

The Budget—Mr. Simmons

● (1620)

In the fall of 1979, particularly during the campaign in May of that year, the Tories promised cut-backs in unemployment insurance rates. The reality was that the Minister of Finance of the day, the Hon. Member for St. John's West, actually increased those same rates which that Party had promised to decrease.

I could go on and on, but to save my time and the embarrassment of my good Tory friends, I will only refer them to *The Toronto Star* of December 6, 1979 where it was reported, "Tory promises have gone down the drain", then in table form it had shown the several promises which the Tories had made and how they had systematically broken every one of them in the Budget of December, 1979.

Those two publications, *Maclean's* and *The Toronto Star*, reporting on those respective Budgets, show the difference between a Tory approach and a Liberal approach to budget making. The present Budget, Mr. Speaker, is a good Budget, because it is a "jobs" Budget. It will create jobs for my riding. There is a lot of ballyhoo about where the jobs are going, and I want to tell Hon. Members of this House that a lot of those jobs are going to my riding of Burin-St. George's. They are going to people not on the basis of their partisan affiliation, but on the basis of a need for jobs. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that since this whole fuss started in the House, I have more Liberals in my riding now than I have ever had before. Some of them who had been offended during the last week to have been called Liberals by those Tory Members have said to me, "Because I have been a sponsor for a job-creation project in a particular community in the riding, am I now considered to be a Liberal? Is that my sin?" What they have done, Mr. Speaker, is to avail themselves of government programs in order to create some jobs.

Let me add to the scandal, Mr. Speaker. This Government is spending—and the Tories have not found this one yet—\$50 million in one riding on a research facility. We are spending \$15 million on a fisheries facility. Can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker? Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, when my buddies on this side of the House hear about that \$15 million in one fisheries facility what they will say? How is that for porkbarrelling, Mr. Speaker, \$50 million on a research facility and \$15 million on a fisheries facility? How is that for porkbarrelling in two great Newfoundland ridings, St. John's East and St. John's West? The Tories conveniently forgot to mention that because that did not support their thesis, their muck-raking. There was \$15 million for a fisheries college and \$50 million for an ice tank research facility. But those Hon. Members opposite do not want to talk about that because that does not support their argument. That knocks the legs out from under their scurrilous allegation that somehow Liberals are looking after Liberals only. We were elected to be the Government of this country and we have created 50,000 projects across the country.

I will be the first to admit, to my Tory friends, Mr. Speaker, that that money would have been distributed even more equitably, even more fairly, if the Tories had been less busy

muck-raking and more busy looking after the needs of their constituents. The example in Rosedale is a case in point. There is a facility operated by a particular religious denomination which was in need of some government funding. This facility has made a marvellous contribution not only in the riding of Rosedale, but in metropolitan Toronto, and has touched for the better the lives of many hundreds of young people outside of metropolitan Toronto. That organization approached a lady whose record of service to the poor and to the underprivileged is well known in Toronto. She happens at the moment to be a Liberal Member in one of the Toronto ridings, but the esteem in which she is held goes far beyond that riding. She was approached by that particular organization to see if she could tap some government funding. To her credit, the lady from York South-Weston (Mrs. Appolloni) did tap some government funding. Do we hear the Hon. Member for Rosedale (Mr. Crombie) congratulating her because she had the initiative to do something in his riding which he had neglected to do? Oh, no. We hear him making some cheap politics. I am not sure how that incident, by the way, squares with the argument that all the money is in Liberal ridings. That particular incident happened in the "temporary" Tory riding of Rosedale.

This is a good Budget, Mr. Speaker. Even the critics say that this is a good Budget. I will quote from an article in the February issue of *Maclean's* magazine by Dian Cohen, an economics writer. She says in part, and I quote:

—in fact, on almost every front Marc Lalonde's efforts were reasonable.

—poor, single pensioners will get a \$600-a-year income boost. Self-employed wage earners and others without company pensions will have their RRSP limits raised. Child support and alimony payers will be able to deduct lump-sum payments. The unemployed will be welcomed back into the labour force by a provision that allows them to deduct moving expenses if their new job is far away. We will have pensions reform and mortgage interest insurance. Farmers working their farms and farmers wanting to sell out will get a better break. Small business will be better treated at tax time.

She goes on to say:

Every one of the dozens—

—the "dozens"—

—of suggestions in the budget is in response to a real concern of some Canadian special interest group. And many—if not most—of the suggestions make small-l liberal economic sense and are good for free enterprise.

These are the words of a very informed lady who has often said some fairly critical things about this Government. I regard those words as an important, dispassionate assessment of what this Budget is all about, because this Budget does make some small-l liberal good economic sense.

After the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) brought down his Budget, we were all treated to some vintage remarks from the former Minister of Finance, the Hon. Member for St. John's West. One of the things he talked about was the size of the deficit. Not only did he talk about the size of the deficit, but he talked about what he would do if he were the Minister of Finance, if the Tories were in power. The Hon. Member for St. John's West told us what the Tories would do. Let me tell you, as one who knows that gentleman inside out, Mr. Speaker, that he would do something. He is a man of his word. Take the Hon. Member for St. John's West at his word when he