

Supply

ment you could reduce this massive deficit that we inherited in three years. You should stop kidding yourselves about that.

The issue is we believe that a balanced approach is a better approach. We were elected on that platform. We are going to reduce the deficit. We are going to make some very tough choices. I want to suggest to the member from Beaver River, if I am mistaken, and I would hope that my colleagues will back me up, you will be one of those who will be very happy to see the next budget in February of next year when we will be making more severe cuts to make sure that when we get our fiscal house in order it is done in a very balanced and structured way.

That is why you have to negotiate with the provinces and not do as our friend Brian Mulroney did and say to the provinces it really does not matter what they think, this is what we are going to do. We know how many seats the Conservatives have.

The opposition members should stop suggesting to Canadians that the zero in three is the way to go, because it is not. Nobody believes it. As a member I know that it will not work and they should revamp that strategy.

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in hearing the hon. member for Kenora—Rainy River attempting math. Math is a very precise science and I know that our zero in three got us from one to 52. That was in five years, but give us another four years and there may be very few opposition members in this House when the Reform Party forms the government.

It is interesting that the hon. member's own finance minister indicated that by reducing unemployment insurance premiums, a type of tax, jobs would be created. How can the hon. member then suggest that by cutting government spending we would be reducing jobs rather than creating jobs? He is not exactly lining up with some of the logic or the math of his finance minister.

I have a young family and I am quite concerned about taking this national credit card that we have and continually running up a debt, year after year, deficit after deficit, to the point at which we are over half a trillion dollars in debt, and then at the end of my life presenting that credit card to my kids and asking them to pay it off.

• (2025)

I notice that the hon. member is approximately the same age as I am. I expect that he either has some similar concerns or knows friends who have similar concerns. I wonder how he can justify running up this debt for his children.

Mr. Nault: Mr. Speaker, that is somewhat of an insult since I am much younger than the member who just spoke.

My family is so young, not even a year old. During the campaign I ran against a Reformer and it was a very enjoyable experience, I might add. One of the things that gentleman said over and over again is that government is wasteful and we have to clean up the government and make sure that we tune it in right.

We know in this place, because we see the expenditures, that total government operations, everything that we do from RCMP to buildings we own across the country, are \$20 billion. The fact remains that we could shut the whole government down. The member talks about selling the odd jet and doing this and that.

This government is talking about a fundamental restructuring of the economy, fundamental changes in the right direction, not tinkering around with one jet or a limousine versus a Chrysler, or a Honda versus a Tempo. We do agree that there have to be significant changes and cuts. We are not arguing that.

Mr. Hermanson: That is what Mulroney said.

Mr. Nault: The member suggests that is what Mulroney said. What Mulroney said and did are two different things, as we all know. He played around on the fringes. He liked to play around and pretend he was making cuts while he sat there with 40 ministers along the benches. There were so many of them and so many limousines around they had trouble getting to their offices after question period.

We do not see that in this government. There is a dramatic change in how we do things and how the Prime Minister is trying to use a more common man approach because that is where he comes from. We do not have a presidential kind of atmosphere around here any more. We have a House of Commons attitude with which we are going to slowly work our way through this.

I have said to my constituents that we need, and what I think we are following as a government, is about a 10-year plan, not a 3-year plan in which we slash and trash everything that is not nailed down and then say: "I cut the deficit but everybody is out of a job, but are we ever doing good". What we want to do is build the economy over a 10-year period. I certainly believe that I will still be in this place if I am so fortunate as far as my constituents are concerned to prove to members opposite that we have done the right thing and have the right policies in place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Before we resume debate I would like to take the opportunity to set the record straight.

Just before the member for Kenora—Rainy River spoke, at the same time the member for Fraser Valley West and the member for Kenora—Rainy River sought the floor. I gave an explanation at that time on why I came to the final decision to recognize the member for Kenora—Rainy River when in fact upon further verification with the table officers I have been made aware that my decision was not consistent with the