

*The Budget—Mr. Nystrom*

Again the minister has provided all kinds of goodies for the corporations. There is the extension of the fast write-off which was supposed to have been eliminated at the end of this year. It has been continued indefinitely without the report to us that the minister promised. The provision of the 100 per cent right-off for exploration for petroleum companies, and a 10 per cent corporate surcharge, that excludes almost all the corporations in this country, together with the 5 per cent corporate tax abatement to the petroleum companies, add to the already extensive bonanza this country has provided to the corporations, year in and year out, from the pockets of our taxpayers.

On the other hand, what is there in the budget for the ordinary citizen? There is a tax cut of \$50. I suggest the Minister of Finance was a little less than honest in the way he presented the tax cut, as if it were to be a minimum of \$150 for the people of this country. In February, 1973, he implemented a tax cut of \$100. That tax cut continues in the main budget. Last May another \$50 was added. The tax cut that came in the budget on Monday was just a re-introduction of the \$50 tax cut of last May. So, all that is gained by the ordinary and low income person in this country is a \$50 tax cut, which is 97 cents a week—less than \$1 a week. That is the only thing in the budget for the low income persons, of whom there are many in this country from one coast to the other.

The government even failed to mention an increase in the basic old age pension. It failed to offer any assistance to the working person. It failed to raise the exemption or to give any credit to people with children, for child day care. It failed even to mention any assistance to farmers. I think it pointed out in explicit terms the people the government is interested in helping, and the people the government is interested in forgetting about in our society.

This is clearly a budget for the rich, the wealthy, and those who already have. It is a budget for the investor, the stockbroker, the corporate executive, the doctor, the lawyer, and for the very mandarins who drew it up, Mr. Speaker. These are the people who will reap real benefits from this budget, not the middle or low income people in this country.

The proposals in the budget violate the principle and intent of the recommendations made by the Carter Commission when it pointed out that we have one of the most unfair taxation systems in the industrialized world. Because of the budget before us today, more loopholes and exemptions will be created, and we will forget about the theory that a buck is a buck, no matter from where it comes.

Now this government decrees that it is the type of buck which decides what kind of an exemption a person will get for it, and not where that dollar happens to come from, and this, I think, is a very bad theme in which we should not become involved in this country. I think the theme of a budget, in a country as wealthy as this, should be the redistribution of wealth and income in order to provide a more egalitarian society for one and all. I think that should be the theme of any budget.

We are fortunate to possess immense natural and mineral resources, and a manufacturing and processing industry which is growing strong with people who are very highly skilled and highly trained. With all the affluence we have

I see no reason why Canada should have such a high rate of poverty and unemployment, and such substandard housing conditions for many of its people across the country. We have an inflation rate which is one of the highest of any country in the industrialized world. This budget should have started to redistribute some of the wealth, and incomes, from the rich to the less fortunate, and should have taken steps to plan the economy so that all Canadians might share equally in the wealth this country possesses.

We in our party believe in co-operation through a planned economy, rather than in the ad hoc proposition of the so-called corporate free market. I believe the time has come when people, through the various levels of government, and through their various community and work associations, should exercise the power of planning and directing the economy, and should take it out of the hands of those in the corporate boardrooms where it has been for the past 100 years.

I think that the gap between the rich and the poor has widened in recent years since this government took office. Regional disparities have increased, and foreign domination of our economy has intensified. To me this is a natural consequence of an economy dominated by foreign and large corporations. Our party believes that the only way to reverse that trend is to take the decision making away from those in the corporate sector and give it back to the people, where it belonged in the first place.

Our monetary and fiscal policy must be independent. I think the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies) referred to this recently in the House. The aim in this country must be to improve the quality of life and economic well being of the average and less fortunate Canadian.

I suggest that Monday's budget is typical of past budgets in that it fails to give any direction in respect of providing us with new approaches. The government fails to realize that the world economic situation is more dangerous now than at any time since 1929. The United States admits it is in a recession, with a growth rate not much above zero. Britain, Italy, Japan and other industrialized states face very serious problems that will cut down on their ability to purchase goods from us. Coupled with this is the fact that we have inflation, which will almost certainly continue at a very high level around the world for the immediate future.

What does the government provide? It is not going to wrestle with inflation. The minister has provided nothing at all. All he does is repeat the old clichés to the effect that our inflation or unemployment rate may be better than that of country X, that he is concerned, and that the west should have its place in the sun. But the government will not intervene in the so-called free market place, and is afraid to allocate resources and funds to improve the lot of the average Canadian. It relies on incentives to wealthy individuals and corporations in the hope that they will provide the jobs and guide the economy of all Canadians. I believe that that does not work.

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Our party believes that the most effective and humane way to create jobs and strengthen the economy is to