

S. O. 31

James McMullen of Burlington writes: "The servicing of the huge debt of both federal and provincial governments will continue to turn Canada into a banana republic in a fairly short period. You must curtail and reduce the size of government and social programs, and apply the money to debt reduction".

Mabel Richardson of Burlington writes: "Unless Canada pulls together and stops wasting money, I don't see much of a future for my grandchildren. The taxes we pay should be able to reduce the deficit".

James Fisher of Burlington writes: "If you do nothing else before the next election—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Vancouver East.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, at a time when the economic policies of this government have resulted in an escalation of racism in Canada, this Conservative government refuses to protect equality rights.

Why has the government withdrawn committed funding for the Race Relations Foundation and the Heritage Language Institute, both of which were passed by legislation of this House?

Why has the government withdrawn funds for the Court Challenges Program, a program that is essential to fund test cases to determine equality rights for women, disabled persons and racial minorities under our charter?

Why has the government disbanded citizen advisory boards, groups and councils that advocate changes? Is this a way to stifle criticism?

Why has the government shown no political will to make changes to protect minority rights in our Constitution when so many groups have demanded tougher protection?

This budget proves that the government has no real commitment to human rights. When times are tough for Tories, human rights are the first to go.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, the unemployed workers in southwestern Ontario, the economic engine of Canada, are given no hope whatsoever by the recent budget. Plant closings of Motor Wheel Corporation, National Hardware, Standard Tube and Elan, to name only a few in Kent, have hit hard during the recession.

The budget offers nothing to these permanently laid-off workers and their families. Now the Tories have cut training programs that could have helped in this time of despair. A \$100 million cut last year to the Canadian Jobs Strategy and a further \$117 million slash to training programs mean more people falling between the cracks. The few programs left are only for those getting unemployment insurance. What about those workers who are off UI, who want to work, who are qualified but cannot apply?

The Tories have forgotten about them. Let us have a government that cares about people.

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[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Gaby Larrivée (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks I received a number of letters from my constituents about the Canadian government's family policy. My constituents wrote to stress tax inequities between married couples and common law couples, and their concerns were entirely legitimate.

I would now like to inform the people of Joliette that the federal government has acted in response to their wishes in its latest budget. The federal budget will apply the same tax treatment to married couples and common law couples and will also restructure and improve family benefits by creating a single benefit for children. The new plan will increase child benefits by \$400 million annually.

Mr. Speaker, the latest budget clearly shows how sensitive the government is to the needs of Canadian families.