

Speaker's Ruling

national debt of Canada by \$190 billion. He deserves an Oscar award, Madam Speaker.

This is the kind of rhetoric we have been listening to in the House of Commons every day. When our present leader of the Liberal party delivered a speech in this House on March 6, he really focused on one of the key issues.

• (1240)

He said: "We should focus more and more of our attention and resources on long-term investment in people, education, literacy and the upgrading of skills". That means the federal government would maintain its credibility with the provinces, its respectability with the people of Canada and invest in those people by putting money into post-secondary education and training programs. The budget we have just had does exactly the opposite.

I will quote one more statement then move to another very important issue that I think will deal very heavily with the public accounts of this country in the next decade. This quote comes from none other than the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in its 1990 pre-budget submission. The Chamber of Commerce is a very good friend of the government front benches. The Chamber of Commerce said at that time:

The staggering federal debt figures prove that the government, despite protestations to the contrary, has failed miserably to address the problem. Virtually every measure it considered unacceptable in 1984 has been surpassed.

The government has even surpassed its own worst predictions. Our poor Minister for International Trade is under great pressure these days. He still has not done anything about the softwood lumber 15 per cent export tax, or small business and industry across this country, to say nothing of the labour in one-industry towns we have in this country.

The Minister for International Trade said: "There will be no changes to the unemployment insurance program". He had been assured of that by the Prime Minister of Canada. Today, those changes are floating back and forth between the Senate and the House of Commons. The bill is somewhere up in the air and it still has to be dealt with. The only way it is going to be dealt with is through a possible conference between the government and the Senate. It is up to the Senate to protect the regions of this country and to protect the

people whom this government sees as dispensable because it does not worry about the social programs of this country.

We have all received letters from Canadians about the intolerable statistics in the Public Accounts of Canada. We know how discouraged Canadians are about the actions of the government.

During the election campaign, the leader of the Liberal party told Canadians that the finances of this country were in a far greater mess than the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance were letting on.

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POINT OF ORDER**ALLOTTED DAYS—SPEAKER'S RULING**

Mr. Speaker: I very much hesitate to interrupt the hon. member. I know he will co-operate with the Chair. I know that he will have no difficulty enlarging on the point he just made in subsequent debate. The interruption, of course, will not take any time from the hon. member.

We heard extensive argument this morning on some difficult matters. I felt that in the interest of members on both sides of the House, with respect to what their obligations might have to be tomorrow in this Chamber, I would make a ruling now which will be very short. I will follow it up as soon as I can, in the next day or so, with a very detailed ruling which may assist hon. members on both sides of the House.

My ruling then is this: Friday and Monday must be allotted days. The New Democratic Party has fulfilled the requirements of the Standing Orders to have a vote tomorrow on the motion on notice. As I say, I will return to the House with detailed reasons for this decision so that the reasons will be of assistance to all hon. members.

Having said that, in the interests of the public who is watching, this ruling does not, of course, detract in any way from the capacity of hon. members on both sides of the House to work out some arrangement between themselves which may be satisfactory with respect to tomorrow.

On the narrow procedural point which I have had to decide, and it is a very important one and not particularly easy, that is the decision. Again, perhaps hon. members