

There is one thing I would like to ask the Minister, I was not here when he spoke. I am not a very sophisticated person and I do not know that much about the economy, but I do not quite understand how raising the exemption on goods brought into Canada from \$100 to \$300 will help Canadians and Canadian businesses. That is interesting. I know Canadians will need a truck to bring their goods back from the United States and from other parts when they return to this country.

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** They will use Maislin.

**Mr. Crosby:** Maybe that is it, Mr. Speaker. Maislin Transport will drive them back from the United States to Montreal. It will carry the goods and earn the money involved.

In the short time I have left I want to mention one thing that is very dear to everybody from Atlantic Canada, and that is the problem of regional disparity. In April of last year we passed the Constitution. It provided that the Government would work toward reducing regional disparity and creating equalization across Canada. In the budget there is absolutely no reference to the problem of regional disparity or to regional economic development.

● (1750)

In the Atlantic Provinces today everyone knows that the problem is in the fishing industry. There is a report before the Government which recommends a program for the fishing industry, a program which is absolutely essential to save that industry. It involves the infusion of funds in the area of \$280 million. There is no mention of that in the budget. That is a blow to Atlantic Canada and a blow to the people involved in the fishing industry. It means that that recovery will be delayed for another year.

For those of us who observed the Government, we knew it was in trouble in June 1982 when it brought in its budget. The inflation, unemployment and interest rates were up, but the Government said that the problem was inflation and interest rates and that we had to get them down. The Government introduced the six and five program. It knew that inflation and interest rates would come down because there was no business activity in Canada. It knew that the problem could be cured.

It brought in the six and five program which had nothing to do with inflation or interest rates. It just robbed a few public servants of some dollar bills. The interest rate and the inflation rate went down. Now the Government is claiming victory and indicating how it will expand the economy. It will put on taxes in October 1984. I can tell the House what Government Members will do. They will call an election in September 1984 and claim that they solved all the problems of Canada. I am saying that today because they are not solving any problems. They failed to do that in the last three years, and they will fail to do that in the next year or year and a half because they are totally incapable of dealing with the realities of economic life. They hide behind rhetoric and empty budgets.

**Mr. Evans:** Mr. Speaker, it was enlightening to listen to the Hon. Member's speech. The proof of the pudding is always in the eating. The fact that he could find nothing of substance to

criticize in the budget indicated, as has been indicated all afternoon by the Opposition, that they are having a difficult time sustaining criticism on their side. The Hon. Member spent most of his time dealing with small business and the need for small business assistance. Could he tell us what was the reaction to the budget of Mr. John Bulloch, head of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and of Mr. Geoffrey Hale, head of the Canadian Organization of Small Business this morning after the budget was tabled last night?

**Mr. Crosby:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell the Hon. Member in specific terms the exact reaction, but I can tell him about the attitude of Mr. Bulloch and other business people across Canada. For the last three years they have felt that in the last numerous budgets and financial statements the Government was suppressing their activities and providing no incentive or encouragement to them to get out and work, expand and contribute to the economy. This weighed heavily on them as they have indicated in innumerable reports, some of which I have before me.

In the case of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, it brought forward all kinds of suggestions. As I indicated in my speech, they want Government to assist them in their need and desire to expand their enterprises and to create new enterprises. With that attitude they look fondly on any change of heart on the part of the Government. I think they see this as a change of heart, not a National Energy Program which virtually destroyed the Canadian petroleum industry, nor the promises of gigantic projects such as the ones which the Minister of Finance when he was Minister of Energy told the House in 1980 he would have constructed across Canada—on the East Coast, in Alberta and so on. It is not the pie in the sky we have heard before. It is a recognition that the economy has to recover through the private sector. That, for the Minister of Finance and his colleagues in the Liberal Government, is a real admission.

We have been telling the Minister and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) for years now that they have to look to the private sector for real economic growth and recovery. Finally, after trying everything else and failing, the Minister of Finance has seen the light. I think Mr. Bulloch and his associates in business and industry across Canada now see it on a piece of paper and applaud it, naturally so.

What I want to say to Mr. Bulloch is, "Do not trust pieces of paper. Dollar bills have pictures of the Queen. Get the dollar bills". Let us see the dollar bills.

I have been waiting for a gas pipeline from the Minister of Finance for three years now. I cannot get gas in my furnace at home. I still pay for imported oil, even though that Minister promised in his National Energy Program, which was part of the budget, that we would have a gas pipeline.

Mr. Bulloch wants to ensure that that same person, now the Minister of Finance, is not trying to fool him with respect to these business incentives like he fooled me when he said that I would have a gas pipeline. My answer to the question is, sure