

Estimates

• (1230)

They say that we cannot afford regional development in the short term and they promised that they will increase funding later on. Tell that to the people in the fishery and the forest industries who have already been specifically singled out for cuts. The Hon. Member talks of increases in industrial technological development. The Estimates demonstrate that the budget has been cut by over \$200 million, over 25 per cent. In the meantime, while all this is going on, how many small businesses will go down the tubes? How many workers will end up on the welfare rolls? How many families in places like Summerside, Prince Edward Island, will have to abandon their homes and their communities?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I fully appreciate the anger felt by workers when they realized that the government is getting out of unemployment insurance. I fully appreciate the resentment of students and sick people at the government's intention to reduce by 270 million dollars its contribution to education and health care funding.

As for universality of social programs, the government tells us that the rich will pay. It might be so today, but tomorrow, the middle class will pay because this \$50,000 threshold is not indexed. Consequently, under the Conservatives, once again the future of the average family is getting bleaker and bleaker.

[*English*]

The Government is cutting funding for native people and for multiculturalism. Language training for immigrants has been halved in the last two years. The women's program has been completely eliminated from the Department of the Secretary of State. These are things that define Canada. These are what give Canada its heart and its character. These have been raped and pillaged by the Government. These are not simply numbers on a page. We are talking about the soul of our country.

I have heard on numerous occasions Members opposite comparing the running of a government with the running of a family. Let us take them at their word. Families have debts. Does that mean that families stop sending their children to school? I do not know of any family that would, but this Government has cut post-secondary education. Does a family stop putting food on the table? I do not know of any family that would, but this Government has cut agricultural assistance. Does a family stop investing in its economic future? I do not

know of any family that would, but this Government has cut regional development and is cutting research and development.

Mr. Hockin: That's not right.

Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard): That is not the document we have. The Hon. Member ought to start reading his own documents. Surely to God, the Estimates are not hidden from the Hon. Member. He should take a look at the Estimates of last year and of the year before. He should take a look at the record of this Government that does not give a damn about the Canadian people.

Mr. Hockin: Read this.

Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Don't lecture me. Tell the workers to read the want ads. Was that not the quote that was used?

No one has to tell the Members on this side of the House that the deficit is a problem, but it is clear from these Estimates that the major cause of the deficit has been the excessively high interest rates to the extent of \$6 billion according to these documents. Has the Government attacked the problem? No, it wants but one thing: an excuse to take the Government out of the arduous responsibility of governing.

Last year, the Government exaggerated its revenue base by accelerating tax payments. This year, it is exaggerating its expenditure projections, the reduction, by reducing its reserves by over \$2 billion. The Government is engaged in phoney accounting.

The Estimates are not simply a matter of adding up columns of long lists of numbers. It is a statement of the Government's sense of responsibility in the face of an evolving and changing society. The Government is saying to Canadians that it is washing its hands of the regions and of those who are in need. This is not the approach of a responsible government.

The battle lines have been drawn. We have only begun to study these Estimates and already one thing is very, very clear, that is that this Government has given new meaning to the definition of cynicism. It told us before the election that all was well, and then after the election that it cannot afford to face up to the challenges of governing a modern nation.

We on this side of the House understand this country and we know its people. We know their values and we share them. Our goal is to build a country, not to tear it down. I can tell Hon. Members that the clock has begun to tick. Pretty soon this Government will know that its time is over.