

*Supply*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** There being no questions and comments, we shall resume debate.

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to join in this debate this afternoon because it is very clear that after six, seven or eight months in office, the Government does not really have an economic agenda for this country. Last week I had the opportunity to visit two provinces in western Canada. Time after time I was told, in talking to people in Alberta and Saskatchewan, it was clear that the Tories had a very active political agenda but a very fuzzy nondescript economic agenda.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has a wonderful press organization. It is able to put together massive conferences where all these things can be discussed, but the Government never actually brings into the House any bills to improve the economy. It goes from one great show to another.

First, we saw that wonderful meeting of the Prime Minister and the premiers in Regina. It cost about \$500,000 or \$600,000. Dozens of officials were flown in first-class from all over the country. Great co-operation was promised and then, as a final stroke of economic determination, we were told the Government was going to spend some \$695 million on job-creation and direct employment programs and it was going to allow the provinces to have a say in how it was distributed. Everyone sat around the table saying, "Isn't that marvellous. The amount which the Prime Minister has put into job-creation and job training is marvellous". But someone at the back of the room asked, "Well, how much was spent last year?" The answer came back, "Just about exactly the same". So I believe, Mr. Speaker, we really have to give the Government credit for putting on wonderful, wonderful shows.

When it announces job-creation and job training programs worth \$695 million, the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) doesn't just announce it here in the House, which is good parliamentary etiquette, but a conference is put on and \$400,000 or \$500,000 is spent to bring all the premiers in to say, "Isn't what we are doing wonderful?" But the actual impact is just about the same as in previous years.

● (1550)

There was an editorial in the May 12 edition of *The Toronto Sun* headed: "Will Budget be Worth the Wait?" It went on to describe all of the wonderful things the Prime Minister promised in the election campaign. It talked about how he was going to reduce the deficit. It said:

Remember how stirring he was on waste? That was before such trifles as the \$525,000 bill for entertaining the Reagans one night. The PM was offkey in singing *When Irish Eyes were Smiling*—and so was the bill.

The Prime Minister also ran into a lot of trouble in London with the Palace. He wanted to make a real production of his visit to the Queen. His press agent tried to hustle over there and make all the arrangements. There was to be some good

pictures which would really show what a tremendous international figure this man is. But those guys in the Palace, you know, they always let you down. They just would not allow those pictures to be taken. Well, the Prime Minister will just have to make other arrangements in the future in order to get suitable pictures.

The motion before us today specifically condemns the Government for undermining the will of Parliament and relates that to agricultural policies in the development of communities across the country. In spite of the fantastic PR job that the Prime Minister does in promoting shows and extravaganzas, there is a touch of uncertainty and concern creeping into almost all sectors of our economy. This is the man who was going to create hundreds of thousands of jobs. He was going to bring down a Budget within a month and really set the economy straight. But here it is May 14 and we are waiting for May 23 to see what the Budget will provide.

We know pretty well from the economic statement last fall what the Government is opposed to. It is opposed to renewable energy. It is opposed to things like the CHIP and COSP programs. It is opposed to programs like RRAP which help people across the country. It is opposed to providing funding for the CBC. It is opposed to programs which protect our environment, and to the construction of a new world class toxicology centre in Guelph. It is opposed to things like the Canadian Wildlife Service. The list goes on and on. But we really do not know what the Government is in favour of, and we are hoping that we will find out in this Budget exactly what the policies of the Government are regarding economic matters.

I would like to quote from an article by Barry Wilson in *The Western Producer* of May 9, 1985, which talks about how the uncertainty about the future bothers many farm groups. He says:

A large part of the unease flows from ignorance and confusion about the Conservative agenda for agriculture mainly because minister John Wise has yet to articulate a clear vision of where he wants to take the industry.

The task forces are combing through Government programs. As far as agriculture is concerned, I do not think there is anyone from west of Toronto on the task force; they are mainly from big corporations. They are deciding what is going to happen to various agricultural programs. The same thing is going on in Indian Affairs, and that report happened to be leaked this week and the Prime Minister immediately disowned it. But there is a great deal of uncertainty among groups, like the Canadian Federation of Agriculture who are quoted in this article as seeing these secret communities working away without even the Minister knowing what is going to be decided. I had the opportunity to attend a meeting with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Crombie) the day after these cuts were leaked and clearly he had no idea of what programs were being cut. That