

If the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) will not resign over the largest release of budgetary information in the history of this country—indeed, as I attempted to submit to your Honour last Thursday, in the history of parliamentary democracy—then there will be chaos in the system, lack of trust, lack of confidence and lack of willingness of 11 million Canadian taxpayers to assess themselves voluntarily and to file that assessment with the Department of Finance.

By not resigning the Minister of Finance is setting precedent in which a Minister of Finance will be held accountable for budget leaks only if he personally leaked the information. That is not good enough for this House. That is not good enough for the country and that is a very misleading interpretation of his responsibility.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): The Minister claims he was the victim of a criminal act. The real crime is his Budget. The real crime is that this Tory Government did not tell Canadians the truth about what it intended to do. This is therefore a Budget of broken promises.

Before and during the election the Conservative Government made \$17 billion worth of promises, megaproject after megaproject across the country. We had a battle of vocabulary with the Minister. He said: "Those are not promises. Those are election commitments." The Minister of Finance said to Canadians that they were spending commitments and the cost was supposed to be zero. Eleven days before the election the Minister of Finance said: "Conservatives have made spending commitments. In those reserves we have sufficient money to handle the announcements." During the campaign the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said: "We have dealt with the deficit. You have got promises. All are within Michael Wilson's fiscal framework. Every nickel has been accounted for." As I have said already in this House of Commons, the Prime Minister's word is not worth a nickel.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Shame!

Borrowing Authority

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious from reading this Budget that Tories never had the slightest intention of keeping their word. They never had the slightest intention, beginning with the Minister, of keeping and meeting those commitments. They were only interested in buying Canadian voters and buying the election so that they could sell this country at a discount to the United States.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Last Wednesday evening, in a matter of minutes, the average Canadian family was saddled with \$7 billion in new taxes and \$2 billion in program cutbacks. To us this was not really a surprise, however. Throughout the election campaign last fall, we clearly explained to Canadians what Conservatives had in store for them. Across the country, in Caraquet, Saint-Jean, Thunder Bay, Saint-Jérôme and Saint-Boniface, I said that if he was re-elected, the Prime Minister would introduce a catastrophic new tax on consumer goods, abolish the universality of our social programs and destroy our social safety net. Everywhere I went, I was called a liar by his Ministers, by almost all the Ministers opposite. And now it has all come true. Who is lying now? Where are the real liars? This Budget is a list of broken promise.

During the TV debate in French, the Prime Minister said in full view of all Canadians, and I quote: "We shall maintain all our social programs, without fail. There is nothing in the Free Trade Agreement that will prevent us from fulfilling these obligations, now or in the future, and we intend to spend more on these programs."

In Sydney, Nova Scotia, the Prime Minister said, and I quote him once again: "As long as I am Prime Minister, social programs, especially those for the elderly, will be improved, not diminished".

In Québec City, the old capital, appearing before another group of senior citizens and this time taking his mother as his witness, the Prime Minister again made a solemn oath that he would not only maintain but increase social benefits for the elderly.

From one election to the next, the Prime Minister's style has remained the same. In 1984, he promised with his hand on his heart. In 1988, he swore a solemn on the taking his mother as his witness. However, only a few months later, he cut the old age security benefits of thousands of Canadians. But, says the Government, this cutback will only affect people with an annual income of