

Government Orders

seats. It is not quite so high in Canada but it is still very high.

What should we do instead? Instead of those cuts we should be cutting \$1 billion from the tax loopholes that the Auditor General identified in the offshore tax havens.

We should be cutting the billion dollars from unjustified capital gains tax; not from farmers, home owners or small business, but from people earning more than \$100,000 a year who do not need that. We could cut a billion dollars from the entertainment tax credit. We could perhaps cut \$4 billion from interest deduction loopholes and \$2 billion from defence, not from operating but from the capital, from those helicopters, frigates and the low-level air defence system that we do not need because the Russians are not coming. Probably around \$4 billion could be cut by lowering the interest rates by 3 per cent instead of jacking them up in order to make the United States government happy by reducing Canadian imports to the United States.

With that we could pay down some of the deficit. We could also pay decent unemployment insurance, welfare and training allowances instead of asking women to go to training when they have no money for car fare and no money for child care.

We could let manufacturing grow again for the domestic market instead of forcing people to buy imports. We could let the retail sales and the service industries grow again. We could let the jobless get jobs which they want. Government would even get its taxes and would be able to balance its budget.

It would have to do things in a completely different way than what it has been doing for the last eight years. It is high time it either exercised some common sense or quit.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Madam Speaker, I too want to intervene in this debate tonight. I want to start out in an unusual manner, particularly given the tone of the debate. I want to compliment the Minister of Finance. Although I disagree fundamentally with what he has done in his budget, I respect the fact that he is one of the few ministers of the Crown who will

sit through the debate and listen to the comments from all members of the House. I congratulate him for that.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Angus: Having said that, I want to say that in my years in this House and my 17 years in elected life—at least attempted elected life in some cases—I find this particular financial statement is one of the meanest, one of the cruelest and one of the worst that Canadians have ever seen.

The attacks are on those who are the weakest in society, the people who have, not through any fault of their own, found themselves on the scrap heap of not having a job to go to, particularly those who will lose their job once this budget is in place, finding themselves being eligible for less money, a smaller percentage of what they were earning before. If it is a woman in a work place who is being sexually harassed, or a person of colour who is being discriminated against, or someone who is prepared to stand up to the employer and blow the whistle on environmental matters, on health and safety matters and is fired by their employer, they will not get any compensation whatsoever. They will not get any return from the premiums they have paid, in some cases for many years. They will get no insurance. They will be cut off entirely.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration gets up in this House and says they will be given the benefit of the doubt. A lot of the women who are sexually harassed do not want to reopen the wounds. They are not going to go to someone who is a stranger and say they were sexually harassed and here is chapter and verse. They are not even going to say that. We know from experience that women who have been sexually abused on the job do not want anybody to know about it. They are uncertain about their ability to prove it even though they know what is happening to them. By turning the clock back 21 years, we have done a disservice to those women. We have made them open season as we have made people of colour, gays, lesbians, any group in society that can be discriminated against because of who they are or what they stand for.

• (2150)

In that sense, it is a very unfair budget. There was lots of promise out there.