

—will mean that something like \$4 billion will be put back into the bottom level of the economy, on a one-shot basis, to get this thing back on the rails.

That quotation will be found at page 3134 of *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker. Pulling another figure out of the air, he blithely calculated that a tax reduction of \$4 billion would, to use his words—

—regenerate about \$1.5 billion in taxes—

Leaving a net cost to the treasury of a mere \$2.5 billion! To indicate just how well thought-out the NDP proposal is, let me point out that while the hon. member for New Westminster was suggesting that what was required was a tax cut of \$4 billion, the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) told the House on February 21, as reported at page 3450 of *Hansard*:

What is needed to stimulate the economy is another \$1 billion or \$2 billion in the hands of the people in the low income bracket.

Well, the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville says \$1 billion and his colleague from New Westminster says \$4 billion. To the NDP, what is \$3 billion?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Then we have the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltzman) who told the House on January 30, 1975, as reported at page 2752 of *Hansard* that he thinks, and I am using his words—

—The economy is essentially strong and healthy and not even the government can damage it very much.

He said that with his usual charming sense of humour. He went on to say that he had difficulty understanding how the Conservative proposal for a \$500 million tax reduction would at the same time stimulate the economy and reduce inflation, as claimed by the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens). He indicated that what was required was not a tax reduction to stimulate the economy, but a change in the tax system to provide for a more even distribution of income. The hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge contended that the tax cuts proposed in the May and November budgets were “enormously regressive”. We return to the view of the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville who told the House on December 6, 1974, as reported at pages 2020 and 2021 of *Hansard* and I like these remarks because I was here to listen to them:

Our income tax system is now the most progressive in the world. It takes into account the needs of individuals. We should do the same sort of thing with other taxes.

The hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge says our taxes are regressive, but not the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville. To return to my main theme, let me point out that we have it on the authority of an unnamed aide to the NDP leader in the House, one of those researchers supported by Mr. Speaker's estimates, and we are all for that, though I do feel the NDP members ought to get together with the same researcher and make sure they are working on the same material—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** —we have it from an unnamed aide to the NDP leader in the House, as reported in the *Toronto Star* of February 12, 1975, that the tax credit scheme would cost more than \$4 billion—he did not say

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anything about regenerating taxes—and that a \$5 billion estimate for the total NDP package probably was a little conservative. That is the NDP aide to the current House leader of the NDP. That may well prove to be the greatest understatement of the parliamentary year.

Let us accept, for the sake of argument, the NDP cost estimate for the tax credit of more than \$4 billion. Let us abolish the sales tax on automobiles as proposed by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. That is \$400 million or so. That brings us close to about \$4.5 billion right there. What about the cost of the increase in old age pensions? The hon. member was particularly vague about what he had in mind, but so far as the OAS alone is concerned, I suppose I am safe in assuming that he was not advocating anything less than that advocated by the leader of the NDP during the last election campaign, an increase in the OAS to \$200 monthly and the reduction over a five year period of the eligible age from 65 to 60.

I am advised that just in the first year the cost of that proposal would be more than \$2 billion, a cost that would escalate by two or three times that amount over the course of the five year period. What the NDP has in mind with regard to increasing the Canada Pension Plan, I hate to guess. Leaving that proposal aside, it is not difficult to bring the total cost of the tax credit, abolition of the auto sales tax and the increase in the OAS, to more than \$6.5 billion.

I imagine that it is anybody's guess how much it would cost for the federal government to pick up the tab for all municipal public works labour costs as advocated by the leader of the NDP, but I might point out that the estimated municipal construction outlays this year, not including school construction costs, will total more than \$1.6 billion. If our experience with the winter capital projects fund is any guide, then labour costs will amount to around 65 per cent of that total, which would involve a federal expenditure of about \$1 billion. That would raise the grand total for the NDP program to \$7.5 billion. That is over the \$3 billion to \$4 billion deficit already in force in the economy, so we are talking about a \$10 billion package from the NDP.

● (1620)

I will not even try to estimate the cost of the federal public service wage package proposed by the member for Oshawa-Whitby. Nor will I try to guess what is involved in his proposal to double housing construction to some 400,000 units. The member for Oshawa-Whitby spoke of the government infusing “enough capital into the economy to allow for the building of 400,000 new housing units”. I do not know whether he is proposing that the Bank of Canada simply turn the credit tap wide open so as to generate private mortgage funds to finance such construction, or whether he is proposing that the government do the whole job itself. Let me just point out, however, that Statistics Canada estimates that capital investment in housing will amount to \$6.7 billion this year, and to double housing construction would require the investment of double that amount.

Some weeks ago it was reported that the leader of the NDP government in British Columbia had emphasized the need for “fiscal responsibility”. It should be blatantly