

*The Budget—Mr. Rodriguez*

representation from coast to coast. Look at the unity that we have created". During the first few months in office the polls reflected the Government's popularity. The honeymoon was on. In terms of popularity the polls showed the Conservatives at 55 per cent and then 50 per cent. In just two and a half short years where has it gone? Where is the unity in the country? The Conservative Government is wracked by dissension. The Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) pointed out that the Government is not paying attention to the problems of the west. As one travels across the country one senses the feeling that the country is as divided now as it was in the time of Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

I wish to point out that in the rhetoric contained in the Budget when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) brought it down he said that some regions are hurting. He then went on to say: "We intend to ensure that our program of economic renewal works for all Canadians". He promised and offered to work with the provincial Governments and industry to find ways to develop a sound base for improved sustained growth in all regions of the country. Let us take a look at that.

He did not say where the growth was taking place. In fact, I would like to offer one statistic to the House which gives a little insight into where the growth has taken place. Between January of 1986 and January of 1987 the total number of jobs in the country rose by 137,000. However, only 5,000 of those jobs were created outside of Ontario.

**Mr. Blaikie:** Shame!

**Mr. Rodriguez:** The Hon. Member says: "Shame". I want to point out that very few of those 137,000 jobs were created in the northern part of the province. The vast majority of those jobs were created in the Golden Horseshoe, specifically in Toronto. I recall in the mid-1970s when young people who were experiencing high rates of unemployment approached the then Prime Minister when he was speaking at a university. They asked Prime Minister Trudeau what he intended to do about job creation and jobs for young people. Do you know what he said to them, Mr. Speaker? He said: "You have to be prepared to leave Canada and go to find a job somewhere else". He was roundly and correctly criticized for having said that. What is the Government now saying to young people? What it is saying is that people have to go to Toronto to find jobs. That is what it is saying.

In spite of that the Government persists. The Minister talks about more growth, more jobs and more opportunities in his Budget. How can he say that when, in fact, that growth is very narrow and limited to Toronto and a small geographic area of southern Ontario? There is a saying that one can go to the east or to the west and immediately form a connection with other people by hating Toronto. Is this the unity the Government has created? Is this the unity that the Minister of Finance and the Government talks about? This is the Government of Toronto.

The Minister of Finance appeared before the Finance Committee soon after his Budget was tabled. He pointed out

that 675,000 jobs had been created across the country. He admitted that 356,000 of them were created in Ontario. That is over 50 per cent. It seems to me that the common belief is that the Government is low in the polls because of scandals. I suggest that we have to look again. I do not think that being low in the polls is attributable totally to scandals. I think it has to do with the fact the Government has abandoned the regions of Canada.

• (1730)

**Mr. Keeper:** That is a scandal.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** That is scandalous. The Government talked about jobs, jobs, jobs. As I pointed out, when we look to the regions we see 5,000 jobs created outside of Toronto from January to January. What about the other Canada? What about the regions forgotten by the Government? Between 1981 and 1986, unemployment in Atlantic Canada increased from 11.5 per cent to 15.3 per cent. The difference in the unemployment rate between Ontario and Atlantic Canada increased from 6.3 per cent in 1981 to 8.2 per cent in 1986. Today we have 125,000 unemployed in four Atlantic provinces alone. The unemployment rate ranges between a low of 13.5 per cent in New Brunswick to 20.1 per cent in Newfoundland. That does not even count the thousands who have given up looking for non-existent jobs. Average family income in Ontario is 40 per cent higher than in Atlantic Canada. Some 25 per cent to 30 per cent of the region's income is dependent on social payments. That is the other Canada. That is the Canada forgotten in the Budget of the Minister of Finance. It would have been better had the Minister not brought that Budget down. Someone in my riding called it the "budgie Budget" because one of the tax increases applied to pet food.

What is the Conservative Government's record on the question of job creation and regional development? As I pointed out, 90 per cent of all the new jobs were created in southern Ontario. Spending on regional economic development has fallen almost \$3 billion since the Tories took power in 1984. Some 70 per cent of DRIE funds are spent in Ontario and Quebec. The private sector in the Atlantic region has said it will reduce investment. Tory tax credits and tax reforms are a total failure. For example, we have the Cape Breton tax credit. It is being used by investors to invest in fly-by-night operations in the same way as the SRTC scam. What have the Tories done about the Moncton shops and the Trenton car works? Jobs have disappeared. The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Atlantic Enterprise Program are caught up in red tape. Do the Budgets do anything about the fishery in Atlantic Canada? We all know about the fishery deal that France and Canada signed. We know the way that deal was fixed. What is the Government doing about the offshore? What about development programs? Are there any increases in transfer payments? On the contrary, there are cut-backs. Are there any increases in equalization payments? On the contrary, there are cut-backs.