

S. O. 31

The truth of the matter is that the two Bloc members are probably not sorry they made such blatantly racist and discriminatory remarks about our cultural communities; they are just sorry their party and the separatist cause may have been hurt by their remarks.

How can the people of Quebec believe in their plan for an independent, supposedly open and profoundly democratic Quebec, when in fact the very people responsible for promoting this plan, like the two hon. members opposite, have no regard for the most fundamental of principles?

We demand no less than formal apologies to be made in this House to our fellow citizens newly established in la Belle Province de Québec.

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FEDERALISM

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when he tabled his budget, the Minister of Finance said, with a smile on his face, that the era of flexible federalism had now arrived. However, we had to be suspicious of that smile, which was more akin to the kiss of Judas.

How can the minister be serious about flexible federalism when he is considerably limiting the financial margin of the provinces by reducing transfers, while at the same time maintaining national standards for welfare, health and post-secondary education?

After promising to reduce overlap and duplication between the two levels of government, the minister has now decided, despite all the opposition, to keep control over a sector as vital as manpower training.

In its editorial of today, *Le Devoir* says that current federalism "manages without us and clearly declares itself to be imperial".

This is what federalism has become.

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[English]

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT PENSIONS

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the third instalment of the Liberal's copy Reform awards.

Today's winner is the member for Vancouver Quadra whose personal proposals for pension reform are suspiciously similar to the Reform blue book. At a time when the cabinet has approved a two tier pension plan that will make millionaires out of defeated politicians, it is indeed outstanding to have a government backbench MP suggest that the treasured gold plated pension plan be based on the principle of matching funds.

Imagine a Liberal actually saying that MPs should live by the same rules as other Canadians, collecting their pensions at age 65, or that they should be forced to tighten their belts like those living outside planet Ottawa. Reformers have been calling for these changes for four years.

I commend the member for Vancouver Quadra for joining our cause. I call on the Prime Minister to stop comparing his salary and pension with professional hockey players and start comparing it to those who actually pay his salary and pension, the Canadian taxpayers.

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[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Bloc member for Roberval was concerned by the decision of the American rating agency Moody's to put Canada's credit rating under review.

● (1415)

The opposition member said in this House, and I quote: "The pressure from the financial community is a signal that the Minister of Finance should tackle the deficit problem by making massive cuts in government spending, which has to be the preferred approach, rather than raise the taxes of the middle class".

I am pleased to see that the wish of the hon. member for Roberval was largely met in Monday's budget.

I want to further reassure the member by reminding him of the comments made by his colleague, the official opposition critic for finance, on the CBC'S French radio network yesterday morning: "The economists and the financial community seem relatively pleased with this budget—and rightly so since, from a strictly financial point of view, Mr. Martin seems to be willing or able to reach his objectives—".

The Speaker: Regrettably, I must interrupt the hon. member. The hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

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[English]

THE BUDGET

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last Monday the Minister of Finance brought forth a trustworthy budget that will put our country in a new era of financial responsibility.

Not only do we feel this is a good budget for Canada, even the international community approved. Within two hours of the budget the dollar began to rise and the interest rates began to fall. These are signs of recognition that we are indeed on the right track. I am happy to add that most reasonable citizens have