

The Budget—Mr. de Jong

housing, education, hospitals, unemployment insurance and welfare. We are one of the lowest in the western industrialized countries. We are lower than the United States, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Holland and Norway. We are lower than all these countries; we are even lower than Italy.

When I hear the argument that we are living beyond our means and that our social programs are a little too rich, are they trying to tell me that people in Italy can afford a richer social program than we can? It is shameful that a country with our strength and resources should have food banks from coast to coast, people going hungry, starving and sleeping in the streets. Yet, these sanctimonious people across the way, the Frazees and the presidents of banks are telling us that it is still too much, that we have to tighten our belts and cut back on our rich social programs to control the deficit. What a sham. What a tremendous sham.

If the Royal Bank of Canada, Shell Oil and Northern Telecom paid their rightful share, perhaps we could have wiped out our deficit. Certainly it would not be as high as it is today, even if they paid a 10 per cent interest on deferred taxes. There is some \$30 billion in deferred taxes out there. If we charged them 10 per cent we could reduce our deficit overnight by \$3 billion.

An Hon. Member: Not a chance.

Mr. de Jong: Absolutely, not a chance, because they are the so-called engine of economic growth and if the guy at the top does well, supposedly it will eventually filter down. That theory is similar to the one which indicates that if the horse is fed a lot of oats, eventually the sparrow will get some. It is a disgusting theory. It is one of the major shams which is occurring today, because it has not worked.

Let us look at the figures of investments in the country since the Tories have come to power. We must remember that during the election campaign they said: "Elect us and international business will have such great confidence that we will have new capital flowing into the country".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member but his time has expired.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Member. Lately we have been reading articles such as the one by Alain Dubuc in *La Presse* indicating that an individual earning \$20,000 will be faced with a \$500 increase, that an individual earning \$30,000 will be faced with a \$600 increase and so on. Yesterday in *The Financial Post* it was indicated that an individual making \$40,000 would have an increase of \$812, that an individual making \$60,000 would have a decrease in tax of \$1,201, and that an individual earning \$150,000 would have a decrease of \$5,470. Would the Hon. Member indicate whether he thinks it is fair that the rich receive tax deductions and the poor and the middle-class have to pay more?

Mr. de Jong: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. In the beginning of my remarks I quoted from *The Financial Post* and stated that it was not fair. Surely it is immoral, but it is part of the economic strategy that has been occurring, in which more and more is given to the wealthy and the rich at the expense of the poor.

Turning to the statement issued by the Bishops from which I quoted earlier, in their summation they indicated the following:

For the present economic crisis, as we have seen, reveals a deepening moral disorder in the values and priorities of our society.

The Bishops condemned the type of Budget with which we are dealing. The Government cut back on the services of the poor, raised the taxes of the low and middle income workers and so benefitted the rich. The Bishops call it a deepening moral disorder in the values and priorities of our society. The Bishops continue by saying:

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We believe that the cries of the poor and the powerless are the voice of Christ, the Lord of History, in our midst. As Christians, we are called to become involved in struggles for economic justice and participate in the building up of a new society based on Gospel principles.

Unfortunately, the Budget we are dealing with today is a continuation of the moral disorder.

Mr. Wise: Mr. Speaker, I believe I am entitled to a question or two. I am seeking clarification from the Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong) who was quoting from some conclusions made by the Canadian Catholic Bishops. Would he clarify whether those comments were directed to the recent budget of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) or do those comments and observations refer to a previous budget? Yes or no?

Mr. de Jong: As I indicated earlier in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, the statement was made in January, 1983.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. de Jong: The statement attacked an economic strategy that is surely no different. Had the Hon. Member and the Minister been in the House he would have heard the quotes I made from this document. He would have heard that recent economic policy revealed the primary objective is to restore profitability and competitiveness in certain Canadian industries. Is that not the same strategy as the one now when the Bishops stated that the present economic strategy is one of economic recovery through the engine of private industry? Is it not the same strategy that the Tories have now, that Lalonde had and that previous budgets had? Is there any difference?

Mr. Wise: There certainly is, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, what does the Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong) think of the budget setting a target only in the realm of the projected deficit? Could he tell us what he thinks of the underlying assumptions behind that