

The Budget

not complaining. I worked hard and I did my best, and I think I have had modest success.

We cannot forget about our own history, our own individual experience of the times we went through, good and bad. I am an adherent of John Maynard Keynes and when times are good I am going to raise taxes and when they are bad I am going to lower them. I am going to increase the deficit when times are bad. If you are not prepared to do that you are not going to have full employment. You are not going to put this country to work. You are not going to rebuild it. Think about all the things that have to be done, and need to be done, in this country.

When I read about aboriginal people on reserves in the north who live in the utmost squalor I think that we have a lot of nerve crying about the human rights of people in China or anywhere else. There are about 5 million people in this country who are deprived of basic fundamental human rights, such as a decent home, a job, and the amenities that others have like sewer and water systems and electricity. We have no excuse for not doing it. I do not give a damn which party is in government.

I want to say to my colleagues in the three provincial NDP governments that if they go along with this hypnotism and hysteria about deficits and debts they are not going to be a hell of a lot different from the Tories and the Liberals. God knows they got us into enough trouble and are keeping us in that situation right now, unless there is a change by all our parties in what we do and how and when we do it.

I would urge the government to make a declaration of a national economic emergency and do the same damned thing we did when we had a declaration of war, do the same things we did when we had to rebuild our total economy after the war. That would challenge our people. It would give them some faith in this place and the people they elected.

I hope that my colleagues will appreciate that I am just trying to remind the House of what we have been able to do before and could do again. It will not be easy. All the experts will criticize us. What do they know? They never dug a ditch in their lives. They have not been there. Most of us have been there, one way or the other.

Unless we make this kind of a change in the direction and the purpose of our political parties we will not learn from history and will repeat the same mistakes.

I am not sure if this is the last budget I will speak on or not, but you have not heard the end of me yet.

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear from the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden and to hear some of his suggestions. I am particularly interested in some of his analogies here today.

I would like to get his reaction on the fact that I noticed in the Main Estimates that the government has cut, for example, from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Department of Employment and Immigration, and Canada Post.

• (1730)

If any group approaches me as a mainly rural MP, it is in reference to the service that Canada Post provides and that has been cut.

But then away down in there—and you have to find it—is \$3.3 million for this museum of humour which is planned for somewhere in Canada next year.

I know you have to prioritize. I know there is a pecking order when dollars are scarce, but I just wondered whether the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden would have prioritized in that fashion to take away services from Canada Post, take away from some other agencies which we thought were doing a pretty good job for Canadians and plug in a bunch of money for something called a museum of humour? Would he react to that?

Mr. Benjamin: If I thought for one moment that the museum of humour would have some of my corny jokes in it, I might go along. No, that is not a priority. I do not put that at the top of the list. It is nice to have and when we can do it, we will do it.

I want to remind my hon. friend too, that all these different agencies in Atlantic Canada and the prairies are patchwork. We need a national effort, like the one for the declaration of war, directed to rebuilding our economy and full employment. If you did that you would not need all these little jerk-water operations that do good work but ain't going to solve anything.