

The Budget

that consideration is being made to move the doomsday clock away from midnight for the first time since the Second World War.

This government continues to move the tax burden from the rich and the powerful, the multinationals and the millionaires onto the middle and lower income groups. The Minister of Finance's own figures indicate that last year another \$1 billion was shifted from corporations onto ordinary income earners. Taxes received from corporations were \$1 billion less than projected, while the taxes received from individual Canadians were \$1 billion more than was projected, a continuation of the move away from those who can best afford to pay taxes to those who can least afford to pay taxes.

Now the government claims that it has no choices left as to where to cut. Rather than show some leadership on the world stage and contribute to a lessening of international tensions by cutting defence spending, they now attack medicare. Instead of reducing interest rates, the government raises them and then cuts education spending to make up for the increased borrowing charges. Rather than let the Canadian dollar resume a sustainable level which would encourage our export industries, the Minister of Finance announces plans in the budget to borrow \$3 billion to intervene on the international money market.

The lack of imagination shown by the government in addressing the needs of the country is so atrocious it brings new meaning to deadly dull. Their dullness now threatens the health of Canadians, their dullness attacks veterans by gouging them for an additional \$35 million in user fees, their dullness threatens the future competitiveness of Canada by reducing access to post-secondary education.

Why should the sick, the poor and our youth be sacrificed so that this government can gamble \$3 billion on the money market? Why are small businesses, farmers, home owners and consumers gouged with the highest real interest rates, second only to those that the Liberals created? Why are they gouging small businesses, farmers, home owners and consumers?

The Minister of Finance is like a little boy in his obsession with the level of the dollar. He wants to go to international meetings and boast about the size of it. The

government is making up for its mismanagement of the economy by attacking the most defenceless members of our society—the poor, the sick and the youth. As I said, fully 70 per cent of these budget cuts are on the backs of the sick, the students and the poorest in our society.

There is no excuse for this, Mr. Speaker. It is a shameful recognition of the direction this government is following. Eighty-eight per cent of Canadians told the government not to cut health and post-secondary education funding, but it went ahead anyway. This is bullying of the worst kind, when a government refuses to listen to those who elected it, refuses to listen to the people it is representing.

The minister with his fat bank account and his life of privilege understands nothing of the daily struggle faced by millions of Canadians. Now he wants to undermine the national underpinnings of medicare, Canada's most essential and most valued social program.

This is the third time the government has taken the axe to health and post-secondary education spending. In 1986, the Conservatives reduced spending by 2 per cent a year, in 1989 they reduced spending by a further 1 per cent a year and now, less than a year later, they have reduced increases to 0 per cent a year. Given the government's own projections of approximately 5 per cent inflation per year over the next several years, it means that health and post-secondary education spending will decline in real terms for the first time since these programs were established and decline by 5 per cent each year.

Anyone who visits our universities and colleges, anyone who visits our hospitals knows full well that these institutions cannot afford a cut of 5 per cent a year. Already they are struggling to meet the demands that are placed upon them and this 5 per cent cut will make it impossible for them to ensure that we have the high quality health care that Canadians deserve and need, and that we have the high quality education system that Canadians need in order to take on the world economy of the future. It is short-sighted. It is short-sighted and it makes no sense.

The Minister of Finance has spoken about the enormous effects of compound interest in describing the growth of the deficit, but with his customary hypocrisy, he has not mentioned the compounding effect of all of