

The Budget—Mr. Mayer

The hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Domm) pointed out the callous waste of money being spent on advertising in this country and the ridiculous use of JetStar planes to fly cabinet ministers across the country needlessly. The government should be setting an example for Canadians if we are to fight inflation.

Some hon. Members: Right on!

An hon. Member: That would be un-Liberal!

Mr. Mayer: There are many issues to deal with, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to begin by posing the question of what a budget should be. If I were the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen), one of the ways in which I would approach a budget would be to consider what Canada is. It is very similar to a very large corporation. A budget should provide solutions to problems facing Canada, and this is something that this budget does not do. The record of this government for the past 12 years has been disastrous. We can use statistics to prove this until people get very tired of them, but since the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has been leading the government, the interest rate payments have risen to an amount equal to the total budget for the federal government when he came to power in 1968. That is an explicit example of callous government spending.

When the voters go to the polls, they are in effect hiring a manager for a large corporation. If we view the performance of this government as we would the performance of a manager during the term he is hired, then this government comes up short.

I would like to turn now to the NDP. The reason this government is in power is that almost two years ago the NDP proposed a motion which defeated the Crosbie budget.

An hon. Member: We had an election.

Mr. Rompkey: Just like the one you are going to have tomorrow in Manitoba.

Mr. Mayer: That is right. And I hope some of the people are watching and paying attention to what I am saying. My point is that it was an NDP motion which defeated the Crosbie budget. We have heard the New Democratic Party talk in the last year about getting help for home owners and for people suffering from high mortgage interest costs. I point out to them if the Crosbie budget had been passed, there would have been approximately \$1,000 or more available to each home owner in Canada to assist him with his interest payments on his home.

An hon. Member: Subsidize the banks.

Mr. Mayer: This would have been available without the need for the home owner to beg for the money. It is my understanding of the budget that for a home owner to be eligible for the \$3,000 provision, he must declare all his debts and be able to lay out his complete financial picture. When the Department of National Revenue decides that the home owner

is next to bankruptcy, it will give him the \$3,000. Assistance would have been available to a home owner under the Crosbie budget without any questions asked. It would have been a dignified way of redistributing wealth across this country. That is something the New Democratic Party was against. They were also against the energy tax credit which resulted from an 18-cent a gallon excise tax on gas. I do not now hear the NDP talking about the additional \$1,400 in revenue this government will derive from the last energy price agreement.

Mr. Rae: That is not true.

An hon. Member: They like high gas prices.

Mr. Rae: Tell the truth.

Mr. Mayer: Are you now in favour of the energy tax credit you voted against two years ago? They are going through a conversion, Mr. Speaker, only it is a selective conversion. They like to forget conveniently some of the things they voted against and be conveniently in favour of some of the things which they realize now may have benefited Canadians.

An hon. Member: How will you vote tonight?

Mr. Mayer: Mr. Speaker, I see you sitting on the edge of your chair paying attention to my every word, but I have a very rude group to my left who are chirping away like a bunch of chipmunks. When we get their attention I hope the truth hurts them and I hope Canadians will realize some of the benefits they would have had under the Crosbie budget if it were not for the chirping chipmunks.

A budget should provide inspiration for the country. It should not be hard to give Canadians a challenge and inspire them to work hard and be productive. Canada has more natural resources per capita than any country in the world. In my area of western Canada, we have more farmland per capita than any country in the world. What we are looking for is ways to be productive. However, this budget does everything possible to discourage production.

The minister spoke about some of the costs which were allowed to be claimed as an expense in the year they were incurred and which will now be capitalized. One of the results of this will be to discourage housing starts and prevent production. This budget discourages production and does not do anything to take advantage of the potential of our country. It provides for the government to take a larger share of Canada's production.

I have seen figures which show the government will take a larger share under this budget than it has at any time since 1946. The Minister of National Revenue talked about that. He was proud of the renewed effort of the government to become more involved in the private economy. The private economy has been the reason for this country's productivity in the past.

The minister also spoke about the small business development bond. The government has destroyed the basic concept of the small business development bond, and the minister admitted as much. He did not call it a development bond, he just