

*The Budget—Mrs. Grace MacInnis*

ordinary people of this country are concerned they just do not care.

References have been made to the modern technology with which we live. I have a feeling that we are up in a great DC-9 or DC-8 airplane and that somehow the pilot's instruments are not working and he has lost contact with the ground. We are headed for no place in particular except in the general direction of the great peaks of the Rocky mountains, and this in rough weather. The pilot is nonchalantly saying to us that our destiny is the just society, but all of us have the very uncomfortable feeling that we are heading for the big peaks and that it is only a short ride to Kingdom Come.

This may be unduly pessimistic. In spite of the way the government has constructed this budget I would hope there are members in all sections of this house who have the right feeling for the large masses, the large majority of the Canadian people who are out there and who are waiting. They are still hoping for something from this government, but for the large majority of the Canadian people in the lower income groups there is nothing in this budget.

I feel sure that there are members in the government ranks who know history, who know that you just cannot get away with legislating for only a section of the people. Daily I pass the west door in the central arch of the parliament buildings and see the words carved in stone, "Where there is no vision the people perish." I believe this to be profoundly true. And I believe this is a budget without vision, that does not look into the future.

Failure to reckon with the well-being of all the Canadian people is simply going to bring trouble for this country before very long. In my opinion the blindness in this budget, the lack of vision, is compounded by the announcements we have heard during the last couple of days. People in this country who have watched the long, slow struggle to try to get Canadian standards of well-being for the whole population from coast to coast must feel pretty disturbed and disconsolate at what they have heard. It has taken us 50 years to get into medicare. Now we hear that within the next five years the whole federal structure of medicare will be broken. It has taken many, many years to bring the tissue of social security legislation to the point where we have it now, a point that is still not too favourable compared with some enlightened countries, in particular some of the European countries. Now we are told that this government intends to get out of a number of these

shared programs. The only analogy I can think of is the very pious handwashing of Pontius Pilate on the occasion when he indicated he was having no more to do with a certain matter, that it was not his business anyway and that other people should carry on and do as they saw fit.

• (5:30 p.m.)

In my view it is a very strange thing to see this Prime Minister doing what he is doing at the present time. I believe he has been doing an excellent thing in trying to get linguistic and cultural equality for Canadians of the two large language groups in this country. I gave him full credit for this when I spoke in the house not long ago. I believe very profoundly that no matter what may be best for the people of Canada in the various parts of this country the Prime Minister is on the right track when he is working toward equality of opportunity and a feeling of being comfortable in one's language and one's culture in any part of the country.

But I must say that I find it very strange to see him then strike out blindly at those pieces of legislation which have gone some way toward giving Canadians equality in respect of their well-being regardless of which part of the country they live in. This is what he is destroying bit by bit. Even if the provinces were evenly matched in their ability to provide standards of social security for their people, there would not be that over-all Canada-wide standard which should enable our people, with the mobility we have, to move about with a feeling of being at home in a social security way in every part of the country. But our provinces are not equal. What this government is doing is saying to them that they must get out and sink or swim with their own taxes. It is saying that they will be given some handouts, of course, but the bulk of their taxes that are necessary for their social security programs they must raise themselves. I suggest that this is not the mark of a statesman. I regret to see one who stands first in one field so lacking in another.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. J.-A. Mongrain (Trois-Rivières):** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit me a question?

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** I need all the time I am allowed, I think, Mr. Speaker, but when I have finished, I shall be happy to answer the hon. member's question.