

The Budget

What is in this budget? The measure of a budget is to say what is in it for those who have very little, for those who are losing ground. What is there in this budget for the poor? Really, honestly, nothing. For the unemployed, nothing. For those on social assistance, nothing. For those that go to food banks, nothing. For those that have declared bankruptcy, nothing. For the farmers, nothing. For our Atlantic fishermen and women, nothing. For small businesses, nothing. For Manitoba, more heartache.

We know, as we look into this budget, and I use the analogy of a used car, once you start using it, once you start looking at it, you start finding out the problems. There are many problems which have not yet surfaced. I quoted a few. For example, there is the rearranging of responses to families. There is going to be a loss over time. There is going to be something now, but over time there is going to be a tremendous loss to families.

We also know that the government has cancelled the co-op housing program, that it has sliced the regular housing budget. On the other side, it has made house purchasing more easily obtained by certain people who have certain investments in their pension funds for the future. Let me quote an analysis that was done with respect to the slashes in housing.

[Translation]

And I quote: "By eliminating social housing and the co-operative housing program, this government also eliminated thousands of jobs in the construction and manufacturing sectors. The number of jobs that will be created in the construction sector following the implementation of the home buyers' plan will be more or less equal to the number of jobs that were lost following the cuts affecting housing starts".

[English]

The government is taking on one side, giving on the other, but in the balance there are no real net winners. We note that the family allowance is gone and again, if this budget is analysed one finds that over time families are net losers.

Look at the health sector. After the government had said "we will not touch the transfer formula, we will not touch it", what did it do in 1986? It was reduced by 2 per cent. It was reduced again by another per cent. Then it was frozen in the period from 1986 to 1995. What have we got? We have a reduction cut in transfers of roughly \$30 billion for health and education. It is about a 2:1

ratio. So \$10 billion less for education, \$20 billion less for health, that is what is happening in the health field.

Let us look at what this budget does for students. I have already indicated that there is a cut to transfers that continues and remember that the cut between 1986 and 1995 is roughly \$9 billion a year. In this year alone, it is roughly \$250 billion for education. There is less for training and retraining, even though there is massive unemployment and social assistance numbers that have never been seen before.

• (1650)

The government says there is more for research and development because the figure is \$240 million over five years. It is easy to say that, \$240 million more for research and development over five years because the transfer payments have been reduced to education again by \$250 million for one year. I would be a wealthy business person if I could increase my revenues that way, and that is exactly what the government has done.

There is also the destruction of key organizations such as the Economic Council of Canada and the Science Council of Canada. Those organizations were vital to planning, to seeing into the future, to making sure that we were doing to the extent that we can the right things to build this country, to get the economy going again, to put people back to work.

If we look at the students today we find that not only do they have fewer dollars transferred to colleges and universities, but they still have that goods and services tax on books and materials. I proposed that the goods and services tax be eliminated at least on books. Perhaps we should be generous and extend it to all reading materials.

There is another interesting feature in this budget. They talk about the 3 per cent administrative fee on student loans. We said a lot about that—and I see one of my colleagues whom I shall not name smiling. I know why he is smiling, because he knows full well that the elimination of that 3 per cent actually will save students on the one hand roughly \$20 million. I have done a rapid calculation and I am pretty close. But the removal of the six-month grace period, no interest, will probably give the government \$30 million. So you give relief of \$20 million on one side and you take \$30 million on the other and you say to the students: "Aren't we great guys and gals?" Sorry, folks, it does not work. I go back to my analogy of the used car. In my dream I drove that car and the motor went, the transmission went, the rear went, everything went finally. And when you get into the budget everything goes.