

*The Budget—Mr. Rae*

height of consistency and, I think, the height of a commitment to a certain number of principles which I hope to outline.

● (1700)

In my view this budget represents the three Ds of Liberalism. This budget is profoundly disappointing. It represents an opportunity missed. This budget is duplicitous. This budget, most important, is damaging to the Canadian economy, to the Canadian worker and to the future of our country.

In terms of our disappointment, I think all of us as members of Parliament should focus not simply on the balance sheet which has been presented, not simply on what is there and not simply on the number of issues which were raised by the hon. member for St. John's West but perhaps most clearly on our own constituencies and constituents. We should be thinking of the people who day in and day out work in those constituencies, cities and communities. When we return to our ridings on weekends or whenever we can to meet with our constituents, we should think of what it is that strikes at the hearts of those people. The thing which struck me about this budget is that just as in the other budget there was no mention of the unemployed. There was mention of unemployment. We have projections of what it will be this year, next year and the year after. Incidentally, it will be higher this year than it was last year and it will be over one million in the five years to come.

That is the kind of projection we are getting from the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen), but I am not speaking about unemployment as a concept or idea. I am speaking of and thinking of the unemployed. As I am sure many hon. members do, I am thinking of young people, old people, not so young people, not so old people and the men and women who come in constantly and say, "Mr. Rae"—or whoever, Mr. Rose or Mr. Nystrom—"I would like you to help me find a job". We must constantly respond, if we are not members of the government party, if we are not living in that part of the world where patronage is a way of life, as is my case in the city of Toronto, by referring people to Manpower or trying to get them interviews or seeing if we can do something through the manpower system. But basically the force which dictates the level of unemployment and the fate of unemployed people is not whether the individual member of Parliament can make a telephone call and get somebody a job. It is whether or not there is a government in Ottawa which demonstrates leadership. I define leadership quite simply as an ability to respond to the deepest anxieties of the people, and ability to respond with compassion and direction and an ability to respond in a way which gives hope and strength to the Canadian people.

One thinks of a government like that of Roosevelt in 1932. One thinks of the Labour government in Britain in 1945. One thinks of those governments which decided they could change some things and some circumstances. They could tell people in certain situations that unemployment was not like the weather and not a function of climate but that unemployment was something which could be affected by the policies of government. We have never had such a government in this country. We have never had a "New Deal". We have never had a democratic socialist government. We have had the policies of

Mackenzie King, the policies of Mr. Trudeau, the policies of R. B. Bennett. We have had policies which have consistently told unemployed people that there was nothing which could be done. That is a very old message and basically a very mean message, a message of intellectual bankruptcy and precisely the message which is contained in the budget which has been put forward by the Minister of Finance. On September 9 in Halifax when the minister was making one of his few public speeches prior to the budget he said that a budget is more than a statement of economic accounts and more than a statement of how much we will spend and how much we will tax. "A budget must be an accounting of commitments, a statement of priorities and a blueprint for achieving our goals".

Measured by that very test which the Minister of Finance set out for us six short weeks ago, this budget is a failure. It is not an accounting of commitments. It is not a statement of priorities, and it is certainly not a blueprint for achieving our goals. Instead, the minister has made fun, as he is wont to do, of our party for talking about serious commitment. We asked him to make certain serious commitments, and he in his own way perhaps correctly said, "We in our party do not take ourselves quite so seriously. We are not in the habit of making serious commitments". The minister is in the habit of giving us lugubrious evasion, and I think what is represented in the budget today is lugubrious evasion. It fails to respond to the need for economic insecurity which racks so many of our communities. It fails to respond to unemployment levels in central, eastern and Atlantic Canada which are unacceptable. It fails to recognize the fact that Canada now has, has had for some time and will continue to have under this government, because of its projections and because of the policies it is making, the highest level of unemployment in the industrial world.

That is the only economic record in the OECD which we can claim to hold. We do not spend more than anybody else on research and development. We do not yet have the highest rate of inflation. We do not have the highest *per capita* income. We have one achievement and one achievement alone, and that is, we continue to have the highest rate of unemployment in the western world.

I am not going to refer to duplicity at the moment. Hon. members opposite said some things when in opposition and now say something else when in government. We have seen governments come and go and change a number of times in the past couple of years. Believe me, if we did not have a program we would not know who the players are. When the Tories are in opposition, they suddenly become the workers' friend. Mr. Crosbie suddenly portrays himself as a friend of the poor and disadvantaged. That is an unique role for him. In opposition we saw that Mr. Gray was the opponent of high interest rates. As Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** Order, please. I do not want to overdo the business of some of the House rules, but I should remind the hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood (Mr. Rae) that when referring to other members of Parliament the custom is that he refer to them indirectly as "the hon. member for" whatever rather than by name.