

The Budget—Mr. Guy LeBlanc

regional development—to which I referred a few moments ago—manpower mobility and retraining, incentives to industry and, in spite of the criticisms of the member who just spoke before me, I shall mention medical care, as well as numerous beneficial legislation we have adopted here.

Let us not forget either, since they are evidence and symbols of the progressive development of our country, legislation which has given us our national flag, the commemoration of the centennial of confederation, Montreal Expo and the acknowledgment of the rights and privileges of the groups which have built Canada and are still living together on Canadian soil.

All the achievements of the past years have been carried out by a Liberal government headed by a prime minister who is no longer in this house, by a prime minister who was our pride both outside and inside the country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. LeBlanc (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, we now extend our confidence to our new Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) who has shown to date, whatever some may say, great mastery, a brilliant intelligence and a remarkable efficiency.

With respect to budget stability, I believe he is adhering to the program that had been brought before the people of Canada.

We were told hardly a few months ago that Canada apparently was in the midst of an economic upsurge and that therefore the government was considering a balanced budget by cutting down somewhat public expenditures.

As we can see in the budget speech, the present economic situation, the intermediate and short term outlook, the present financial situation, the taxation outlook for 1969-70, the control of public expenses, discussions with the provinces—as are taking place at present—the pattern of political economy, the battle against inflation, the present taxation policy, taxation recommendations, estate tax and gift tax, the case of life insurance companies, financial institution reserves and all other measures are facets of our financial problem which were faced squarely, with full knowledge of the facts and, in the light of the contemplated goal, financial and budgetary stability in this country.

We think it is a responsible and honest financial statement, outlining all the aspects of the problem.

[Mr. LeBlanc (Rimouski).]

In the present state of our financial obligations and in view of the financial and economic development not only in Canada, but as we see it, throughout the world, an honest, just and sincere Minister of Finance must show great courage. Such courage is shown I think at present by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson). In order to prevent any further inflation, the minister had to plan a very substantial increase in revenue for the next fiscal year.

However, the first elements of a fiscal reform are given in that statement. In spite of it all, it does seem that the taxation system is more equitable. The reforms will affect mainly the corporate tax, the income tax and their allotment between the federal and provincial governments.

A stable budget should enable us to strengthen and develop our economy. However, under the item: expenditures, it should not be forgotten that the federal government is not solely responsible; if we want Canada to progress toward an ever more vigorous economy, the provincial and municipal governments must also assume their share of responsibilities. Together, we must strive to decrease the tax rates and expand the tax base, that is the wealth of Canada.

We are told that the time has come to be frank. There is no magic formula to guarantee our evolution, to achieve our ideal of justice in Canada; we cannot expect the path to be strewn with flowers. We must choose the way of realistic, functional and efficient solutions and so, that way will surely lead us to a well-organized environment for the greater good of those of our citizens who will inhabit it.

[*English*]

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, for me this is a frightening budget. It is frightening because the people who prepared it seem to have lost their ability to see reality. From this budget it appears as though they see only a part of the Canadian people, the affluent part, the part that is best able to struggle for itself. It appears that they have closed their eyes, minds and hearts to the existence of the others.

Fortunately, while a Liberal government might have wanted to do such a thing during the last few years it was impossible for it to do so because it had a very narrow majority. Now members of the government do not have to care. They have a big majority, and this budget shows that so far as the masses of the