

The Budget—Mr. Van De Walle

payments, will help many western farmers remain in business. While the international mess is being sorted out, the economy of our country will benefit from this assistance program.

However, other programs will have to be considered, for example, equity financing and more flexible repayment schedules. Yet that is not the long-term answer. Canadian farmers do not want subsidies and hand-outs. They want dependable markets and a reasonable price for their products, just like any other businessman. As a Government we must create an economic and international environment which will enable our agriculture industry to do what it does best, produce massive quantities of high quality food products to be sold competitively on world and domestic markets. In this context the importance of research, innovative market development and efficient transportation cannot be overlooked. In this vast country only 5 per cent of the land is fertile, ideal for growing food. Proper land use and soil conservation are essential to our nation's well-being. Diversification and processing of our agricultural products must take place if Alberta is to reach its full potential. Canadian consumers recognize the importance of our food production and the need for a strong agriculture industry in Canada. They will support future government incentives in the field of agriculture.

Many residents of Pembina depend on the oil and gas industry for their livelihood. They work in oil fields, gas plants and for hundreds of small companies which provide goods and services to the industry. It is frustrating for those who are unemployed because they know that Canada needs the energy, and exploration and development must continue if we are to have security of supply.

● (1620)

During the past decade the National Energy Program, instituted by the previous Liberal Government and supported by the socialists, siphoned billions and billions of dollars from Alberta. It was a devastating tax, not on profit but on production. Today Alberta's oil economy is hurting. I call on the Government to assist the oil and gas sector. We ask nothing more than what other sectors of the economy are receiving, such things as flow-through shares and earned depreciation allowances. I do not have to remind the Members of this House that all Canada benefits from a healthy energy sector in Alberta.

The downturn of the economy in Alberta has dramatically affected the construction industry. Residential and industrial construction is grinding to a standstill. Trades people, construction workers, and related supply industries have felt the brunt of this disaster. Only immediate action by the Government in co-operation with the Province of Alberta will get the construction industry rolling again starting with the expansion of industries, building of roads, construction of homes, and development of our tourist attractions.

Employment is a federal responsibility. I am confident that in the spirit of fairness and national unity these regional disparities will be addressed. Economic diversification is the

key to long-term vitality in Alberta. Major opportunities exist for development of our coal industry. Low-sulphur coal is ideal for industrial use in Ontario. It minimizes the acid rain problem and makes pollution control much easier. I challenge the Governments of Alberta, Ontario, and Canada to get this project moving. It is in the interest of our nation.

These days "high tech" is the word. Many communities in Alberta are trying to attract the best in computers and electronics. I am pleased that the Government recognizes the future of the electronics industry.

One great opportunity comes in the form of tourism as a national renewable resource. Every part of Canada is a tourist attraction, no matter how small the community. We have it all; scenery, mountains, lakes, wildlife, the arts, language, culture and recreation. We just have to seize the opportunity, advertise our advantages, and welcome the tourists in a manner they will not forget. We want them back again and again. As we say in Alberta: "Smile, you're a tourist attraction".

Canada is a trading nation. A large amount of what we produce is for export. Trade means jobs. I would like to commend the federal and provincial Governments for their united efforts in the field of international trade. We must move in the direction of processing more of our raw materials and exporting semifinished or fully manufactured goods. Albertans welcome the Government's free trade initiatives. In view of the growing protectionism in the U.S. these trade negotiations are paramount to the future of our country. The members of the European Common Market have negotiated an agreement as have Australia and New Zealand. Why not Canada and the United States? It will mean wealth and jobs for Canadians. Alberta welcomes the opportunity.

I would like to stress the support of Pembina residents for the free enterprise philosophy. Governments should not be in business but, rather, should create a constructive environment so that business can flourish on its own. Albertans recognize the steps taken by the Government to date in the area of privatization of Crown corporations. When will we get some action on PetroCan and Air Canada? The Government is to be commended for its initiative in becoming a facilitator and regulator rather than a competitor in the business community.

Like the residents of Pembina, Mr. Speaker, I am very positive about our future. We have much to be thankful for. Canadians have a strong, proud heritage. We have unlimited resources and opportunities. We have the youth and vigour to make us leaders. Canada is a land of opportunity, a country of challenges. Alberta is determined to play a role in the destiny of our nation. Let us work together to understand one another and help make Canada an even greater country.

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, in taking part in this debate on the Budget I must record my very grave disappointment with the Government's spending and taxation proposals. This Budget is certainly a missed opportunity to do some good for Canadians, to promote job creation and fairness. The Government is utterly failing in