

Debate on Budget 2015
April 28, 2015
House of Commons, Ottawa

**Hon. Deepak Obhrai, M.P. and Parliamentary Secretary to the
Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights**

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand in the House and speak once more on a budget. As a matter of fact, this is the 18th budget speech I am making today and 11 of them were on Conservatives budgets.

Before I talk about the budget, I want to pause and reflect on the terrible tragedy that has befallen Nepal due to an earthquake.

In January, I went to Nepal to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Canada and Nepal relations. Our relationship has been long and a good one and it was a successful visit. I saw the development challenges Nepal was facing due to the long Maoist rebellion. They were looking forward to moving on, then this tragedy struck. Nepal is a developing country, Nepali are struggling to provide for themselves and their families.

The government has responded in a variety of ways. Today, I want to make an appeal to Canadians to give to organizations which are in the forefront of assistance. The government will match contributions. Please help the people of Nepal in their time of need.

It comes as no surprise that the NDP and the Liberals are not actually supporting the budget. In the past they have indicated without looking at the budget that they will not be supporting the budget and then they went on to find reasons why they do not want to support it.

I come from Calgary, Alberta, an oil producing province. No one here is talking about the dramatic collapse of oil prices, as if the price of oil falling would have no impact at all on the budget or on the economy, not recognizing the fact that all of Canada benefits from the oil industry, including eastern Canada. Everybody is talking about we want money, we want money and the government has not done this, that it went into the contingency fund to balance the budget. What are we talking about? There has been a massive shortfall in revenues.

My own family works in the oil industry. My daughter, my son, and my son-in-law are facing an uncertain future today. Massive layoffs are taking place. This is impacting the whole of Canada, yet this is the time to provide sound management of the economy and that is what the budget has done.

The budget has focused on growth, on jobs and on security. In October last year, we were attacked in Parliament. These are the concerns of Canadians. When I went door-knocking last weekend for my colleagues in the Conservative Party in Alberta, this is what I heard from people. Yet, here we have the NDP and the Liberal Party talking about no investment here, no investment there. It is time they took a pause and said it is time to provide sound management.

When the price of oil goes back up and the economy moves forward, there are then choices to be made where we can invest, but currently, what Canadians want is security of their jobs. That is what we are facing. That is what the budget is talking about. That is why the budget is a forward-looking budget.

The price of oil is low today and revenues are compromised and even then we managed, without raising taxes, to bring in a balanced budget. What is the contingency fund for? This is for a rainy day. Opposition members do not know what a rainy day is as the Liberal member talked about. When the price of oil was \$100 a barrel and today it is close to \$50, is that not a rainy day? When is a rainy day then?

Nevertheless, this government has made sound decisions on where it will invest and what it will invest in, so that there is confidence that the Canadian economy is moving.

I am the parliamentary secretary. When I go overseas and when I meet people, all of them have questions to ask me, which are: how did we manage to escape the 2008 recession? Are our banks not failing? How is Canada providing such strong, economic stability while other countries are facing different challenges?

Who are we? We are an oil producing country. We are not an oil consuming country that is benefiting from low prices.

At the end of the day, I want to say to my colleagues that at this given time when there are challenges out there of low oil prices, it is time to make sound judgement. The NDP opposed the pipeline that would have helped export our oil. That would have benefited the whole country, but no. The NDP nitpicks at oil here and there.

For the Liberals, let me say this. As I have said, this is my 18th budget. Of them, seven were Liberal budgets. Members should have seen the rhetoric that was coming from the Liberal Party. Today, the last Liberal speaker to stand up was insulting the Minister of Finance. That is all that the Liberals love to do. They love to insult people. They do not come up with any good ideas. All they do is insult. What a shame. I have sat in this Parliament. Canadians do not like other people insulting them. If they want to talk, talk about exactly what it is that they are standing up for.

That is why there is confusion now, and why there is a question of what the Liberals and the NDP stand for. There is all of that confusion out there.

I was here in Parliament when the Liberals presented their budgets, and did they come up with anything? Now they are claiming that the Conservatives are not doing anything, specifically when there was the 2008 global recession. We went through that, with banks failing. No Canadian bank failed. Where do they think that came from? The Liberals? Absolutely not.

Now, with low oil prices, we are still doing okay. The country is still managing because it is well managed. Do they think that it came from the Liberals? Absolutely not.

The NDP, of course, wants high taxes. That would be their government. I have no idea where they would get the money that they are talking about, spending with high taxes. This is something where, these days, the Liberals and the NDP are becoming pretty difficult to distinguish. They have different names, but they seem to be talking the same language. Maybe this is the coalition that they are trying to form for the next federal election. I can tell the House that the way in which this budget was presented and from the feedback that I got, we are on solid footing and we will remain on solid footing.

This government, under the Prime Minister, has provided excellent leadership on economics as well as security. Let us for a minute talk about security. Canadians are concerned about security. We hear it time after time. We just heard from the security agencies that, yes, Canadians are under threat and the jihadis have made absolutely no secret about wanting to attack Canada. Would it not be prudent for us to invest money there for our own security? Would that not be prudent?

My opponent from the Liberal Party came out and said that we should not be in Iraq, that we should be out of Iraq, until he got such a severe backlash that he had to withdraw what he wrote on his Facebook page.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say this. This is the budget that would provide the security of jobs and national security for the people of Canada, and I am very happy to support it.