

The Budget

I happen to think what we need to do to approach our economic problems in Canada is to establish for ourselves what the objectives are and what the key issues are. I agree that inflation and deficits are major economic problems. I agree that we need to address those problems. I believe that employment is also very important. I believe that this budget is a prescription for much higher unemployment, with very significant personal costs to individuals who are affected by it.

I believe that the time has come for Canada to lead the world in establishing environmentally sustainable development programs in this country. Yet in this document I see nothing about the environment. There is nothing to say that the government has any commitment to the rhetoric it has given out on the environment.

I see no evidence here that the important need for more investment in science and technology is going to be addressed by this government. There is a \$38 million cut in science and technology.

In the cuts to transfer payments I see great costs, not only to our hospitals but to our post-secondary educational institutions. I suggest that these things do not lie in the area of expenditures. Governments are wrong when they look to cut back this kind of item in order to balance budgets. I suggest that these are in the realm of investments. My friend has been in business. He knows you treat those differently.

In education, it is as simple as this. If we think education is expensive, wait until we begin to absorb the cost of ignorance.

Mr. Whittaker: Madam Speaker, first I have to tell the member that I did enjoy his speech. It was a well prepared and a well delivered speech.

I would like to talk a little bit about his trip across Canada with the finance committee. Does he see some of the same things and patterns I have seen in travelling with that committee, things that I see projected and increased in this particular budget.

I refer to the regional disparity question, the major regional disparities that have not been looked at in the goods and service tax. We see the increased regional disparities as a result of cuts in this particular budget not paying attention to the east or the west.

• (1740)

I ask him whether he would he agree with me when I say that the finance minister and his wealthy friends are going to end up with all of the clothes of the nation while he strips the majority of Canadians who will end up left bare and shivering in poverty?

Mr. Manley: Madam Speaker, perhaps, as my friend suggests, there will be more than the emperor with no clothes. What we have in the goods and services tax is a withdrawal of the federal government from the vision of a strong, national Canada. You have it with the GST because transportation costs will be taxed under a federal sales tax, increasing the burden on the regions as they acquire things from the central manufacturing areas and making it more difficult for them to build their own manufacturing base.

You see it in the budget as you see the withdrawal from regional development programs, the fundamental changes to those programs that will make it more difficult for the federal government to play a role in building the regions of Canada. You see it in the cut-backs of transfer payments to the provinces, where the federal government is just going to have to stand back and take a back seat to the provinces in what they do with investments in medicine, health care and post-secondary education.

You see it in things like the cuts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The minister responsible does not even think that the CBC should be concerning itself with national unity or so he told a House of Commons committee.

This is a budget that is characteristic of a government that is withdrawing from the nation.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Regina—Wascana.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Madam Speaker, at the outset of my remarks today I was going to say how pleased I am to be able to address this very important subject, that being the debate on the budget. However, given the minimum amount of time I will have today, I will barely get into the subject so I will confine my remarks to the approximate three minutes that I have left.

The thing that we must consider about our budget is that it has no new taxes. The people of Regina have often written to me and, in turn, I have passed on the message to the federal government, as have all of my