

The Budget

economy. Another measure designed to help our businesses is the program allowing a small or medium-sized company to borrow money, while the loan and revenues made on that loan by the lender will be considered a dividend rather than an interest. As we all know, if these companies expand, they will create employment. If they create employment, it will benefit the Canadian economy.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Finance who suggested the merging of three programs for children into just the one. People will receive only one cheque per month, not taxable and bigger than what they used to get. There will be less paper burden and everybody will therefore be happier. Instead of having three programs, there will only be one: one cheque per month, and bigger than what people now get. This must not go unnoticed because unfortunately I do not often hear the opposition mention the positive measures that are in the budget. The deficit is reduced and people have tax policies that meet their needs. These things must be said. We must be positive. That is how the regional economy of Trois-Rivières, of Quebec and of Canada will improve.

In concluding, I would also like to emphasize the fact that, for the first time in a very long time, the Minister of Finance has reduced taxes for all Canadians. Yet the opposition will automatically say: "Not by much, not by much". That is not the point. The point is that thanks to the cuts made in the last eight years, thanks to the work of the member for Etobicoke Centre and now the member for Vegreville and thanks to the fact that for the last eight years Canadians throughout the country have tightened their belt in terms of federal expenses, this government has been able to reduce taxes.

Everyone in this House would love it if there were no taxes, if there was no GST. We all agree on that. It is perhaps the only thing on which we all agree, but we agree on that. However, because of our structures and programs, we must have and we must pay taxes. From that point on, this government has demonstrated that you can increase taxes, but it has also shown that you can reduce them. Again I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance in that regard.

My time is up but I would just like to ask all members to be positive and to make sure that this budget is passed as quickly as possible.

[English]

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with interest to the hon. member.

One of the comments he made was that the budget was to put trust and confidence in the people. I agree that that is what a budget should do but certainly we have not seen any initiatives in this budget that would put any trust or confidence back in the people.

He went on to say that it is a budget of hope. The same thing applies. I cannot see anything in this budget that offers any hope whatsoever for the 1.5 million people who are unemployed. I know in my province the unemployment rate is approximately 17 per cent.

This budget, as I said, does not offer any hope. There is no capital works program. There is very little investment in research and development. There is nothing new in training initiatives.

He went on and talked about small business and what a great thing that the ceiling of borrowing has been doubled. Does he not realize that small business today is trying to survive? It does not matter if the borrowing level is quadrupled. If they cannot take advantage of it, what good is it?

Look at the bankruptcy rates of small businesses across this country. This government should be doing something for small business. It was small business that helped lead us out of the last recession but the government fails to realize that.

This is the question that I want to ask. I want to come back to the statement the member made about it being a budget of hope. I would like to know what hope this budget offers to the 1.5 million people who are unemployed across this country.

[Translation]

Mr. Vincent: Mr. Speaker, I must admit I am disappointed with the question because either the member did not listen to my presentation or they did not understand the message.

At the beginning of my speech, I explained the nature of a budget. A budget is made up of figures, it is not a series of announcements by 40 departments of what is to come during the following year. It presents revenues expenditures and credits for each department. That is what a budget is all about. It is not supposed to describe