

believe it is better and a national child care program has to be a goal of the government.

When it comes to the infrastructure program it is far better to invest in lasting things such as roads, sewer and water. Sooner or later these things have to be replaced. Whether they are replaced today or tomorrow when they are built they are something lasting. When moneys are paid out for unemployment insurance, for welfare or for a study, for that matter, nothing of real lasting value is being created. However when moneys are spent building a road that needs to be built, not only are jobs being provided for people but the people create a long-time lasting benefit. That is important. It is not whether we spend the money here and there. It is a matter of focusing the money on the best long lasting value such as infrastructure programs.

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, budgets provide an opportunity for government to account to the country on the spending, the anticipated spending and the programs for the upcoming year.

This particular budget was really an annual accounting because the bulk of the changes made that would have normally been made in this budget were made earlier, indeed last year in the financial statement of December. This budget has to be read with the December financial statement to indicate the totality of the government's attack on a very serious problem: the effect of a recession and a very serious restructuring. It is not easy to deal with problems. Our debts have been growing exponentially, but this budget keeps us on track and still forecasts the deficit at \$32.6 billion for the current year.

There have been all sorts of suggestions, and indeed I have made them myself, that we should have had a budget with a whole host of methods by which we could more seriously attack the public debt.

• (1525)

I might point out this budget in its forecasts estimates that we will not have to borrow fresh money from the marketplace after 1997-98.

Be that as it may, I believe it will probably be necessary for the new government under a new Prime Minister,

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whether it is from this side or that side, to attack the long-term economic problems of this country.

The issue in the next election in this country will be the question of the national debt. There will be no other issue. A political party that wiggles and wangles like the Liberal Party does and like the New Democratic Party does, will not be elected by the people of this country. The people of this country are not going to vote for a political party that at the same time as our debt is being attacked and our financial figures are being attacked votes to spend \$20 billion a year more on a national child care program, \$15 billion on a further infrastructure program and more on a national jobs plan. In other words they will spend more.

I have been speaking in this House on the question of our debt for a long time. I dug out a speech that I made on July 19, 1982 from *Hansard* in which I dealt with this question of trying to spend ourselves rich. I said then:

I want to say that there is no evidence whatever that government spending, particularly government deficit spending, is in any way stimulative. It may be said that when you spend money at least you put people to work, that people are doing something. But when you spend borrowed money that costs a minimum of 17 per cent for interest—a good part of it now at 19.5 per cent—you wind up with a situation whereby the dollar borrowed at 17 per cent doubles itself in three and a half years or so, depending upon the compounding.

That is from *Hansard* of July 19, 1982.

This is a serious matter. When in government the Liberal Party attacked the last recession by trying to spend its way out of it. In the process it placed an unconscionable debt burden on this country. We have yet to be able to break that debt burden.

Mr. Nystrom: You've made it worse.

Mr. Blenkarn: The debt burden has become worse because we have never been able to tax enough or cut expenditures enough to pay all of the interest on all of the debt.

An hon. member: That is your problem.

Mr. Blenkarn: The member says that is our problem. It is the problem of this country. It is the problem that this nation must face. We must face it tomorrow because we have to face it. It cannot be left outstanding any longer. It has to be dealt with.