

Borrowing Authority

In closing, this Government has made much of its concern about children of future generations and what we will be leaving them. I am afraid that we are leaving them is a Canada where only the very rich can afford homes and shelter.

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise to this debate. As I listened to the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner) give his redress to the Government's Budget on May 2, I realized that I have never been so proud and so confident that to be a Liberal in this country means that every Canadian is important, on every farm, in every town and every city from coast to coast to coast. It is the recognition of that third coast, the Arctic coast, that the federal Government has denied in this Budget. Northerners want to contribute their fair share to the fiscal policy of our country, but this Budget disproportionately hurts northerners more than residents in other parts of Canada, and that is not fair.

People in the western Arctic are already burdened with the highest cost of living anywhere in this country. Our political and social development depends on economic growth. Broadening our economy's foundation and building on our strengths will help us solve our society's problems. Settling land claims will create the stability needed for development and give aboriginal people the resources to be full partners in the economy. All northerners will benefit from the self-reliant economy and society which we build together.

However, the Government has not recognized this in its Budget. Instead, the Tories have made the possibility of northerners acquiring equality very doubtful given the already high unemployment rates, the high birth rates, the paucity of economic opportunity in many of the small and particularly northern native communities in the western Arctic. There is still an enormous amount of catching up to be accomplished before northern residents to become economically on par with Canadians south of the 60th parallel.

The Leader of the Official Opposition said on May 2, and the Governor of New York said it during the 1984 U.S. election, that the difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives is that the Conservatives believe the train will not make it all the way unless some are left behind: some of our old, some of our young, some of our

weak. The strong will inherit the land. But Liberals believe that we can make it all the way with the whole family intact. So what the Budget does is crystal clear. It erodes, destroys, abandons, denies, cuts and divides regions and Canadians from coast to coast to coast. It does nothing more. There are no new initiatives. There is no creative programming. There are no improvements. There is no light at the end of the tunnel. I laughed when I heard the Minister of National Defence (Mr. McKnight) tell the world that the sovereignty of Canada's Arctic will have to be maintained by our allies.

• (1210)

In 1987, the Government released a White Paper on Defence which announced that one of the priorities of the Ministry was to have a three-ocean navy in recognition of threats to Canada's claims in the Arctic. The former Minister of National Defence thought that the best way to define sovereignty was to invest in \$8-billion worth of nuclear submarines. Naturally, Canadians did not share the Minister's hunger for power, and did not buy his cold war rhetoric about Canada being in an extraordinarily military threat. When the government Members said that the subs were necessary to protect the Arctic, Northerners and Canadians asked, from what?

The Budget cuts in the Department of National Defence indicate more than any other reductions that the Government does not have a clear goal. It does not know in which direction to go. It does not have the ability to lead Canada to becoming a strong and independent nation.

The whole submarine escapade is a symbol of a Government without a coherent security strategy. The Tories have taken four years to release policies such as the White Paper on Defence and to indicate to Canadians their plans.

Now, almost overnight and without any consultation or recognition of these policies, a Budget is implemented and everything has changed. Universality is being destroyed, social programs are eroding, national infrastructure is being dismantled, big business is being put ahead of ordinary people, and two Canadas are being created; the rich and the poor.

The defence policy which was a priority of the Government is now a policy of economic restraint. The truth is that the reductions in defence spending are not actual