

The Budget

nouncement to extend the four lane highway, the Queensway, beyond Arnprior up the valley.

My only comment on that is that I hope it operates better than the Queensway. I say that because it takes me as long to drive from Cobden, Ontario, to the end of the Queensway as it does to come from the end of the Queensway to Parliament Hill.

Here is another expenditure of over \$400 million for Highway 416. It will be another \$250 million for the first two phases up the Ottawa Valley, going north on Highway 17. All this was done in this very short period of time, in four and a half years. The other part of the highway will be upgraded.

I want to put this in perspective. The extension of Highway 17 up the Ottawa Valley that has just been announced is costing half the amount of the national debt that this government has unloaded on to the provincial government of Ontario. If it had that \$500 million on its own that it is now going to have to levy additional taxes to make up for paying the federal debt, it could have extended the highway north. Or it could have taken the whole thing and had a surplus of \$100 million left over after building four lanes of Highway 416 from Highway 401 into the national capital from southern Ontario.

Madam Speaker, I see you are giving me the signal here. I think it is time we started looking at these things in terms of what the bad management of this government is doing to the financial structure, both federally and provincially in this country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Couture: Madam Speaker, I ask the hon. member of the Liberal Party to compare the two preceding governments. Under one, from 1980 to 1984, current operating expenditures increased at an average rate of 14 per cent, and in 1984 the deficit was \$39.3 billion; the other, from 1984 to 1988, achieved an average increase in expenditures of 3.6 per cent and managed to bring the deficit down from \$39.3 billion to \$28.1 billion. Through good management, in the new budget, we expect the increase in operating expenditures to be no more than 3.2 per cent.

I would like the hon. member to compare both governments and tell us which is the best.

[*English*]

Mr. Hopkins: Madam Speaker, if we want to talk about an administration that had some human values to it it was the one we had between 1980 and 1984, certainly not this one.

• (1740)

I appreciate the hon. member asking me that question. I think it is a very pertinent one. I would like to point out to the hon. member that we had a world recession in the early 1980s. This government opposite has had some of the best economic years in recent decades to bring in taxes and meet its debts, and it has not been able to do it with the best economy going. That is part of your bad financial management again.

With world recession and with markets falling apart around the world, for many nations in the early 1980s, there was a large number of people unemployed in this country. The Liberal government of the day did not turn its back on John Q. Public. It did not cut medicare. It did not cut post-secondary education and destroy the future of the youth of this country. It kept those up. It also looked after the unemployed in this country, as well as the senior citizens. There was no clawback. This was a human government.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopkins: I am glad when members of this government get up and ask questions like that. I am really happy to lay it on the line. I was here. I know what the feeling was out there across the country. We travelled the country in those days. I will tell you, we did not have senior citizens lining up in front of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill with elderly people telling the Prime Minister of that day that he had lied to the Canadian people, because he did not lie to the Canadian people. He looked after them. They know that. They remember that.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Madam Speaker, this is a return to the same kind of logic that party used back in the days of the Trudeau government. There is no question about it.

If you look at the record, what did they burden us with? They burdened us with 20 per cent plus interest rates, and double digit inflation. They left us with a debt which, if any reasonable person examined the books with respect to, would see that it was \$200 billion plus. It was a burden of debt that no country in the western world