

blaming everything on everybody else but themselves. The Government does not have its act together. The Government is bringing in heavy taxation on middle and lower income earners who cannot afford the burden.

Would the Hon. Member explain how the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Tory Party can rationalize what they are saying at a time when the facts do not prove it?

**An Hon. Member:** The facts prove it.

**Mr. Penner:** Mr. Speaker, it is well recognized that the economics of recession are different from the economics of recovery. The last administration, a Liberal administration, had to face a world-wide recession. We did not cause it in Canada. We suffered from it.

Since the advent of 1985, we have moved into a period of economic recovery. Again, it was not caused by the Government in Ottawa. It is a recovery that is going on around the world. It is propaganda either way to say the last administration caused the recession, built up the deficit and increased the national debt. It is equally propaganda and pretentious to say that since the election of 1984 we have had leadership at the federal level that has brought recovery. We know that this is simply not the case. We know these are world-wide effects.

I argued in my speech that the Government and the Minister of Finance are not in tune with the economics of recovery. The Minister is missing the boat by putting the heavy, heavy tax burden on lower and middle-income Canadians.

In terms of regional economic development, I will say very briefly that northern Ontario would be a much poorer region, much less self-sustaining than it is today if it had not been for those regional development programs. It meant that small industries in the forest product sector were able to remain competitive. Small communities like Hearst and Dubreuilville and many others that had encouragement in their main industry or in a subsidiary industry using forest products to make a manufactured product were able to keep going.

I was shocked when I asked a question of the Minister of Finance about regional development and I heard my friend, the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) refer to those programs as hand-outs. We are going to end the hand-outs, he said. Northern Ontario never received a hand-out under any regional development program. What we received was an advance payment to get our economy moving and then we paid back many, many times. What we received in tens, we gave back in hundreds. That is what economic development does. It is not a drain on the national treasury or the national economy, it is a way of adding to it. Regional development spurs the economy in that region and generates new wealth, which contributes to national prosperity. It does not detract from it.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Blais (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity this afternoon to speak in the Budget debate. I

*The Budget—Mr. Blais*

agree with my hon. friend from Chicoutimi (Mr. Harvey) that even after eighteen months experience, it is hard to have to listen to the same redundancies on the part of the official Opposition, which is using the same images of gloom and doom and the same scare tactics as last year.

Mr. Speaker, after last year's predictions when they tried to scare us, today they are still unable to see the very definite advantages and the incredible and unique results of last May's Budget and the economic message of November 1984. They cannot get used to good news. They just cannot get used to it. I wonder why. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you they will have to get used to good news, because we are going to be in power for a long time. Canadians realize that this Government is working very hard, and has been since it came to power, to bring concrete measures before Parliament that will enhance the well-being of the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, as far as agriculture is concerned, this Government has taken some very concrete measures in the past year and a half to deal with certain problems confronting the agricultural industry. We have taken a pragmatic approach, which is quite different from what I was hearing earlier from the Hon. Member for Regina-West (Mr. Benjamin) who managed to use the term: positive deficit. A new expression is born. Deficits can now be bad or good. The Canadian people and Government Members all agree that there is no way a deficit, and the Hon. Member for Chicoutimi said as much a while ago, there is no way that a deficit could have been positive in the past.

For months we have been hearing: Increase Government spending. We know we are spending billions across this country. We know where we are now: we have to pay our debts. If I were in their shoes, I would be ashamed, but they have no shame. They do not know the meaning of the word. They do not like good news, and they are not ashamed of the state in which they left our public finances. Well, we are just going to keep on working and reminding you of what happened and how it happened. We are going to straighten out our public finances, in spite of the mess you made. Don't worry. We will take care of it.

Concrete measures, well the Budget is full of them. Twenty minutes is not enough to talk about all of them, so I will limit my remarks to agriculture, Mr. Speaker. I met with western agricultural producers, and again yesterday I was talking to a number of producers in various localities in my riding, and I can say that theirs is a very positive reaction. They know we have delivered the goods. What have we been doing for the past year? We helped farmers who had sustained crop losses in the east, in Quebec. We also helped western agricultural producers who had experienced difficulties as a result of the severe draught. We helped Ontario grape producers.

The Official Opposition had five years to come up with a long-term dairy policy, but they failed to do anything at all in those five years. It took us only a few months to get all