

The Budget

The wharfs at Pointe-Verte and Petit-Rocher need upgrading for fishermen.

Turning to municipal infrastructure, I was on the phone yesterday with the mayor of Jacquet River. He is looking for financing. They have some financing available from the province and from their own community to put water and sewage in their community. Why is the federal government not making plans to assist those types of communities?

When we are talking about some of these plans the rhetoric from the government is: "Those are short-term solutions. We are putting in place long-term solutions". Well, short-term should go with long-term. A very direct example of that, and I hate to use medical examples, may be someone suffering a heart attack that may have been caused by a poor diet arriving at a hospital. They do not put them in a little room and say: "Here is your diet. Follow it". They treat the patient right away. This is what we need right now. The economy is a patient and it is going to die if we do not treat it immediately.

We definitely need long-term solutions. But the patient is in intensive care right now. We need compassion and we need solutions immediately.

Another area that is of great concern to me is the area of severance pay for some of these employees who are going to be put out on the street. Their severance pay is regarded as earnings and therefore makes them ineligible for unemployment insurance. I would hope that the government would look on that as a short-term measure and maybe change the regulation to allow people to draw their UI and use the severance pay to either invest in business, to open their own business, or to at least make ends meet in the meantime while they are pursuing employment.

Speaking about employment and immigration, the Minister of Employment and Immigration recently made an announcement in the riding with regard to a major project. I congratulate him on that and ask him to continue in that vein. No doubt, we always want more. There are other projects. That was Recreaplex in Dalhousie, but we do have a major project in Campbellton, the civic centre in Campbellton. The Eel River Bar Reserve is looking for a major project, a community

centre-office building complex for the Jacquet River, St. Quentin and Beresford areas. I would hope that the minister would look upon those projects with compassion, flexibility and assist those areas.

I guess my time is almost at an end. I would like to say that one of the problems when we look at the budget is not necessarily what is in the budget. It is what is not in the budget. That is the key.

There is no new plan for recovery. There is no new deal for Canadians. There are approximately 1.5 million people out of work. There are approximately another 1.5 million people out of work and not looking for work. The real statistics when we talk about unemployment are that there are three million people out there who are unemployed.

There is no real plan to put those people back to work. In fact, there is a cutback in employment and immigration in job creation programs. That is a concern of mine. There is no hope for the unemployed. The government is saying: "Listen, we have accepted you. You are unemployed. There is nothing we can do".

I say to the government, through you Mr. Speaker, that the budget has to be redrafted with compassion and flexibility. The government has to understand that there are areas that are suffering. My area, for instance, has an 18.2 per cent unemployment rate. That does not make sense in this day and age.

Canadians need a new deal. Enough is enough with regard to the deficit. It is a problem but I guess the biggest deficit that we have is the deficit of new ideas.

I think about my colleague from Broadview—Greenwood. I saw him on TV on the weekend expressing his ideas with regard to taxes and his idea about the single tax. I am not saying we are totally in support of it, but why not look at this new idea?

I should say, in wrapping everything up, Canadians need a new deal. We need a new budget and definitely we need a new government.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marie Gibeau (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our hon. colleague in the opposition whose role it is indeed to discredit government action.