

The Budget—Mr. Fisher

In my consultations with Canadians in all walks of life and in all regions, I have been encouraged by the sense of realism they bring to our economic and human challenges. There has been a renewal of confidence throughout the country—confidence in our economic potential and confidence in our ability to achieve that potential.

That is good news for Canadians who are looking forward to additional prosperity through the 1980s. Of course, we have a continuing problem with unemployment, and that is why I observed a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, that we have dedicated over \$3.5 billion to work in the economy in 1984-1985 alone. Of that amount, an extra \$150 million has been allocated to the Youth Opportunity Fund, bringing that fund up well over \$1 billion in its commitment and activity in the Canadian economy.

All of this, Sir, is a good Liberal Government's approach. As an illustration, let me say we have immediately allocated increases of \$50 a month in the guaranteed income supplement, \$25 now and \$25 in December. By December, recipients of the guaranteed income supplement will be receiving \$85 a month more in GIS payments than they were receiving in 1980. That extra money is indexed so that the benefit is a permanent one for them. At the same time we improved private pensions. We made recommendations for reform on portability and vesting, for flexibility provided by a registered pension account, and for higher RRSP limits. The two measures combined represent the approach we as Liberals have followed. There is immediate help for those with the greatest need as represented by the GIS increase. There is a proposal for long-term reform for everyone in our country.

● (1630)

All of this comes out of extensive consultation. We saw a conference on pensions, federal-provincial discussions, a green paper and a parliamentary task force on pensions, all of it culminating in these measures in the Budget. We went to the Canadian people, examined the situation carefully, and then made some proposals which interested Canadians will help to shape into their ultimate form. That is a Liberal approach to this kind of problem.

We have seen similar approaches with the mortgage insurance plan, mortgage investment instruments which will bring back the ten-year market, and clearer rules. Again it is a balanced Liberal approach. We provide immediate help for those in need under the Canada Mortgage Renewal Plan, and we offer long-term reform through the ideas contained in this Budget.

There is plenty of benefit in my riding. People in Mississauga like to see the kind of changes we brought about in the sales tax reforms, and here I would like to pay particular credit to Mr. Richard Bennetts at Mary Kay Cosmetics whose advice to me personally on this issue has been informed and intelligent. We saw a lot of benefit derived in my riding from the sales tax reforms on domestic and foreign automobiles. My riding has over 5,000 small businesses, and those people will like the simplification offered in the tax rules. In my riding we have lots of senior citizens, many of whom have expressed to me their need for a simpler tax reporting system. The new

method of reporting investment income will help hundreds of people in hundreds of families in my riding.

This Budget, Mr. Speaker, continues the smooth thrust developed previously, a thrust toward economic recovery. It is based on open consultation, both before and after the Budget, with large numbers of Canadians. It uses a Liberal approach which helps those most in need, offers reform in major social areas, and does so in partnership between Government and the private sector. I am proud to have worked on this Budget and I am proud to have been associated with the Minister of Finance in his recommendations.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I thought it was very fitting that the Hon. Member got his best advice from a cosmetics company, because the Government spends most of its time on cosmetic solutions.

Mr. Fisher: Another contemptuous comment; that is all you have. There are thousands of people who work for that company.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member will have an opportunity later to respond.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I just wondered if his consultations were on how to use the blush brush?

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Speaker, that is a remarkably contemptuous comment. I do not understand why the Hon. Member would say that. Let me expand on the ideas I heard from Mr. Bennetts. I would like to assure the Hon. Member that Mr. Bennetts has thousands of women and men who work for him not only in their location in Mississauga but also as sales agents going from door to door right across the country. I am sure they will not think this is a laughing matter.

It was Mr. Bennetts who pointed out to me originally that the work of the task force was very positive. He indicated that it was not necessary for us to change the federal sales tax from the manufacturing to the wholesale level on all items. He indicated the problems with the administration of the tax, appeals and assessments, and the problems in specific industries like the car industry where we give unfair advantage to foreign competition. All of that was explained to me by this individual, and the result, not just because of his input but owing to similar input from hundreds of other businesses across the country, is the reforms we see in this Budget. We see the sales tax system being continued the way it is with much better rules, much fairer assessments, and with an attack on problem areas such as the car industry, and with a general sense that we should reform slowly because we have learned to live with this system over a period of some 50 years. I do not think that kind of benefit deserves the sort of contempt we just heard from the Hon. Member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen). I want to say that loudly so the Mary Kay ladies out there will vote against him.

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of time spent in the Budget indicating how much the Government was concerned about small business. However, small businesses in my riding,