

The Budget

people in Newfoundland and the maritime provinces, tens of thousands of people in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. We saw nothing in the budget to make the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share of taxes. We saw nothing to help the homeless. Indeed we see cuts to social housing. There is nothing to help feed the 1.2 million children who go to bed hungry in this country.

We see nothing which would have addressed the concerns of the deficit other than those cuts on the least well off in our society. We saw no imagination in terms of adjusting tax rates for the wealthy and for corporations. While corporations can write off to the tune of almost \$1 billion their lunches and their entertainment expenses, this government in this country of so much wealth is taxing those people who are earning less than the poverty line.

People that we see in our offices—do not know whether the Tory members see them in their offices—are already suffering and not able to cope with this government's cuts.

• (1630)

In conclusion, this budget fits into the Tory philosophy. It helps the rich and it hurts the poor. The last speaker talked about free trade and the goods and services tax. He wondered why some speakers were referring to these particular measures. Well, it all fits into the same package.

As we have seen from those recent public opinion polls, the government represents only 19 per cent of Canadians, the richest Canadians and not the poorest. Free trade involved us giving up control of our economy and attacking people, the sick, students and the poor. This budget is putting into effect the same philosophy which sat behind the free trade deal into social programs and the way in which this economy will be managed.

We see increased regional disparity. There is no effort in the government's activities to help those less well off regions. The attacks were not quite as hard as those on the richer provinces, but there was nothing to redress the enormous problems of the regions of the country. Members of the government should go out and visit

those regions to see the enormity of the problems. Then maybe they would concentrate on addressing them.

There is the privatization of Petro-Canada which will take away our last vestiges of an attempt to control our own oil and gas reserves. There is privatization in the health care system. It has to come, and we are already seeing it because there simply is not enough money going into the public system. We are going to see increased privatization in the post-secondary education too as tuition fees go up and as we see private universities springing up in the country.

We have a two-tiered system which the government is pushing upon on us, one for the rich and one for the poor. There is an Americanization of our programs and an Americanization of our society. It is one in which the rich do well by the government and the poor get trodden on. It is simply not acceptable. The people of Canada are speaking out all over the place. We see it from the public opinion polls today and whenever we see ordinary Canadians in our office and at meetings. The country is sick of these unfair programs which protect the rich and hurt the poor. The government, of course, and members opposite will feel the brunt of it come the next election.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosby: Mr. Speaker, sometimes I am afraid that we, in the House of Commons, have become so insulated against the empty rhetoric of members of the New Democratic Party that perhaps we should stop to think that perhaps somebody else is actually listening to them and accepting some of the material. Let me make a couple of comments to point out a few things to the public.

The NDP constantly takes credit for being the institutors of our health care system. What nonsense! I was a solicitor in the Department of the Attorney General of the Province of Nova Scotia in 1957 and 1958 when the Right Hon. John Diefenbaker, who was then the Prime Minister of Canada, was promoting the hospital plan. That was the precursor or our medical care plan for all Canada.

An hon. member: It happened in Saskatchewan in 1952. Where were you in 1952?

Mr. Crosby: He required the consent of six provinces in order to implement the hospital care plan across Canada. He prevailed upon Nova Scotia and the Hon. Robert Stanfield to join with the five other provinces