

## S. O. 31

## STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

## THE BUDGET

**Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to recent budget cuts to various social and educational programs. This government has cut important programs for our aging veterans, is diminishing our native people's ability to communicate with themselves and others, has cut women's programs which provide support for battered and sexually assaulted women and for jobless, illiterate and homeless women in Canada.

Furthermore, this government has cut important educational programs and, in particular, has cut funding to the summer group exchange program. This program has permitted students to learn English and French through exchanges between Quebec and Ontario.

I wonder, with others, why this government cut funding to a program which promotes bilingualism, tolerance and understanding among our young Canadians. This year, because of government cut-backs, 18 school boards were forced to drop the program eliminating the participation of over 800 students.

At a time when relations between English and French speaking Canadians are strained, we are seeing an assault by this government on a program which promotes greater understanding, tolerance and acceptance.

The Commissioner of Official Languages this week accused the government of failing to take the necessary measures to promote the intent of our Official Languages Act. I ask the government to accept the just criticism and, as a first step, reinstate the necessary funding to promote student official language exchanges.

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## ROUGE RIVER VALLEY

**Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana):** Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the need to take steps to improve our environment and to protect the natural beauty of this country for future generations.

The creation of the Rouge River Valley system is an important victory that will preserve 10,500 acres of river valley in close proximity to Canada's largest city. This victory was only achieved after decades of effort by many people and all levels of government.

When we look at this triumph, we can see the tremendous effort we all must be willing to put forth over the next years if we are to make real progress in solving our environmental problems.

In this effort, I wish to acknowledge the member for Scarborough Centre who worked tirelessly to bring about real solutions to this difficult environmental problem.

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## GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

**Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, this government appears determined to force Canadians to swallow the goods and services tax, despite the obvious negative effects it would have on the health of our economy, despite protests from all sides, and despite the general feeling that it is a rotten tax.

This exercise of having the GST rammed down our throats has left a lot of us feeling pretty sick. In fact, even some Conservative members of the House are showing signs of nausea. At the same time, we have heard that any Tory member who misses the final GST vote will be asked to produce a note from his or her doctor. In other words, they are going to be dragging themselves here even if they are at death's door.

As someone who cares sincerely about my colleagues, I am urging hon. members to play it safe. If you are feeling too disgusted to vote for the GST, I am sure that we can come up with a doctor's note to get you off the hook.

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## AGRICULTURE

**Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government in one year has cut back its commitment to agriculture by 57 per cent, a drop of \$1.8 billion.

The Ontario soybean growers report that current prices are 14 per cent below the five-year average, 25 per cent below that of a year ago, and that several areas were hit hard by drought and excessive moisture last year. Likewise, the Ontario corn producers marketing people