

The Budget

today. They are starting to wonder how much longer they will have a job.

[English]

Before he gave his budget speech the Minister of Finance said he would present a realistic budget, a realistic budget. But now that we have heard it, it is clear this budget is the height of unreality. It has instead strong elements of fantasy. It ignores the reality of too high unemployment; it ignores the reality of slow economic growth and lingering painful recession. A realistic budget would give Canadians heart and hope instead of continuing the despair caused by this government's policies.

The priority of a truly realistic budget would be to get Canadians working again. This budget does not do so. In this budget once again this government has betrayed the trust of Canadians. This government has confirmed why it does not deserve the confidence of Canadians and why there should and must be an early election to get rid of this callous and incompetent Conservative government.

In conclusion that is why I move, seconded by the member for Beauséjour:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following:

That this House condemns the government for its budget's failure to provide realistic support for the millions of Canadians who are victims of its short-sighted fiscal and monetary policies and for its failure to offer a realistic blueprint for the creation of jobs and economic growth in order to bring about a strong and early recovery from the economic disaster induced by this government.

• (1600)

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, it is always an interesting exercise to get up and look first at the rhetoric of Conservative budgets and then to look at the details of those budgets.

The rhetoric of this budget talks about strengthening the fundamentals. It talks about an emerging new Canadian economy. It talks about action for jobs. It talks as well about a social dividend and yet, when you actually look at the details of this budget, it provides little help to the many, many people across this country who are in such desperate situations. They are in such devastating

positions that their families face grim futures. They themselves have started to lose hope.

I say to the Minister of Finance and this government that there is across this country a sense of despair, a loss of hope which is taking place, and this government is not responding with the kind of compassion, caring and serious programs which are essential if we are going to see that despair reversed and if we are going to see some hope provided to this country for the future.

I wish that I could talk about the budget in a more positive way because, frankly, there are cosmetics on this budget. This is a budget which has taken the face of previous Conservative budgets and put some make-up on it. There is a little bit of lipstick. There is a little bit of rouge here and there, but what there is not, when you penetrate below those cosmetics, is anything that seriously gets at either the roots of our economic problems in this country or gives the people who are out of work across Canada a sense that over the next six months or over the next year we are actually going to see recovery, that we are actually going to see significant growth. Is there any chance that they are going to get a chance to get back into the work force and put food on the tables of their families?

I come from a constituency which has just had a study produced this week which indicated—it is not a community which is different from many in southern Ontario, it is not a community which is different from any in Atlantic Canada or in parts of Quebec—that 21.5 per cent of the labour force of Windsor is out of work. These people are unemployed.

That is a human tragedy. It is a human tragedy for the people affected. It is a colossal waste of resources for this country to have people out of work, having to receive unemployment insurance, having to receive welfare when they could be productively contributing to our economy. They could be giving our economy a sense of growth, a sense of expansion, and they could be giving all of us as taxpayers some partners to help in the burden of paying taxes.

That is one of the things we forget. We think sometimes it is just the 1.5 million people out of work who are affected when there is a serious economic downturn. The reality is that every Canadian is affected because