

The Budget—Mr. Elzinga

voted in 1979 to defeat a sound economic Budget which was presented to the Canadian people. On issue after issue the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party have walked hand in hand. Mr. Speaker, there is no difference between those two Parties.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Speaker, I was the guy interrupting the Hon. Member earlier. I should not have done that. He was quite right to remind me of proper decorum, and I apologize to him. I will ask him the question now rather than doing it in the middle of his speech.

As the former President of the National Progressive Conservative Party can he tell us why his Leader does not come to the House of Commons? Why does his Leader not ask questions in Question Period? Why does his Leader not participate in the debates here? All new guys take a while to learn things, but we do not run away and hide. Actually, we usually throw ourselves into the fray rather than running away from it. This guy seems to have stabbed the Hon. Member for Yellowhead (Mr. Clark) in the back and left. Why is that?

Mr. Elzinga: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the Parliamentary Secretary. On a personal basis I have always appreciated visiting with him, but the sleaze and slime to which he descends in the House of Commons is not becoming to him.

Mr. Mazankowski: Nor is it becoming to the House of Commons.

Mr. Elzinga: As our Leader said, there is no belt below which individuals such as yourself will not kick. It is because of such an attitude that the Canadian people are going to throw you out so fast when you have the courage to call an election that it will be unreal.

Our Leader has an enviable record in this Chamber. On a consistent basis he has spoken on a number of major issues and has put questions to all Cabinet Ministers. The sad part is that he never gets a decent answer from anybody on the Treasury benches.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Member who just spoke. Would the Member be sufficiently candid to acknowledge that the economic proposals which his Party often puts forward call for tax reductions, particularly with regard to the business sector? That is in fact what the Liberal Party has been doing, particularly in the last Budget. It handed out more tax loopholes to the business sector. In fact, the Liberals and Tories are the same when it comes to give-aways to large businesses and to economic policy. Could he explain that?

Mr. Elzinga: Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to respond to that. There is no trust in the business community as it relates to this Liberal administration because, on a consistent basis, it changes the rules. There is no predictability for the business sector.

I would like to deal now with the Hon. Member's question as it relates to our economic proposals. As I indicated in my speech, the Budget we brought down was labelled the most socially progressive Budget introduced in Canada in the last 10 years. It was labelled thus by the Social Policy Planning Board of Canada. It indicated that was the most socially progressive Budget introduced in Canada in the past decade.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the gentleman from Pembina. My friend, the Parliamentary Secretary, got his answer. The gentleman from Pembina yelled about sleaze and dodged the question. I can understand his dodging the question, but he should not mislead the House. We all know the gentleman from Central Nova (Mr. Mulroney) makes an appearance here roughly once a week, other than for votes. Everybody knows that.

Mr. Elzinga: You already gave your speech. Ask a question.

• (1700)

Mr. Simmons: This period is for questions and comments, as I am sure the Member will realize. That is my comment. Now here is my question.

Mr. Mazankowski: Neither will make sense.

Mr. Simmons: I understand. I am quoting him so it will not make sense. The gentleman talked about sensitivity to the far reaches of the country. Then he proceeded to talk about the whole country from P.E.I. to B.C. Does he know that geographically, Newfoundland is east of P.E.I.?

Talking about sensitivity to the far reaches of this country, will he explain what sensitivity it was that constrained the Member for St. John's West in the December, 1979 Budget, to cancel, without exception, all small craft harbours fisheries expenditure in Atlantic Canada and the short-term job creation program? Would he explain that in terms of sensitivity to the people of this country?

Mr. Elzinga: Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to engage myself in a debate with the Hon. Member who referred to himself in Question Period as the Member with the bionic mouth with no brain behind it. If I heard him correctly, that is what he called himself in Question Period earlier today. I do not have to speak on behalf of the man who was the Finance Minister for us in our short lived Government because he is very capable of speaking for himself. I just say to the Hon. Member that we on this side of the House of Commons will take a thoughtful and reasoned approach—

Mr. Simmons: Answer the question.

Mr. Elzinga: —to any policies that we advocate, unlike our friends opposite who will indicate one thing during an election campaign and immediately reverse themselves after the election.

We can point back to the 1974 election when they swallowed themselves on wage and price controls. We can point back to the 1972 election campaign when they swallowed