

The Budget—Mr. Bawden

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, particularly during his maiden speech. I thank him for his co-operation in accepting the suggestion made by the Chair a few minutes ago.

Mr. Peter C. Bawden (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to rise on this occasion in the House of Commons. In prefacing my remarks, I would like to say a few words about my predecessors. Hon. Pat Mahoney represented Calgary South in the twenty-eighth parliament. Though I rarely agreed with the policies of the party Mr. Mahoney represented, I respected him as a Member of parliament and as a friend, one who has followed the high standards of members who have in the past represented this riding. The House will remember the contributions of Carl Nickle, Arthur R. Smith, Senator Harry Hays and Ray Ballard as well respected members who have represented Calgary South. Previous to the rapid growth of Calgary in the 1950s, my riding formed the southern part of Calgary West, a riding distinguished by the representation of Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, Judge Manley Edwards and Arthur L. Smith. As I recall their contributions, I am truly humbled by the honour bestowed on me by my constituents in Calgary South.

Since coming to Ottawa, I have been continually grateful for the hospitality and assistance accorded to me as a new member. I congratulate Mr. Speaker on re-election to his high office. I learned to appreciate his skill and tact very early in my parliamentary life. I extend congratulations to Mr. Deputy Speaker and my thanks to the Clerk of the House for his generous assistance and the guidance extended to me and other new members.

In view of the time restriction imposed on speeches, I am particularly appreciative today of the works of Pauline Johnson who, in a few short lines, captured the pride and enthusiasm of my constituency in this excerpt "Calgary of the Plains":

Not of the seething cities, with their swarming human hives,
Their fetid airs, their reeking streets, their dwarfed and poisoned lives,
Not of the buried yesterdays, but of the days to be,
The glory and the gateway to the golden west is she.

This is Calgary, a city of the future with a rich and exciting heritage, centered in Canada's most prosperous province. Calgary's geographic location is ideal. The clean, crisp air of the foothills and nearby Rocky Mountains and the warm, sunny climate invite visitors from around the world. I invite members from all sides of this House to visit Calgary and hope that I may have the pleasure of being host to many of you in the months and years ahead.

May I now comment on the budget which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) presented to this House on Tuesday last. The people of Canada, more, I believe, than at any other time in the history of this country, were hoping and even expecting that this tired and disabled government would at long last come down to earth and give to this country leadership to lift Canada from its tragic level of underachievement of the last five years. Mr. Speaker, if I were to describe last Tuesday's budget in a word, I would say it is a humbug budget. I say this not because of any special treatment accorded confectionary but, in the words of the Oxford dictionary, a budget of sham and

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deception; "a type of hard-boiled sweet, usually flavoured with peppermint."

It is presented as a budget to cure the country's economic ills, but it has no chance whatsoever of meeting such an objective. Its benefits to individual Canadians are small, and the minister must know that it will do little to bring down unemployment or to cure inflation. To be fair to the Minister of Finance, I do not think he is the kind of man who would purposely present a humbug budget to this House. I just do not think that he and his advisers have the knowledge, experience, staff or courage to produce what is needed.

It has become painfully obvious to this House that this government has abdicated its responsibility to govern Canada on the basis of any principles or policies of its own. It has no policy, as was evident to the Canadian people during the election last fall, and it has no principles. Today it is governing as a coalition between the Liberal and New Democratic parties. Canada today has a coalition government, and it is now clear that much needed legislation will be sacrificed in the interests of narrow political gain. For that reason, this government is not master of the destiny of Canada. In fact, it never has been.

The cost to Canada, in just one case, is illustrated in the government's handling of the bill to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act. The government refuses to debate the bill. The minister has said that passage of the bill would save Canadians \$1 million per year, or over \$275,000 per day. Why has this bill been stalled? The reason, I suggest, is that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the leader of the NDP are playing "house" while the taxpayers of this country are paying the price of this common law arrangement. In short, Mr. Speaker, this budget confirms the belief of many in this country that the government continues to be incapable of managing the economy. Notwithstanding its acceptance of some important Conservative principles, it now refuses to consider a temporary freeze on prices and incomes. I am sure that by August they will again be adopting our policy and bringing it before parliament, but it will be six months late.

The approach of this government is that of trial and error. Every time there is a trial, there is another error. The hon. member for Verdun (Mr. Mackasey) when speaking in this debate defended this approach by saying, "If necessary, the minister can bring in two or three budgets." Canada cannot afford such a "try and try again" type of government. I am sure the members of the NDP also recognize this, Mr. Speaker, and if they support the government in today's vote they will know that they are not, in a moral sense of right or wrong, acting in the best interest of the people of Canada.

A budget is expected to be a future looking document which, on the basis of experience and sound judgment, sets the ground rules under which the country can achieve its economic and social goals in the year and years ahead. The minister said last Tuesday that this year we are expecting the expansion to be driven mainly by business capital investment, inventory build-up and exports. Can we really expect the necessary expansion in capital investment? The Economic Council of Canada reported in the fall of 1971 that capital investment intentions in Canada