

been proposed. I should like to speak briefly to two points dealt with in the budget as a whole. The government states that the budget is one of restraint. It also states that it is a budget that is going to prove helpful to those in greatest need of help. These are the two points upon which I wish to elaborate: first, government restraint; and second, the area of our population in greatest need of help.

So far as restraint is concerned, the government, this Grit administration, are not exercising restraint. All they are doing is preaching restraint to everybody else, without practising it themselves. The government tell us we must tighten our belts, while they continue to loosen their own belt. If the government were serious about exercising restraint, they would not condone such examples of waste as the sending of telegrams by the minister responsible for manpower and immigration to individuals who served on constituency advisory groups for the Local Initiatives Program, which cost the taxpayers of Canada \$8,000. Some \$8,000 of the Canadian people's money was spent on giving these people a Christmas greeting. Would not a letter of thanks have been just as good? I fail to realize why a telegram had to be sent, when a letter would have been just as welcome and a great deal less expensive. The government tell us, Mr. Speaker, that we must exercise restraint, yet this Grit administration are not willing to do so themselves. We have to exercise restraint and suffer because of their lack of initiative to do what they themselves are preaching. I realize that \$8,000 is only a small amount in the total overview of government expenditure, but this is just one example of many.

This year is International Women's Year. While I wish to comment on the waste of money on this program, I do not want it to be understood as a criticism of the female population.

Mr. Foster: It will be.

Mr. Elzinga: That is a chance I will have to take. I have always felt that women and men were born equal. Both sexes in Canada have a great deal to contribute, and I believe it is the individual's right to decide how she or he wishes to make that contribution. We see money being wasted by this Grit administration on such things as "Why not" buttons. Is one of these "Why not" buttons or a poster going to change the attitude of anyone toward the female sex in our population? I do not believe so. All we are witnessing is a promotional gimmick that is going to cost you, Mr. Speaker, and I a great deal of money—money that could have been spent in a much more responsible manner. Here is just another example of Grit waste. This is what the government calls restraint, while you and I have to tighten our belts. Not only do we have "Why not" buttons; we now have "Hire a student," and youth buttons. Where is it all going to end?

In the booklet issued by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) entitled "Budget in Brief", the following is stated: "Growth in government expenditures should be restrained". The minister states they "should" be restrained; he does not say they "will" be. Government expenditures will not be restrained even though they should be, because the present administration are not concerned about restraint; otherwise they would do something to curtail expenditures.

Income Tax

The sales tax on building materials has been reduced to 5 per cent. The government has announced that \$500 grants will be made available to those purchasing new, moderately priced homes during the next year. Would it not have been a better idea for the government to remove completely the sales tax and to forget about the \$500 home owner grant? The saving to the new home buyer would have been very much the same and would have been available not only to the first-time home buyer but to all new home buyers. It would also do away with the expense of administering two government programs. For every dollar that the government is giving out by way of a grant of this type, it costs approximately \$1 to administer the program. Had the sales tax been dropped completely and the \$500 grant done away with, our houses would have cost the same, but over-all we would have saved tax dollars because we would not have had to administer these two areas. I believe this is just another example of waste within the federal government. And our Grit administration calls this restraint.

The inadequacies not only of the budget but of many of the proposals put forward by the present government make me more aware each day that they do not have any positive solutions or policies to solve the problems of this country. Too many of the government's decisions reflect a strong tendency to put that which is expedient ahead of that which is basically sound from the long-term point of view. It is time there was restoration of ideals and principles to their rightful places in our national politics. This has not been observed in the budget. Once again let me point out that the government preaches restraint but is not willing to practice it. Because of this, Mr. Speaker, you and I must suffer.

This leads me to the second point in my presentation. Once again I quote from the booklet "Budget in Brief" published by the Minister of Finance: "Continued attention should be given to helping those in our society who are most vulnerable to inflation". Again I draw attention to the word "should"; he does not say that he "will" give them this attention. Who are the people in our society who most need this attention, and just what is the present administration doing to give this attention? What does a cut in taxes do for people who do not pay income tax? Nothing is being done for these people, yet they are the ones hardest hit by our ever increasing inflation rate. The budget does not help those people who need help most.

While I commend the government for introducing legislation that will allow senior citizens to write off interest on savings, and therefore at this time of high inflation to extend the buying power of the savings accounts of our senior citizens, the proposal has limited merit. It is of advantage only to senior citizens who have savings. There is nothing in the budget to increase old age security pensions which have been eroded by inflation during the past years. There can be no doubt that those who have for years paid tax dollars to provide themselves with a senior citizen's security plan are now being deprived of their just desserts. The people who pioneered this country and built Canada to what it is today are being shafted. The fact that senior citizens were not offered an increase cannot be justified. This is the administration which has stated that "continued attention should be given to helping those in our society most vulnerable to inflation", yet the govern-