

The Budget

this legislation will allow the electronic filing of these applications, which will increase the efficiency as well.

It is important to note that although there is a serious reservation concerning the question of fees this is a piece of legislation on which we feel that the New Democratic Party, and we are happy to see that the Liberals are also on board on this, can agree with the government that it is something that is long overdue.

I hope the government will take note of this because this is not a rare occasion in which all parties say they agree with a bill, with a certain legislation. We hear constantly from the government that the opposition is always in opposition and never says that the government does anything right. It is against the law of averages that this government could do everything wrong. Now and then it is going to stumble upon something which needs doing and which is done right. This is one of those rare occasions.

I wish the government would learn the lesson from this piece of legislation and in the future have a great deal more pre-consultative exercises in which it meets with the actual people concerned with the legislation.

Mr. Lewis: It is inclusive.

Mr. Edmonston: One of my friends, the hon. minister, talks about inclusiveness. Perhaps the word is inclusiveness but I think it is just consultation. We need to talk to the people of this country, not at the people of this country. We need to make sure that what we are doing here is absolutely necessary and improves the situation. I think this does.

I am proud to be a member of this Parliament in which we can all agree upon something. I hope that in the future we will see other pieces of legislation that allow us to do the same thing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

[*Translation*]

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): In accordance with the agreement reached earlier today, I now suspend the sitting of the House until 4.30 p.m.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 4.14 p.m.

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4.33 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), the House will now deal with Ways and Means Motion No. 30 which derives from the financial statement.

* * *

• (1635)

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Finance) moved:

That this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

He said: Mr. Speaker, at the outset I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the thousands of Canadians who have communicated with me in the preparation of this budget. I would also like to thank the many who participated in the pre-budget consultation process and all those who gave me the benefit of their thoughts, ideas and suggestions in the preparation of the budget.

I also want to say thank you to my colleagues on this side of the House, and indeed to all members of the House of Commons who have from time to time offered suggestions, sometimes in the crossfire of debate. Excellent suggestions have come from the House and from my cabinet colleagues. I want to thank them very much for their support. Most of all I want to thank the Prime Minister for his constant support and guidance and particularly for the confidence that he has expressed in me in discharging this very important position. I want to thank him very much for his ongoing support, advice and good counsel. I hope that it has been put to good use in this particular budget.

The Budget

Today I am presenting a budget that will deliver: no new taxes; no tax increases; more than \$30 billion in spending cuts and other measures; zero real growth for federal spending on programs and services; the lowest federal program spending as a share of the economy in more than 30 years; the elimination of all new federal borrowing within five years and a strong, positive initiative for a co-operative national attack on all government debt.

Since my hon. friends across the way did not get it all let me repeat it in French.

[*Translation*]

Speaker. No new taxes and no tax increases. More than \$30 billion in spending cuts. Zero real growth for federal spending on programs and services. The lowest federal program spending in 30 years. The elimination of all new federal borrowing within five years and a federal-provincial attack on the public debt.

[*English*]

The goal of this budget is to free the economy for more job creating growth by steadily reducing the burden of deficits and debt. Today I will also outline a process to bring federal and provincial governments together to work toward that goal.

There is only one taxpayer. Canadians want a national solution to the national debt problem and they want their governments to act now.

• (1640)

This budget sets out a responsible, achievable course of action. It builds upon the actions in previous federal budgets but recognizes that a problem that began two decades ago cannot disappear overnight.

It also underlines that by working together as governments and as Canadians we can make an immediate and fundamental change for the better in the prospects of our economy, our country and our people.

This budget is presented at a time of unprecedented concern about the collective spending and borrowing habits of our governments. Canadians are justified in their concerns. They know that a household cannot keep running up credit card bills and borrowing to pay interest. They have seen what happens when govern-

ments act as if they are exempt from the same basic rules of common sense.

Here is what happens: Taxpayers pay more and more for less and less service from government because interest eats up a growing share of the tax dollar. Those higher taxes act as a break on the economy. Less economic activity means less growth and fewer jobs.

Home owners pay higher mortgage rates because government borrowing drives up the price of money. Higher interest rates discourage investors and consumers and that too means less growth and fewer jobs.

Finally, in an effort to maintain a standard of living that we no longer earn, we rely more and more on foreign lenders. This leaves Canada with less and less control of its own economic future and the income that we do earn goes increasingly to pay interest to foreigners.

Canadians want to keep control of their future. They want their governments to have the means to maintain vital social support services and the flexibility to respond to emerging priorities. Less borrowing, lower taxes, more jobs and more choice: that is the direction in which people want to go. That is the direction in which this government is going.

This government has been and is fully committed to helping Canadians build a stronger economy that creates jobs and that can adapt, compete and prosper in a new more competitive and rapidly changing global economy.

That is why we have continued to move forward on policies such as bold trade initiatives to secure and expand access to markets; innovative job training measures to help Canadians adapt to a changing work place; tax reforms to increase incentives for work, investment and prosperity and regulatory reform and privatization to reduce the burden of government and improve efficiency.

Most of all, we must and will continue with our firm, responsible spending control policies. That is of fundamental importance as we set forth on this debate. Since 1984-85 we have made real progress in a changing, uncertain world economy. We have cut the average annual growth of federal program spending from 13.8 per cent to 14.1 per cent. We have cut the federal deficit from 8.7 per cent to 5.1 per cent as a proportion of our national income.

