

*The Budget*

But to the finance minister unemployment is just another economic indicator. It is not an economic indicator. It is people. It is bread and butter on the table, it is dignity, it is respect and we owe it to this country to have a policy of full employment not a policy of high unemployment.

As an aside, whatever happened to the jobs that were to be created by the free trade deal? There do not seem to be any. The only job that this government created is one, a con job, and the biggest con job that this country has ever seen.

*[Translation]*

The destruction of unemployment insurance, the pressure to lower wages, the use of the unemployed to fight inflation, the lack of new initiatives in the Budget to help unemployed Canadians work all show the government's insensitivity to unemployment.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) must realize that if he wants a sound economy, he must invest in the people of this country. That means creating jobs. The NDP maintains that all Canadians are entitled to a job. An unemployment rate of 8.5 per cent is totally unacceptable. It is even scandalous!

*[English]*

In this budget, this government has ignored a very important crisis facing Canadians, one that over 80 per cent of Canadians have identified as a priority concern to them, to their children and to the future. That is the environment. By failing to deal in any way in this budget with the environment, this government has failed Canadians. There is perhaps nothing in the budget that so clearly represents the lack of vision of this country than the inactivity concerning the environment. Nothing shows more clearly how this government is out of touch not only with the problems in Canada, but with our commitments to the international community.

• (1730)

It is not as though this government does not talk about the environment. We have heard many promises regarding the environment. The Minister of the Environment promised a tough environmental agenda for Canada that would include concrete measures and funding to support them. The environment minister promised that it would

be a green budget. My colleague says that we have word inflation, more words but no action on the environment.

There is no intention in this budget to make the condition of our environment a priority. By addressing environmental initiatives, of course, we would create more jobs. But the government plans this budget on increased unemployment, not on planning for the future.

There is not one cent in this budget for alternative energy, research into clean technologies, conservation or recycling. There is not one new initiative to deal with ozone layer depletion or global warming.

This budget demonstrates how ineffective the environment minister has been in promoting his agenda. It demonstrates how little real commitment this government has to the environment. It is a total sham when it comes to action.

Canadians who care about the future of this country and care about our environment must speak out, and write to the Minister of Finance and Minister of Environment to say they want economic planning that plans for the future, that plans for our children and our grandchildren. That is what we want to see in the budget.

*[Translation]*

The Minister of Finance must now recognize that the most important deficit facing Canadians is the environmental deficit. It is growing all the time. It is a threat to our children. And unlike other deficits, it cannot be repaid.

We must stop it without further delay. Now, Madam Speaker, not in ten years.

Canada has no economic future if our children cannot breathe without danger and if they have nothing to drink and eat.

*[English]*

In conclusion, I want to make several points. The Minister of Finance was very specific with dollar figures in his budget when it came to the kinds of cuts that would take place in social programs and health programs. We know it is going to be some \$7.3 billion in five years. There will be cuts to health and post-secondary education, cuts to those things that are an investment in the future. There will be cuts to science and technology, which affects our very ability to compete in a changing world.