



Unequal: Arthur Rorris says the Budget is unfair.

Battlers will suffer - Rorris

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By LINTON BESSER

"CRUMBS for the poor," was how South Coast Labour Council secretary Arthur Rorris described last night's Federal Budget.

He said Treasurer Peter Costello's 11th budget was a play for wealthy Australia - and not for the first time.

"I can't remember when he did anything for the battlers," Mr Rorris said.

"It seems it is always time for the rich under this Government."

He conceded lifting income tax thresholds was positive, as was "some increase in family benefits".

But he said it was not enough to make up for the economic climate working families found themselves struggling in.

"The benefits won't make up for the massive cuts to family incomes that may arise from (the Federal Government's) industrial relations changes," Mr Rorris said.

The union leader also said the figures announced last night should be seen in the context of a federal cash surplus of \$10.8 billion.

He said the tax savings would be seen by Illawarra families in terms of a "quarter of a tank of petrol, or a couple of days of interest on their mortgages".

"Any increases in interest rates or petrol prices or reductions in overtime and penalty rates earnings for families will not only erode these carrots, but may see working families even worse off."

Mr Rorris also said the region had been "shunned" by the Federal Government, which announced no major spending increase on the Princes Hwy.

"He (the Treasurer) mentioned every other road but the Princes Hwy," he said.