

instance, one of my constituents who lives in Cumberland, Ontario, and works for the Department of Public Works and whose job as a janitor is threatened? What am I going to tell him? Am I going to tell him that the Minister will make sacrifices, that the Government will make sacrifices if he loses his job? No, Mr. Speaker, this will not happen. The Government still will have 39 or 40 Ministers, 39 or 40 limousines, 39 or 40 executive assistants, and so forth, constantly giving to those who are well off and taking away from middle income people and the most in need.

[English]

A few days before the Budget came out, Canadians became aware of a rumour that the Government might increase gasoline prices. The Hon. Member from Mississauga is chuckling at that proposition. But we know of course the Government did not intend to make a major increase in gas prices at that time. It was a deliberate strategy, in my view. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Government attempted to scare the people of Canada by participating in the propagation of these kinds of rumours so that when the Budget was not quite as offensive as the rumours—in which the Conservatives likely participated—indicated, then Canadians were supposed to be grateful. They were supposed to be grateful for the fact that there was no tax increase on gasoline.

Mr. Gauthier: There is one percent.

Mr. Boudria: I recognize the fact, of course, as my colleague the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) pointed out, that the federal excise tax increase will include gasoline, to the extent of 1 per cent, which really means one half cent per litre. We should all be aware of the fact that the Government, through its policy of not encouraging Petro-Canada to reduce the prices on gasoline, is indeed causing a situation of serious hardship on the taxpayers of Canada.

Across the border—and I happen to have been in the United States last weekend—gasoline was selling for approximately 90 cents a U.S. gallon. There are parts of this country where we are paying almost that much, in Canadian dollars, of course, for a litre of gasoline. Indeed, we are paying in the 65 cents to 70 cents a litre range in some parts of the province of Quebec, and 55 cents in my riding, only 10 miles from the Parliament Buildings. That price for gasoline is totally unjustified. The people of Canada expected that the Government, as part of its budgetary measures, would at least have a suggestion in its Budget that it would be cutting off the increases—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member's time has expired, but he is such a popular Hon. Member that I am sure the House will allow him to continue until six o'clock. Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: No.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments. The Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier).

The Budget—Mr. Boudria

Mr. Gauthier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate my colleague for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria) on his excellent speech.

I am somewhat familiar with his constituency and I know that he represents a large number of medium and low income families. Since the Government has now changed the definition of the poverty line by lowering it arbitrarily to \$15,000 as this is the cut-off level for certain Government programs according to the budget papers, and since 1,538,000 families now receive the child tax credit, whose cut-off level was set at \$23,500, and this Budget provides a prepayment of \$300 for one million families next November, can the Hon. Member tell us what it will mean for the standard of living of a family in his constituency that 538,000 families will not be eligible for this prepayment. For instance, in his constituency, is a family with four children and an income of \$17,000, which will make this family ineligible to the prepayment of the tax credit next November, not just as deserving as a family with one or two children and a \$15,000 income? Why is this Government insensitive to the fact that 1,538,000 families receive the tax credit and why has the Government arbitrarily decided to exclude 538,000 of these families? Has the Hon. Member anything to say about this?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) is raising a very valid point. Naturally, someone in my constituency who has an income of \$15,000 rather than \$14,999, especially if he has a large family, needs the cheque as much as the family earning a few dollars less. This decision is extremely arbitrary and very unfair for my constituents since a great many of them have low or medium incomes. I am sure that the Hon. Member for Argenteuil-Papineau (Mrs. Bourgault), whose constituency is close to mine, agrees with me, and I trust that the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) will let her speak later on. If he allows her to speak, I am convinced that she will want to make a few comments.

[English]

This Government will be remembered for tunagate, deindexation, patronage, free trade when it promised the opposite, privatization, lay-offs in the Public Service, bank failures and Ministerial resignations. I say to those Hon. Members opposite that this is not my Government. It is the Government of the Party in power. I may not even claim to like it. But it is goofing up, messing up so many things that I ask those Hon. Members to pick themselves up, get themselves organized and try to make this country work. Investors across the world are losing confidence in the Government because of its activities and because of the way it has gone about totally removing the confidence everyone had. In so doing, it is creating damage not only to itself—and I do not particularly care about that part of it—but to all of us in this House. The actions we saw today are an example of that. The Government is creating damage and that Party should pick itself up by its bootstraps and try to at