

The Budget—Mr. Boudria

federal sales tax increases as they affect the farming community, the amount of tax increase is greater than the budgetary allocation the Government has made to assist farmers. Obviously, the farmers come out with less after the Budget than before the process began.

Let me talk briefly about the disadvantaged people in our society. Perhaps Leonard Shifrin, a well known commentator who writes for *The Toronto Star* and other papers, put it best when he said:

Indeed, some of the poor will actually be a few dollars better off as a result of Wilson's new offering, though others will be worse off.

A family of four with a \$15,000 income is well below the poverty line anywhere in Canada. But under our preposterous tax system, it pays more than \$1,000 of income tax. And the surtax Wilson is now introducing will add a further \$20 levy.

At the same time, the 1 per cent in the federal sales tax will pile another \$50 or so onto the family's tax load.

Whether one is rich or poor, one has to repair or replace the refrigerator or other major appliance when it breaks down. The fact is that the least advantaged people in our society are paying a disproportionate amount because they can least afford that tax increase that some of us may think is very small.

On the night of the Budget the Leader of the Opposition said:

It's becoming impossible to improve one's quality of life in the face of this kind of Government attack.

He said that those from 30 to 50 years of age earning from \$15,000 to \$40,000 a year are the ones who are hit right between the eyes.

I want to talk about the middle income people in our society who are so often hit by tax increases. They must bear the burden. The middle class seems to be getting smaller and smaller. The number who are well off seems to be increasing and there are more and more poor people in our country that we consider to be affluent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I should like to deal now with the problems young people are facing in our society. You are aware that a few days before the Budget speech, a report entitled "Youth: A Plan of Action" was tabled in the House in which the Canadian Senate suggested extending the Katimavik Program to offer still more help to young Canadians who need it most. What did the Government do?

In its Budget, it started by dispossessing the Minister of State responsible for Youth of her portfolio or purse, thereby eliminating her department for all practical purposes. From now on, the Minister will have no money and no budget.

Today, in the House, we heard an Hon. Member saying that in a document he had read, the Minister herself was quoted as saying that her responsibility was simply to convince young people to join the Progressive Conservative Party. Mr. Speaker, it is a disgrace to see a Minister of the Crown forget about

young Canadians and think only of the political gains the party in Government could make.

Illiteracy is another problem which affects a great many young Canadians. It is a very serious problem which most Canadians and a great many of their elected representatives would rather forget than deal with.

In my federal riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, there are quite a number of my constituents who just cannot read, a situation which is not unique, Mr. Speaker. I am sure that although Hon. Members opposite do not seem to be too concerned with the issue, if they could think it over for a few minutes, they would realize that our educational system unfortunately has created a situation in which a great many people are facing the same problem.

Mr. Speaker, the most amazing thing is that such a great proportion of illiterates are young people.

And I call your attention to the following recommendation contained in the Senate report which reads as follows:

Our committee supports the proposal of a national campaign against illiteracy.

The Committee feels that the recommendations in the "Obstacles" report that have not yet been implemented should be, and that it is important to acknowledge the special needs of the young who have learning problems or handicaps.

Mr. Speaker, I call your attention in particular to the areas where it is seen that this Government is attempting to make quite significant budget cuts in social programs.

[*English*]

I listened to the discourse of the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) in which he spent considerable time of the House telling us how he and others within the Government are trying to find ways to cut back Government expenditures and make the system more efficient. One cannot help but wonder how a Government that encourages blatant patronage, as the Tories do, can talk honestly and sincerely about cutting unnecessary expenditures.

I see that one of my Conservative colleagues has woken up. I want to remind him that when my constituents who live near the national capital and work on Parliament Hill or elsewhere in the public service see their salaries and benefits being cut back and their jobs abolished, they do not take too kindly to what we heard earlier today about the patronage of the Government.

● (1750)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we have seen a 57 per cent increase in the estimates for the Office of the Prime minister (Mr. Mulroney). Where are the Budget cuts in the Prime Minister's Office? We fail to see any. There were 30 ministers in the previous Government, the new Government now has 40. But the same Government is telling us that we must slash whatever expenditures they consider unwarranted.

I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, what am I supposed to tell my constituents? What should I tell Mr. Rémi Saint-Jean, for