

The Address—Mr. Redway

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, I of course wish to thank the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne. As well, I want to express my sincere thanks to the people of my riding of York East for selecting me to represent them here in the House of Commons. At the same time, I want to assure the people of my riding that I intend to represent each and every one of them and to serve each and every one of them to the best of my ability, regardless of their political persuasion and regardless of my own political affiliation.

The riding of York East is located in the central and the eastern portion of Metropolitan Toronto. Approximately 40 per cent of my riding is located in the City of North York and is comprised of the original Don Mills community as well as the communities of Flemingdon Park, Jonesville, Victoria Village and Wynford Heights. The balance of the riding, the other 60 per cent, is located in the borough of East York, the central and eastern portions. That is the municipality where, until recently, I had the privilege of serving as mayor.

York East is a slice of urban Canada. It has a population of approximately 100,000 people. That includes people from every part of the economic spectrum. About 70 per cent of the people in my riding come from the traditional, long-time Canadian background. The balance, approximately 30 per cent, come from Greek, Chinese, Southeast Asian and black origin. In fact, there are over 60 different cultural and ethnic groups and backgrounds represented in my riding. At the same time, York East is the home, proportionately speaking, of one of the largest communities of senior citizens anywhere in Canada. As well, it is the home of a great many businesses and industries, some large and some small.

Although the recent recession has not affected Metropolitan Toronto or my riding as severely as many parts of the country, a day does not go by in York East when I do not hear from somebody who is either unemployed now, has been unemployed, or expects to be unemployed in the near future.

Mr. Boudria: It will get worse with the Tories in power.

Mr. Redway: I stood for Parliament because of remarks like that and because of the policies of the previous government.

In the last two years that I served as the mayor of East York, I would go to my office every morning to find it filled with people looking for work. In 1982, because of exorbitant, horrendously high interest rates, many of the businesses which formed the tax base of our community went bankrupt.

At the same time, because of those same high interest rates brought in by the last government, the senior citizens of our community could not sell their homes. The young people could not afford to buy those homes. That was two years ago. Today we still have 1.5 million unemployed in this country.

This morning I was very pleased to hear the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) indicate that there has been a gain of some 34,000 new jobs since September 4. I was pleased this week, at long last, that the Speech from the Throne and the economic statement spelled out the new government's strategy for the unemployment problem. The first is to restore fiscal responsibility by putting our own house in order in order to limit and reverse the massive build-up of public debt and the damaging

impact that this has on confidence and growth. The second is to redefine the role of the Government so that it provides a better framework for growth and job creation and removes obstacles to change and innovation. The third part of the strategy is to foster higher investment, greater innovation, increased international competitiveness and a positive climate for the birth and growth of new enterprise. The fourth is to bring about these changes in a way that is fair, open and consistent with the basic sense of compassion, tolerance and justice that is a characteristic of Canadian society.

• (1420)

Last night the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) began the process of implementing that strategy by outlining his plan for reducing the deficit in an orderly, balanced and fair manner. As the Finance Minister continues the process of implementing government strategy, I ask him to bear in mind that, in addition to restraining expenditures, to improving management and to eliminating programs and agencies, there are two other ways to reduce the deficit and to restore business confidence. I commend both of those ways to the Minister.

The first way to do this is to reduce interest rates. Even a modest reduction in our interest rates would substantially cut the cost of government borrowing which this year will reach something like \$17 billion out of a \$34 billion deficit. It is plain to see that any slight reduction in interest rates will have a very substantial effect on our deficit and on the cost of borrowing. In my view, the second method by which we can reduce the deficit is simply to put people back to work again and turn them into taxpayers instead of welfare recipients.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Redway: I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Finance has a little rule of thumb that indicates that for every 84,000 people who are out of work, we lose \$1 billion in government revenues. Just think about that, Mr. Speaker. If we could put one million people back to work again, we could cut that \$34 billion deficit right in half.

In the United States, people have been put back to work again and this has been done by cutting personal taxes to stimulate consumer spending. It is no wonder that President Reagan was re-elected with such an overwhelming majority. After all, who could refuse to vote for a man who cut unemployment, who cut taxes and who cut inflation? That is an amazing record and one that I commend to our own Minister of Finance.

The primary task of this Parliament is to put people back to work and to get the economy moving again. If we can do that, we will have laid a firm foundation for the new era which was described in the Speech from the Throne as an era of national reconciliation, economic renewal and social justice. If we can do that, we will get Canada growing again and Canada can truly reach its real potential as a nation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!