

The Address—Mr. Jamieson

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I just want to ask how much the minister charges for a ticket to this show.

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I have the highest priced ticket this side of Broadway, with not one nickel going to any corporate welfare bum in the theatrical business.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I made a conscientious decision that I was not going to talk about the NDP this evening.

Mr. Lewis: I don't care whether you do or not.

Mr. Jamieson: Don't feel offended if I have not done so.

An hon. Member: It won't hurt, if that's all the harm you can do.

Mr. Jamieson: All I want to say to the hon. gentleman who made that interjection is that he really synthesizes what I was saying earlier. I do not say this in any bootlicking fashion—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jamieson: Hon. members can laugh if they choose, but if they, particularly those who have not been here before, would take a little time to read the record they would know I have consistently said there are many things, not only about the leader of the NDP, but about his followers and his policies, that I admire. Of course I do, and it did not take an election to make that kind of determination on my part. I ask hon. members to refer back to the last throne speech debate in which I said precisely the same thing. I see that somebody else in the audience wishes to ask a question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Yewchuk: Would the minister mind if I asked him a question?

Mr. Jamieson: Not at all.

Mr. Yewchuk: Mr. Speaker, he has only a few minutes left. Would he care to tell us what action he intends to take in the Department of Regional Economic Expansion in order to solve the unemployment problem of this country?

Mr. Jamieson: I thank the hon. member for bringing me back to earth. One of the happy things, and also one of the unfortunate things about this House is that one gets into this kind of argument, or debate, if one wants to call it that, and I readily admit I have not devoted as much time in my speech as I ought to the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. But to end on a serious note, Mr. Speaker, judging from the mood of the House I think all members have taken what I have said in reasonably good grace.

On this subject, the other day I came across something which was written many thousands of years ago. It was by a critic who was writing about the fallings of Peloponnesian policy-making. That was a long time ago, in Greece.

An hon. Member: What about today?

[Mr. Jamieson.]

Mr. Jamieson: We will come to today in a moment. You haven't been here long enough to know about today. In the position in which the country finds itself now I would like to commend these words, in all seriousness, to hon. members:

Each member presses his own ends which generally results in no action at all. They devote more time to the prosecution of their own purposes than to the consideration of the general welfare. Each supposes that no harm will come of his own neglect, that it is the business of another to do this or that. And so, as each separately entertains the same illusion, the common cause imperceptibly decays.

All I have been trying to say, and perhaps I have been doing it in a little too humorous and dramatic form, is that the important point is for us now to get on with the business of Canada.

In the time I have left I wish to say, with respect to the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, that there are a number of things which I can specifically commit to the House at this time. The first is that there will be substantial provincial-federal consultation; that first of all it is important that we as a federal government understand and comprehend what are the philosophies and objectives of individual provinces, and it is not in the first instance our responsibility as a federal government to impose our priorities on the provinces.

Therefore, I commit to the House that we will consult with the provinces. Indeed, the process has already started. We are trying to help them in every conceivable way that we can, to determine what their economic objectives are and, more than that, what it is they want for themselves in its totality, that is, in terms of a life style, in terms of what they want for their citizens. This is something that has been undertaken and which we will carry through to the extreme. We very much want to have that kind of co-operation with the provinces.

Mr. Nielsen: But what have you been doing?

Mr. Jamieson: I have not been doing anything, because I have not been in this particular portfolio.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the minister, but the time allotted to him has expired.

Some hon. Members: Continue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The minister may continue if there is unanimous consent.

• (2050)

An hon. Member: He has just started.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is agreed?

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, on this business of extra time, I should point out that I have a long list of members who wish to speak in this debate. We gave extra time to the hon. member for Verdun (Mr. Mackasey) because he resigned from the cabinet; he was being used as a scapegoat and we wanted to hear the story. The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Jamieson) had an opportunity to be serious, but he did not deal with serious