

The Budget—Mr. Bockstael

projects to show that it is unnecessary to lend money in the amount of \$2.4 billion, as mentioned in the budget for the Export Financing Fund. We have many areas requiring attention and development right here in Canada. I have mentioned some. I hope the Government will give serious consideration to the proposals I have made and amend its spending priorities so that the projects carried out will in the end be of benefit to Canadians who must eventually pay their cost through increased taxes. Since billions of dollars are to be spent within the next year, I beg the Government to review and re-examine its spending priorities in the interest of building a better Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Questions. Answers. Comments. Debate.

Mr. Robert Bockstael (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the budget debate. Since the budget was delivered by the Hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) on April 19 in the House, it has been received and perceived as a boost for Canadian people. It has given them a lift and a buoyant feeling of hope because it is a "people budget". It is a budget for the people of Canada. It is positive, objective and appropriate for the times.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bockstael: The budget presents a balanced approach in that an equitable amount of money is being used to stimulate the economy and to create jobs within the range of a manageable deficit that we have to face.

Over the past few days in the House we have heard Members of the Opposition state, on the one hand, that we should not increase the deficit. On the other hand they state that we are not putting enough money in the budget to stimulate the economy. Those statements are contradictory. They cannot have it both ways. I suggest that the Minister of Finance has found a good balance between those two situations.

I realize that the population at large must be very happy to note that at this time the inflation rate is at its lowest point in three years. Similarly, interest rates, the cost of borrowing money for housing projects and everything we need, are at their lowest level in the last three years.

Some may say that there are many reasons for this situation. Among other factors the federal six and five program is working, is on target and is meeting the objective it was set up to meet. There is an observation made by Canadians that the public sector and people who draw from Government programs have been guaranteed an increase of 6 per cent this year and an increase of 5 per cent next year. That is more than we can say for the private sector. In the private sector professional people who are on their own or who work as representatives of manufacturing companies have often faced a freeze of their salaries. Some have had to take pay cuts. Other workers have had to submit to work-sharing programs. People who work four days a week and draw benefits under work-sharing programs can thank the Government for making it possible and for helping them get over the rough spots.

• (1630)

As soon as a budget is delivered, it is typical of an Opposition to criticize and try to shoot holes in it. I dare say that because the Opposition could not find much fault with the content of this budget, they have criticized the process. On Monday last, as reported at page 24835 of *Hansard*, the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor) said:

While I am in favour of some of the budgetary measures, those that encourage people to work and get us out of this mess, some of its other measures are bad.

Again I say that the role of the Opposition is to criticize the budget. As a Member of the Government, I see a great deal of good in this budget. A federal budget is a natural phenomenon. Some people are indifferent to it. There are those who think it is good and those who say it is bad. That is because they operate from the perspective of looking at the budget and saying "What is in it for me? What will it do for me?"

This budget addresses the needs of seniors, working people, their families, youth, labour, small business, and is a stimulus for investment in this country. I would rather look at it in terms of what it will do for Canada.

A senior citizen in my constituency told me he was not happy with the budget. Although he is getting a 6 per cent increase, he objects to the two things he likes, liquor and smokes, being taxed. Those are petty arguments against a budget that will put this country on the road to recovery.

In delivering his budget, the Minister of Finance said that his primary objective is to develop a sustained economic recovery for Canada and his dominant concern is to get jobs for people who need work. Therefore, \$710 million over two years is going to be put into the economy for direct job-creation.

We are all aware that technological advances are rendering certain jobs obsolete. An article in the Monday, April 25 edition of *The Winnipeg Free Press* states:

Robots will radically change the role of labour in a factory—

It states that structural employment will make certain jobs disappear for good. We have to face this fact. When I was a young lad in St. Boniface, there were three blacksmith shops. They disappeared over a period of 20 years. In this day and age, we see jobs disappear within months because of new technology. You cannot create artificial jobs. Those who are or have been involved in seasonal work realize that when the season is past, there are just no jobs in that line. I have had 33 years' experience in construction. As a building contractor I know that it was difficult, but when a contract was completed and I was not successful in tendering for another job, I had to lay off my workers. I could not create work where there was none. It is demand that creates jobs. That is why this Government has taken a two-pronged approach. One is to stimulate projects that will make work immediately, and the other is to develop our human resources. I commend the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) for the forward look he has taken at the needs of the country. We have added \$155 million to develop our human resources, bringing our input to \$1.2 billion. We will provide training facilities and