and in many other communities across Canada. For hundreds of thousands of individuals the