

*The Budget—Mr. Broadbent*

In the reality of 1987 it is unacceptable to the New Democratic Party for the Government to use such phrases as the Minister of Finance used in his budget speech the other day. He said that we have to put our house in order. For us, the Canadian house has many rooms. Among those rooms are Atlantic Canada, western Canada, northern Ontario and parts of Quebec, not only the industrial core. A Government which is concerned about the whole house cannot just stand back and watch things happen. In the thinking of some people there may have been justification for that until the 1930s, but I thought we had learned something since then. We would like a commitment to an activist government.

I would like to make a couple of particular suggestions. With regard to corporate loopholes, it is obvious that a number of financial incentives for corporations are appropriate if they have the appropriate effects on research and development, job creation, and so on. We are talking about the useless kind to which the Minister himself has referred. We are talking about the kind to which the Auditor General has referred which simply cost the taxpayer money without having any spin-off effect for the nation. If the Minister had, in this Budget brought in the corporate tax reform which is necessary now, he could have taken tax revenues from corporations which are now making a profit and channeled that money into regional development funds to create jobs elsewhere in Canada. That is one approach which would be followed by a Government which believed in an activist role of government in the economy and had a solid commitment to ensure fair development in all the regions of Canada.

Regardless of which part of the country we are from, we all have deep concerns about the extraordinarily rapid decline in economic opportunities in the Province of Alberta and part of Saskatchewan associated with the petroleum industry. There has been a catastrophically quick decline related to circumstances over which the people of Alberta and Saskatchewan had no control and, ultimately, over which the Canadian Government had no control, namely, international prices of petroleum which are primarily established in the Middle East. There is a crisis in that part of Canada which requires action rather than a Government which says that it will deregulate the economy and hope for the best, as this Government has done. We have not seen the best, we have seen the worst. Our energy critic made a very sensible suggestion in his reply yesterday, which I will repeat. The Government has seen fit to increase taxes on gasoline by 1 cent a litre. That would increase our incoming cash flow by about \$450 million. What better way to use that money than to recognize the need in the oil sector, to recognize that the benefit from the change in the PGRT has gone to big oil companies and that the people who are really suffering and could be providing jobs are the small Canadian producers? Why do we not use the \$450 million which will be generated by all Canadians paying for an increase in the price of gasoline for job creation in Alberta where it will be effective now?

These are but two illustrations of the general point I want to make of my concern, as Leader of the New Democratic Party, about the unfairness in regional opportunities at this time. We built into the Constitution of Canada just a few years ago a commitment to the principle of equalization. As a social democrat, it was a commitment that I was very pleased to see supported in principle by all Parties at that time. It recognizes the principle that a young boy growing up in Cape Breton ought to have the same expectation of opportunities to do what he wants in life as a boy at Dundas and Yonge Streets, or a young girl in Saskatoon who wants to go to university. If she wants to receive an education she should have the same expectations for that as a young girl in Vancouver. There ought to be no difference in medical expenses from coast to coast. In short, equalization ought to be a fundamental concern of any national party. At a time when we see the great disparities in terms of employment opportunities in our regions, the federal Government ought to be putting more money rather than less into regional economic development.

• (1350)

I do not want to take more time of the House today. I have mentioned two aspects of budgetary policy in my speech. One is the notion of fairness in terms of tax burden between individuals and corporations. I have suggested that the Government has failed in this respect. It has failed in its basic commitment to fairness. I have talked about the importance of coming to grips with the growing inequalities between our regions. The Budget completely fails to deal with that issue.

In conclusion, Canadians voted for a change in 1984. They expected to get a little more frankness from the Government, and a little more fairness. I regret to say that they received neither. The Government now is at a low standing in the political polls. I will not be glib about that because all of us here have had enough experience in political life to know that there is considerable ebb and flow in party standings. The Hon. Member opposite knows that as well as anyone. However, I want to say that if the Government wants to regain some credibility and move back up to gain the respect of at least a substantial share of the population of Canada, it will have to come to grips with its own failure to deliver on fairness. If it begins to deliver on fairness it will deserve to get increased support. If it does not, it deserves to be booted right out of office.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been some informal discussions among the Parties. If you were to inquire, I believe you will find there is agreement in the House not to see the clock and continue debate through until 5 p.m.

**Mr. Speaker:** There being agreement to the suggestion, as indicated by all Parties, I recognize the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes).

**Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to enter this debate following the gloom and doom