
Budget 2017; Good Drama, Bad Numbers

Peter Vogel

Deputy Leader, CHP Canada

The drama in Parliament before the tabling of the 2017 Federal Budget was more interesting than the budget itself. Because the Liberals have been proposing changes to procedures—changes that both the Conservatives and the NDP oppose—they held up budget proceedings with a good number of questions of privilege and rounds of applause before the budget was actually tabled.

There were also serious questions about not all parliamentarians receiving the budget document at the same time; in particular, Liberal MPs were receiving it before any other MPs and texting out details before it was officially introduced. This is not allowed, and it smacks of contempt for parliamentary procedure.

Andrew Coyne probably said it best when he wrote that this budget¹ has “No money, no ideas, but a wealth of bafflegab and buzzwords from the Liberals”. They used the word “innovation” quite a bit, and also talked about “jobs of the future,” which includes picking berries, exporting seafood, and producing maple syrup. While these are jobs for the future, to be sure, they are most certainly jobs embedded in our history as well. Liberals like to make all things sound new and exciting, no matter how mundane!

According to Finance Minister, Bill Morneau, “It’s going to help us to ensure that women are more successful in our economy.” How? With 40,000 subsidized childcare spaces.

Perhaps that quote alone helps us to understand the contempt the Liberal Party has for women. Perish the thought that a woman may see the raising of her children as a contribution to society. Success is defined by their ditching their children with the government, to be raised by strangers, so that the mother can contribute by getting a “proper job” like a man.

Further, men are penalized in order to pressure women into getting out and getting a ‘real job’. This budget does nothing to address the challenge faced by older men in manufacturing. These men represent a significant portion of laid off workers. But we needn’t worry about them. As their morale deteriorates, they’ll just quietly leave the stage, facing a difficult retirement. They’re just not very important to our self proclaimed feminist Prime Minister.

Basically, this budget was about making the Liberals look good, but it is not as generous as last year’s because there is not enough money! The Liberals have been spending like there are no limits; a bottomless pit of money available for the shallow purpose of making them look good.

The numbers actually don’t look good. The projected deficit is 28.5 Billion² and even that dismal outlook is probably dependant on the economy doing as well or better than it has been. We seldom see an honest assessment of the projected deficit, rather we hear them preaching ‘peace when there is no peace.’

The more worrying number is the debt to GDP ratio; while it is not the worst it has ever been, it is moving in that direction rather quickly. If this measure goes further out of balance, it will be harder for the Canadian Government to keep getting the low-interest loans to which it has become addicted.

Getting back to innovation, Kevin Page wrote this particularly innovative suggestion³: “It’s great the government has added gender-based analysis to the budget document. Why not add fiscal sustainability analysis as well, so that Canadians can have a better understanding of whether this fiscal plan will stabilize debt relative to the economy over the longer term horizon, where we bear the full impact of aging demographics?” Adding the idea of long-term fiscal sustainability to the forefront of Canadians’ understanding of federal budgets would be very useful; then, when we see a budget like this, there would be more of an uproar. It would be evident to more Canadians that, like so many previous budgets, this one is shamefully irresponsible to future generations.

Immediately following the speech by the finance minister, MP Gerald Deltel rightly pointed out that it would be children who would pay for the deficits of this budget—and he asked when the government would return to balanced budgets. Good question.

On their better days Conservatives know that this is important—always when they are in the opposition benches—but the sad reality is that they also added substantially to our national debt when they held power.

That is why we in the CHP need to keep talking about *integrity* and the fact that **economic decisions are also moral decisions**. Increasing our National Debt by 22%, as this Liberal Government is on track to do, is theft. It is stealing from our children and grandchildren.

Please talk to your fellow Canadians about the importance of not only returning to balanced budgets, but also paying down our national debt; it is the only responsible and moral thing to do for future generations.

To participate in bringing moral solutions that retain an inheritance for future generations, join CHP Canada⁴ today.

Footnotes

¹ news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/andrew-coyne-no-money-no-ideas-but-a-wealth-of-bafflegab-and-buzzwords-in-the-liberal-budget

² www.cbc.ca/news/politics/federal-budget-highlights-2017-1.4032898

³ ipolitics.ca/2017/03/22/the-feds-hit-a-fiscal-wall-too-soon/

⁴ www.chp.ca/get-involved