

The Budget—Mr. Keyes

Recently, the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) had the gall to accuse the opposition of playing with the integrity of the Canadian economy. I would suggest to him that Government Members, since November, have been playing with the integrity of the Canadian way of life, using political gamesmanship and chicanery upon the Canadian public. This Budget in its sheer disregard for numerous promises made to the Canadian people demonstrates to Canadians this Government's overriding commitment to harmonizing with American economic practice rather than to enabling Canadian initiative and self respect.

Most of us are aware that a Budget is more than a fiscal plan, more than a simple guideline for spending. It defines the actual outline of social possibilities for change. It plays a key role in what individuals and families will be encouraged to try for themselves in the immediate future. At all times it should enable not constrain individual, family and community growth.

In other words, the Budget provides the framework for weaving the fabric of our society. I state today that this Budget, rather than enabling a strong social fabric, is unravelling our sense of community. With its attack on the CBC, on unemployment insurance, on child care, on co-op housing and numerous other unique Canadian support systems, this Budget attacks the most vulnerable members and institutions of our culture.

An Hon. Member: Despicable.

Some Hon. Members: Shame, shame!

Mr. Keyes: As I examine this Budget, I am reminded of a famous story by the great Canadian humourist and world renowned economist, Stephen Leacock. It is called "*The Sinking of the Mariposa Belle*". Many of us may well remember the tale about a marine excursion in which most of the community of Mariposa sets out in an old paddle boat for its annual picnic. Suddenly the old boat springs a leak and the leaders of the town go into a frenzy. Realizing that they are sinking, the cry goes out: "Women and children first, women and children first". The women and children are tossed into leaky lifeboats which sink quickly into what turns out to be thankfully only two feet of water.

The Conservative Government, in a state of panic over the way their ship of state has sprung leaks, and with great cries that we are being engulfed in the deep waters

of the deficit, have sent out the cry: "Women and children first".

This is not a laughing matter. This is a despicable tale in which the Government rescues itself at the expense of women, children, and the Third World.

• (1630)

So, to all the single parents in Canada, to all the wage earners who are struggling constantly between seasonal jobs, to all those children whose parents or parent had to work to pay for housing and food and who cannot stay home with them each day, to all the young people or unemployed adults who are trying to upgrade at post-secondary institutions, to a large number of women with children who live below the poverty line, to all grandparents and elderly who find their income earned over a lifetime of service to our community now being eaten away by inflation and this Government, to all these people of Canada, the Government assures you that there is \$1 billion available for roads and things in Lac-Saint-Jean. You will be pleased to know that there is \$1 billion available for the Hibernia oil field. Oh, yes, there is the \$650 million for tarsands, \$325 million for heavy oil upgraders, \$288 million for improvements in the Prime Minister's riding, half a million dollars for renovations to offices of government Ministers and over \$191,000 for a beautiful book on energy starring the current Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse).

But wait, four months pass by and the cry goes out, women and children first, women and children first. Alas, there just is not enough for day care at this time. We understand you voted for us on that basis, but sorry, that was a lie. There just is not enough for transfer payments to welfare, unemployment insurance, post-secondary education, medical health care. You remember that promise, that commitment about conserving social programs and universality? That was a lie too.

Time wounds all heels. Oh, by the way, there is not enough for co-op housing or any other solutions for the homeless in Canada or even those suffering elsewhere in the world. Sorry about that, just a few more promises or rather commitments necessary during the heat of an election campaign. We are sure you will understand, short term pain for long term gain and all of that. Just tough it out and sometime, somewhere over the rainbow, things will get better.