

*The Address—Mr. Hicks*

against high interest rates. I hope that at the same time as members of the Conservative caucus raise the details of these damaging IRDP cuts, they will also urge their Government to do something about high interest rates. Certainly at the moment real interest rates remain, as the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis) has stressed, at the highest levels we have ever seen in this country.

I also want to indicate strong agreement with the Hon. Member in his criticism of the previous regime. That regime in fact was responsible for the economic mess in which we find ourselves today. But we have to ask what is the direction to follow in dealing with that mess. I would express a very sincere and non-partisan sense of strong disappointment that this Government seems to have moved in the wrong direction. That direction does not build on potential partnership to restructure and modernize our economy in a way represented by the IRDP. Please, let us see a strong effort throughout this House to rebuild our economy rather than tear it down, as these changes by the Minister threaten for the future.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The time for questions and comments is now over. We shall proceed with debate.

**Mr. Bob Hicks (Scarborough East):** Mr. Speaker, I have waited 51 years for this very moment to rise in the House of Commons of Canada and address such an august body in my maiden speech. With your permission, I would like first of all to extend my sincere congratulations to you on your appointment, as well as to the Hon. Member for Don Valley West (Mr. Bosley) on his election to the distinguished yet difficult position as Speaker of this assembly. I feel confident, as do my hon. colleagues, that he will do justice and honour to himself and this House.

I would also like formally to express my heartiest congratulations to the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. The Hon. Member for Sarnia-Lambton (Mr. James) spoke most admirably and struck what I believe is the proper tone for this debate. The Hon. Member for Montreal-Mercier (Ms. Jacques), in her eloquence, did further justice to this debate in her remarks as seconder of that motion.

In addition to being very proud of having the opportunity to serve in this House, I am equally proud of being the Member of Parliament for Scarborough East. The riding came into existence in 1968 and is the most easterly riding in Metropolitan Toronto. I personally moved to that area nearly 40 years ago, and although my hon. colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise), may slightly disagree, I must say that I have had the pleasurable experience of observing its development from farm land and narrow roads where my father and I regularly towed the milkman and the baker from the mud to what today is a modern suburban area. Scarborough is geographically compact compared to so many vast areas in Canada, but it has swelled to 100,000 people and is still growing very rapidly.

The City of Scarborough itself is the seventh largest city of Canada, as well as at present the fastest growing city in

Canada. In 1982 the city issued \$244 million worth of building permits. In 1983 it issued \$491 million worth of building permits, more than double that of the previous year. I can only surmise that for the remainder of 1984, and certainly for 1985, with a Conservative Government in Canada our expansion will increase even more dramatically.

• (1210)

The riding of Scarborough East is proud of some very unique and outstanding landmarks. The Scarborough bluffs rise over 200 feet from Lake Ontario and are not only world famous but have been studied by geologists for decades. My hon. colleagues from both coasts of Canada may also be surprised to know that some of the best salmon fishing in the world takes place off the shore of Scarborough East riding in Lake Ontario.

The Guild Inn is also world famous and has been honoured by the presence of countless heads of state and governments from many countries. Its grounds consist of over 90 acres on Lake Ontario. Its rooms and halls are alive with priceless sculptures, paintings and historical documents and antiques. Last year the Guild Inn celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

A building in Scarborough East, Mr. Speaker, which strikes even closer to my own heart is Centenary Hospital. I have had the privilege of serving on its board of governors for the past five and one-half years and have thus been in a position to observe first hand the tremendous struggle which this hospital, and certainly many others like it, is having merely to survive each year let alone expand.

Centenary is a 520-bed hospital which serves a large geographical area. Unfortunately, the tremendous population increases in Scarborough, to which I alluded earlier, have made its facilities grossly inadequate and an expansion program is now under way. This is a \$30 million expansion program at a hospital which is running into debt in each year of operation.

Its problem in raising money from the public is simple. Centenary Hospital is not famous, although that will be somewhat alleviated after my speech today. Centenary Hospital does not perform heart transplants or other rare and sensational procedures frequently noted by our ever vigilant news media. It merely heals the sick day in and day out without much of the publicity it deserves. As an example of its service to the community, Centenary Hospital had more than 18,000 admissions in its 1983-84 fiscal year and treated 64,600 cases in its emergency department. I stress these figures since I know that all of my hon. colleagues in the House who do not have a hospital in their riding will wish to return to their constituents and urge them to support Centenary Hospital's expansion fund.

I have attempted to provide a broad overview of Scarborough East, Mr. Speaker, because only in that way is it possible for all of us to perceive the relationship of these 100,000 individuals to the Throne Speech and subsequent financial statement being debated in the House.