

Excise Tax Act

Sales tax on laundry detergent will be increased under this Bill. I do not know what the Government has against cleanliness.

This Budget not only hurts Canadians by hiking taxes and using regressive sales tax measures but it also hits them at the same time by cutting back on funds for services. These are needed services, ones which are expected and should be the right of Canadians.

Funds for social services will be cut. Child care services which were promised will not be funded. Citizenship programs will be cut back. Pensions will be taxed back from higher income people. Health and welfare payments will be affected, as will education payments, unemployment insurance, housing, environmental programs, foreign aid and social housing programs.

I would like to give a few more details on these. The Budget will slash essential services that are within federal jurisdiction. It is ironic to think that the Tory Government squandered quite a few dollars to whip up hysteria about the deficit, and then expects the citizens will foot the bill for deficit reduction. The Tories refused to attack the root causes of the high deficit. We are concerned about this as well. However, we are concerned about unemployment, high interest rates and the failure of corporations to pay their fair share of taxes. These should be the measures on which the Government is working.

The national child care program has been abandoned. Family allowances and old age security programs are no longer available. Those with incomes over \$50,000 will have their benefits taxed back under those programs. This means that as years go by the threshold will be lowered and universal programs will be eroded continuously. Secretary of State programs which funded advocacy groups for women, for natives and for visible minorities will be slashed by \$16 million over the next two years. This means advocacy groups for people who do not have power in our society will be cut by 15 per cent over the next three years. This is an erosion of democracy.

Transfer payments to the provinces for health care and post-secondary education have been cut by 1 per cent. There were native students who protested here on the Hill. They, above all others, surely deserve open access

to education, not only for themselves but for the future of their people. We know that they are seriously concerned and have the right to be concerned about this.

Some \$400 million will be cut from regional development grants next year. I do not blame the regions, particularly disadvantaged ones, for feeling very strongly about this. However, I do blame them for voting Liberal. They could have chosen New Democrats. Perhaps that will happen the next time around.

Ms. McLaughlin: They did in the Yukon.

Ms. Mitchell: That is right, they did in the Yukon.

The Government talks about environment being a top priority. What did it do in the Budget for the environment? Some \$10 million will be cut from environmental programs by phasing out the national conservation and alternative energy initiative in closing the 12 regional conservation and renewable energy offices. That is a great way to expand environmental protection services.

Canadians take pride in the fact that we want to go beyond our borders to assist countries around the world, particularly developing ones. I note that the Minister responsible for aid is here in the House tonight. She should be ashamed that Canada's foreign aid effort will be cut by \$400 million to \$2.4 billion as a result of this Budget.

Affordable housing is also being severely cut. People in my riding in Vancouver East and in Vancouver generally are extremely concerned about this. There is practically no allowance of units for co-op housing to address a very large need this year. There are thousands of people on the waiting list with only a few hundred spaces in Vancouver. It is the same across the country in the major cities where there are severe housing crises.

RRAP programs have been cut completely. Of all the federal programs, RRAP programs were very practical. They were labour intensive. They restored the housing stock. Yet this is one of the programs being cut. Some \$55 million will be taken out of RRAP programs.

The Government promised 5,000 co-op housing starts per year. However, this year's level may go below 2,500.

In the face of a national housing crisis, the Tory Government will build fewer affordable housing units and will terminate a program to prevent existing units