

The Budget

again to \$14 billion. By 1995 it will stand at \$10 billion and at that time we will regain control over our economy.

Madam Speaker, there being no ready-made solution to the ever growing national debt problem, the steps taken in this budget are therefore essential if we are to bring lasting economic prosperity to this country.

The priority of our government since 1984 has been to get a handle on the deficit and the national debt while restoring better control over our finances. Such was the mandate given to us by all Canadians. When we came into office, forecast program expenditures were \$16 billion more than revenues. Now, the government's expenditures are \$9 billion less than its revenues. This turnaround of more than \$25 billion makes all the difference and proves that we know how to manage our finances.

Significant economical progress has been made because we have controlled program and federal service growth. Budgetary initiatives, combined with better management and the implementation of the goods and services tax make up the government's economic strategy to restore our country's financial health and improve our economic performance on the international scene.

This budget takes into account the economic situation in Quebec. I want assure Quebecers to know that the extra help they receive through equalization payments will remain untouched. Neither will it be affected by the 5 per cent limit imposed on federal transfers under the Canada Assistance Plan. In fact, major transfers to Quebec should increase overall by some 3,2 per cent in 1990-91, and 3,4 per cent in 1991-92.

In sum, Madam Speaker, Canadians have adjusted well to the changes introduced by this government. The number of jobs created and our numerous achievements prove that our policies are working.

Our mandate is to restore Canada's financial balance, and because of that we are committed to reducing the waste that was a major contributor to the debt. We will keep on making the changes that are needed as long as this country's economy has not stabilized.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government that does not balk at taking drastic

measures where needed. This government is not concerned with its popularity when the welfare and future of Canadians are involved. We therefore will keep on acting in the best interests of all.

[*English*]

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to my hon. colleague's response to the federal budget and heard her itemize several components of the budget that we have been held in criticism of over recent days. I cannot help but think, given the limited amount of time a member has in the House of Commons to comment on a particular matter, that there are certain components of her speech which should be emphasized and perhaps highlighted.

I take this opportunity to express to her my concern and also my appreciation for the time and effort she has spent on this speech. I wish she would take this opportunity to comment perhaps from *la belle province* on a couple of points of her speech that would be of great interest to Canadians generally who are having Quebec presented to them in a misunderstood way.

I particularly make note of her comment with respect to the fact that this government to which we both belong has fielded a budget this year showing that in effect we have a program surplus. However, we are harnessed with this cancerous debt we have inherited that stifles our very sovereignty and we cannot act as Canadians should.

Therefore, I would like to ask her to comment some more on the good government that has resulted in us giving this operating surplus to the citizens of Canada. If the hon. member has any other highlights that she may have overlooked with respect to how this budget affected Quebec, I think it would be in Canada's good interest to know.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Jacques: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Regina—Wascana for his remarks and also for his question.

I would like to tell him that, as was said a few moments ago, this budget is indeed a good thing for all Canadians. Obviously we have to take drastic measures in order to help Canadians reduce the deficit, all that because the