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horrible situation which is occurring in that province. Quite frankly, I wish there was one single item about which I could be optimistic. I suppose that Members opposite will stand up and tell us about the wonderful things the Socreds are doing in that part of Canada. I hope they do, Mr. Speaker, because I would love to make a few comments on what they have to say in support of the Social Credit policies.

I would now like to turn to the Conservative Party, Mr. Speaker. Nine months ago after the election it was conceived that the new Conservative Government would do all sorts of things for British Columbia. There were Conservatives through-out British Columbia saying that they were going to help the agricultural, forestry, fishing, and small business sectors. People actually believed them, just as they believed the Socreds when they said they were going to create jobs and improve the economic situation. Well, the Socreds brought in a policy of restraint and cut-backs. I suspect that a week from tomorrow when the Budget is introduced in the House we will see a repeat of that mindless approach to the development of the economic infrastructure of a country in a sound and progressive way.

The Conservative Government promised a reforestation agreement immediately. My colleagues and I in the New Democratic Party, have stood in the House every week since October 7 asking the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens) or the Minister of State for Forestry (Mr. Merrithew) where that agreement is. They have told us it may be ready next week or next month.

Mr. Siddon: It was signed in November.

Mr. Riis: The Minister says it was signed in November. How can he say that without smiling? Well, he is smiling. I can see why he would. Where is the tree planting, the road building, and the reforestation?

Mr. Siddon: Patience.

Mr. Riis: He says "patience". This is planting season, Mr. Speaker. You do not plant trees in the winter-time or in the fall. If that agreement is not signed soon we will lose tens of thousands of seedlings and another planting season. The tree planters of my constituency have brought their contracts. On those contracts it says that the job will proceed subject to the signing of the forestry agreement with the federal Government. There are thousands of those agreements in British Columbia, Mr. Speaker. The entire reforestation industry is poised ready to provide jobs, and the Government refuses to sign the necessary forestry agreement. We suggested that it be pulled out of the greater agreement if that was the hold-up, but they would not do that.

The Government said it would be providing funds for more research and development in the forestry sector. That was before forestry research was cut by \$3.5 million in the November statement. The Government then said it was going to start a National Forestry Internship Program to provide student jobs. That has not been done, Mr. Speaker. The Government said it was going to start an Indian Lands Forestry Program.

That has not been started either, Mr. Speaker. It said it would give more tax incentives to enable the forest industry to develop new technology and product lines. That was a \$60 million promise for this year but British Columbia has received nothing. The Government promised \$10 million in enhanced funding for the fishery sector. The Estimates show only \$1.6 million for the fisheries sector under the Pacific Salmonid Enhancement Program. There was supposed to be \$5 million for the agricultural program and \$5 million for the Freshwater Fisheries Enhancement Program. We have seen no money for either of those programs. The federal Government was going to provide loans to fund a voluntary boat buy-back program to reduce the size of the West Coast fleet. That has not been done. As a matter of fact, the only thing the Government did was to levy user fees on fishermen, increasing total fees by \$6.3 million following the November statement.

Where are those commitments and promises, Mr. Speaker? When will the Government deliver? Is eight months not long enough? Never in the history of our Parliament has a Government waited so long before introducing a budget. It is disappointing that the federal Government, when one considers the promises it has made, has not acted more quickly to provide assistance to the people of that hard pressed part of British Columbia on whom the present provincial Government has simply turned its back.

● (1540)

With respect to energy and mines, the Government has not fulfilled its promise of a new taxation system for northern workers. There has been no mention of its promise of a portable pension plan for miners, which is particularly important in British Columbia. The Government has not taken any action with respect to new tax incentives to encourage mineral exploration. I could go on with other unfulfilled promises.

When Hon. Members opposite are discussing the Budget with their Ministers, I urge them to recognize that British Columbia is suffering some special pains. The people in that part of Canada have been abandoned by their elected representatives in the provincial Government.

The Government has said repeatedly that it is the private sector that will create the jobs. This may apply to central Canada, to some extent, where the recession has been lightened and businesses are in fact expanding. However, room for expansion in the private sector in Atlantic Canada and the far western part of Canada is simply not there. The small and medium sized business sectors want very much to expand but there is no demand for their goods or services. People are not prepared to spend their savings on new cars or appliances, expand business operations or begin ranching operations when that part of the country has the highest level of unemployment and a deteriorating economic situation. It has absolutely no political, economic or social leadership.

It is time the Government realized that it has a special obligation to that part of Canada, that it must make some provisions in its Budget to provide relief for the people of British Columbia. The provincial Government has turned its