

The Budget

million into the hands of business. Most of that is small and medium size business.

I would like to know from the hon. member for Wetaskiwin how he feels about that particular reduction and whether he would support putting that kind of money into the hands of business which might use it to increase jobs.

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, the member raises an excellent question, one that I am sure we could debate on all day.

The first thing that springs to my mind is that whenever government gives something, it first had to take something away.

I am going to try to answer this question to the very best of my ability. I am not going to dance around it. If government had not been involved in unemployment insurance in the first place, if it was an agreement between the employer and the employee, probably the rate would have been down around \$1.50. There would never have been a need for it to be raised in the first place so that it can be lowered at budget time.

I think that should probably suffice the hon. member.

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask a question of the member and congratulate him on his presentation.

I have a bit of a problem with the position he took with regard to the military. I think it is very clear that as the budget came down, the finance minister and the minister of defence had a mandate to reduce expenditures and costs. Certainly there is a review of the military and that is extremely important as well.

However, if they were not to take steps and measures within this budget of a \$1.9 billion reduction we would have a deficit, in addition to what there is at present, of \$1.9 billion more.

Is the hon. member suggesting that those cuts not be taken and the deficit be increased?

• (1615)

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, I am suggesting that there is a need for military in Canada today. Let us define what it is. We need a certain amount of military to exercise our sovereignty over Canada. We also need a certain amount of military to exercise our sovereignty over our 200-mile offshore limit. We also need a certain amount of military for search and rescue operations.

Let us define what it is before—and I use some terms I have heard from the other side of the House—we hack, slash and burn our military.

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I have a very quick question for my hon. colleague.

He mentioned in passing in his speech that he found the \$70 billion figure for the social safety net unacceptable. Could I ask him what he thinks is an acceptable figure? In other words by how much would he cut the \$70 billion and what programs would he cut thereby?

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that it is so much a matter of cutting out certain programs. It is safe to say that we could find a level somewhat less than \$70 billion.

If we were able to lower our debt we would lower our interest payments and there would be at least a portion of the \$40 billion that could be used to put into social programs. That would be my recommendation.

Mr. Tony Ianno (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present my maiden speech to Parliament with honour, pride and a great sense of responsibility. I would first like to congratulate you on your election as Speaker. I believe your sense of fairness and calmness will help us in these uncertain times as we face the unique challenges of the nation.

I am honoured and humbled by the confidence placed in me by the people of Trinity—Spadina who have given me the opportunity to serve them in the House. In this capacity I hope to echo both their deepest concerns and their greatest hopes.

Trinity—Spadina is located in the heart of downtown Toronto by Lake Ontario. It is one of the most economically and culturally diverse ridings in Canada. It is an exciting place to live and a great place to raise a family. It is home to the University of Toronto and the world champion Toronto Blue Jays. Great theatres and some of the best restaurants in Canada are located in places like Portugal Village, Little Italy, Chinatown, the Annex on Queen Street and the waterfront.

I had the good fortune to be raised in Trinity—Spadina and have experienced many of its great attributes. My parents like many Canadians immigrated to this country because of the opportunities it provided. They instilled in me the belief that with hard work any dream can be achieved. They also instilled in me that sharing with and compassion for others must be integral parts of that dream.

I believe the government was elected to give Canadians their pride, dignity and hope. The way to achieve this is by charting a new economic course. As an entrepreneur this experience allows me to speak with some insight on the issues facing our economy. Too often in Trinity—Spadina I see small business people striving to keep their enterprises alive. I see single mothers struggling to raise their children. I see university graduates trying to find jobs that do not exist and working people who cannot make ends meet. I see a staggering number of people who