Income Tax Act

five year period. We do have constraints in respect of manpower years in the Department of Fisheries. While it can be said that we should not be increasing the number of people in the service of the Government of Canada, how does one bring forward a program of this type without having additional people in the employ of the government?

Mr. Paproski: What has this to do with this bill?

Mr. Anderson: I agree that there should be extreme care taken in respect of the number of people we bring into the civil service. If there are ways of having work done on contract which will not affect the quality of the product, I would accept them. I use this as one example in the province of British Columbia of tremendous expansion. That is one of the growth areas of Canada, just as is the province of Alberta. We have had a number of government programs in conjunction with the budget which have made a difference in the last ten years. This has resulted in growth in the gross product of that province by leaps and bounds. It has been a growth of sixfold or sevenfold in the past ten years.

I commenced my remarks and will conclude them in the same vein. In this situation we are dealing with a budget that is historic. It is a budget that recognizes Canadian unity by innovation, in the sense that even at the risk of budgetary secrecy we have consulted with provincial ministers over a period of time. We brought them into discussions with the Minister of Finance in order that a stimulus might be provided in quick order. This required the co-operation of provincial premiers. I think it is of credit to the premiers and the Minister of Finance that this co-operation did occur.

There is no question but that when people look at this event in time, when they look at this portion of Canadian history they will see an advancement or evolution of the consultative process. Surprisingly enough, this required no regulation except the bill now under consideration to confirm the action. It required no administrative or bureaucratic apparatus. It required only consultation, people talking with each other. History will record this particular budget as a milestone on which to peg one's hat in the evolutionary process. Perhaps it started a few years ago, but this is one of the signposts that historians will look to as an example of the consultative process.

Instead of arguing about the powers that belong to the provinces or the federal government, and instead of tearing the country apart through debates which basically solve nothing, and only enhance a certain position, be it federal, provincial or party, this will be seen as an attempt by the leaders of this country to accomplish through negotiation, crossing boundaries of purely conceived constitutional matters, amendments, and articles. Regardless of whether a matter is within provincial or federal jurisdiction, as a result of this consultative process we will not require a federal-provincial conference on constitutional rights in order to resolve it. We will not require such a conference in order to make decisions on matters that may rest in the provincial area or within federal responsibilities. We will be able to cut through those responsibilities by

negotiation with the provinces. This is important, regardless of budgetary measures brought forward.

Incidentally, those budgetary measures were welcomed. I suspect there are other areas in which we can do exactly the same thing without the formalization of a constitutional conference. I suggest that this may be one of the ways to resolve problems in Canada when we cannot obtain formal agreements among the federal and ten provincial governments. Perhaps situations of that kind can be resolved in exactly the same manner adopted in the budget on April 10. We can obtain a consensus on a short term basis, and will be able in this way to solve short term problems. This lesson will not be lost by the present leadership or any future leadership, be it of the Liberal or Conservative parties, because a model has been established.

We have proven with the aid of the provinces that this cooperation can exist, and through it we can accomplish many things in the future. If it has been done once, I suggest that it can be done in other areas, and that is why I say a milestone has been reached. With regard to the second subject which I brought up on the budget, I can only thank the Minister of Finance on behalf of the people of British Columbia, those especially in the forest industry who have had a long, outstanding grievance resolved, and who, I am sure, will reciprocate at some future date.

● (1642)

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening for about 40 minutes to the rather irrational remarks of my predecessor. To say in the House that lack of respect for the Canadian constitution should be a positive attitude towards the future and that it should be the corner stone of forthcoming discussions is, I think, reason enough to say that that person should not sit in this House and is wrong in using such arguments to justify a totally anticonstitutional attitude on the part of the government. I deeply regret that hon. members attempt to support such theories in the House. Concerning Bill C-56 generally, the proposed measures are positive; they result from the pressures exerted by intermediary bodies, by the opposition parties and, in some instances, by members of the government.

However, the bill in general reflects a little the attitude of the government which tends to encompass a variety of measures which are acceptable to the population as a whole, but we do find one which is not acceptable. For example, in clause 1 about deductions for board and lodging for workers in a remote location, I think that the opposition parties and some government members have been suggesting such a measure for a long time.

An hon. Member: We did too!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): But what the hon. member opposite neglects to say is that it is precisely the same party in power which created those taxation measures a few years ago.