

over the world. The need has been suggested in Namibia and in the Middle East; no doubt, other needs will arise. This contributes to the peace of the world, it is something Canada has shown it can do, and it is something we should be prepared to do. We are not against Canada taking a share of responsibility for military commitments, and it is essential that we arm our forces to fulfil these roles. But let us get away from commitment to expenditures that help nobody yet hang a vast debt around the necks of the Canadian people.

All of us are looking at the effects of the cuts that are being made. Many of those cutbacks are painful and unfortunate. We regret the effect they will have on such things as equalization payments, assistance programs, health and medicare. We regret that the cuts affecting the CBC will help destroy the high level of artistic endeavour and quality which has been built up. We object to the CIDA budget being frozen at the expense of those throughout the world who are most in need. We object to the cuts in loans for public housing. We object to the cutting back of forest research stations. There are many acts of this kind, inefficient and selected at random, though some of them are necessary. But let no one say that we in this party did not criticize them and offer alternatives. By all means let us strike out programs and expenditures which we need, to use common parlance, like a hole in the head. The axe must fall, perhaps, but let it fall on what we do not need, on what we could well do without. Let it fall on this unnecessary production of highly sophisticated aircraft whose capability, I believe it is safe to prophesy, will never be used at all. Let us get rid of fantasy and look at the world as it is, making the best contribution we can and minimizing those cutbacks which adversely affect the welfare of the poor, the development of productive resources and the artistic future of this country. Let us use sense about these things and not be swept away by the theory that defence expenditures are sacrosanct. Of course, some are necessary, but none of them are sacrosanct and when we are told by our allies in the United States that the manned bomber is no longer regarded as presenting any considerable risk,—it has been downgraded to almost nothing—why must we go ahead with a project of this kind that we do not need? Is it because we are committed to it, because we do not dare to say no to the military? I believe the military people are wise enough to recognize that it is only when they are doing something worthwhile that they earn the true respect of the people of this country. I hope they will earn that respect. Let us have the guts in our government to say no when no is the obvious answer.

Mr. F. A. Philbrook (Halton): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity of taking part in the closing hours of this autumn budget debate—perhaps tonight I should call it a winter budget. I should like to congratulate the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) on a budget which is appropriate and responsible.

● (2102)

An hon. Member: Why?

80067—20½

The Budget—Mr. Philbrook

Mr. Philbrook: It is nice to hear from one of the new members opposite. His interjection was typical. I point out that I have been attentive and quiet while members of his party have spoken, and I am sure he will afford me the same courtesy. This budget has been called many things in the last few days. It has been called a pro-business budget, and I for one do not apologize for that. I think private business and industry are the most capable of bringing about a healthy economy and a better life for all Canadians.

I would also like to congratulate some of the new members who have spoken in the House. One has been my colleague, the hon. member for Westmount (Mr. Johnston). Another has been the hon. member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. de Cotret). Both those hon. members made very fine maiden speeches.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Philbrook: Of course, they were based on their own points of view. I would like to say a word of thanks to the official opposition for recognizing some positive features in this budget. I think that is a step in the right direction.

Political parties still have far to go in that direction, but that recognition is certainly better than nothing.

In my speech tonight I would like to deal with positive public reaction to this budget. I will also deal with some complaints which have come in from my constituency. I want to make a few general remarks on budgets and then deal with the general economic picture which provides a context for this or any other budget. I know that my hon. colleagues opposite will understand and forgive me if I quote some of the positive remarks which have been made in reaction to this budget. The proof of the pudding for any budget is found a few weeks or months down the road, but in the meantime we can learn a great deal from the important sectors of our society. Their reactions are articulate, and they tend to be accepted as non-partisan. For example, Mr. Sam Hughes, executive director of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, said:

It's a sensible and responsible budget, and he has avoided going political.

Mr. Chrétien apparently listened to bankers and economists who urged him to refrain from over-stimulating the economy.

He could easily have been much more stimulative but has chosen the more practical route.

A spokesperson for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business said:

We're delighted. It's a masterful job.

We're particularly happy with the special 25 per cent research and development tax credit for small businesses.

Mr. William Small, president of the Housing and Urban Development Association of Canada, said:

The government's decision to extend for another year the capital cost allowance for multi-residential building construction will be helpful.

Mr. Erik Nilsson, not our distinguished colleague opposite but an economist with the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, said:

It was basically a good budget.

Chrétien didn't have much leeway, but we're pleased he didn't fly in the face of economic realities and introduce a program of massive stimulation.