

The Budget

operations and reducing spending to make them more efficient and effective.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance are to be applauded for recognizing the concerns of my Liberal colleagues and myself that middle class Canadians would not tolerate an increased tax burden. I am pleased to note the Minister of National Defence has taken courageous steps in the budget to rationalize the excessive national defence infrastructure on the basis of need and function. He is further committed to examining my concern about government waste, including government moves, a commitment to cost savings and efficient operations in government. That has always been part of my public life and continues to be so in the House.

In keeping with this idea we should debate expanding the number of seats in the House. It is my strong wish that any reallocation of boundaries be reconsidered in keeping with the central premise that the number of MPs be restricted to the present number of 295. Canadians do not want more politicians; they want us to do more with what we have.

People in the community have also been working on creating a community venture capital fund by which the community could support its own entrepreneurs through capital investments. It is ideas like this one which embody the spirit of programs such as our Canada investment fund.

Environmental issues are not simply a current trend in my riding. The University of Waterloo has been a leader in environmental studies education for years. The Waterloo public interest research group was created by students from the University of Waterloo 20 years ago. Through voluntary contributions of time and money it has spent over \$1 million on consumer and environmental concerns. Environmental related companies are a growing segment of our business community.

For this reason I join with Friends of the Earth to applaud the finance minister who is the first ever to speak about sustainable development in a budget speech and the government's commitment to this end.

To achieve this objective the budget outlines the establishment of a task force involving government, industry and environmental NGOs to identify barriers and disincentives to sound environmental practices and to find effective ways in which to use economic instruments to protect the environment.

The expertise of the riding's workers, managers and entrepreneurs is enhanced by the presence of the post-secondary institutions mentioned previously, namely Conestoga College, the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University. These world class institutions participate in explicit transfers of expertise through their excellence in co-operative education and apprenticeship programs.

The riding can enjoy a recruitment advantage in this well trained pool of potential employees. As a result the post-secondary institutions of the Waterloo region offer their expertise to the community well before their students graduate.

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Until now there has been an alarming trend for our best resources, these students, to look for a future in other countries. It was a sad commentary that these students were looking to companies such as Microsoft in the United States for jobs. In effect we had our own brain drain.

I am happy our government has addressed this problem by active promotion of programs such as the Canadian technology network and engineers and scientists program to keep our most precious resource, our youth, in Canada.

Our commitment to established programs financing expenditures to universities will be maintained. This government is concerned with education and literacy as demonstrated by fully restored funding to the national literacy program. This is important to my riding as well.

The public and Catholic school board systems offer high quality education to our region's students. Both offer progressive innovative opportunities for individuals in the region. The public school board offers the opportunity for the region's workers to complete their high school diploma through on site classrooms in the workplace. As well, the separate school board is world renowned for placing a priority on full and successful integration of challenged students into the mainstream classroom.

As the finance minister said yesterday, the budget reduces the deficit by \$6 billion next year and by \$7 billion the year after. This is an important accomplishment in light of the fact that the previous government underestimated the deficit we inherited by \$13 billion. Over the next three years for every dollar of deficit reduction on the revenue side there are \$5 of spending cuts by this government.

What was demanded by Canadians in pre-budget consultations was a fair and equitable budget. This has been presented by our government. It is our commitment to make this government transparent. We will work together, as I know personally from my riding that Canadians can, to build a partnership that will create opportunity for this country. This budget is the foundation that will make that happen.

Mr. John English (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for Waterloo on his excellent speech.