

The Budget—Mr. Stanfield

have been auditioning for freelance work after the next election.

An hon. Member: Or for "Laugh In."

Mr. Stanfield: No, this is serious. After the next election campaign he will contribute to "Capital Report" as somebody who does the job "peeping through the newspapers".

Then we have the old song, again sung by the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Financial Times*, about the glowing state of the Canadian economy. I will quote one item from the *Financial Times* of April 29 under the heading "Curiouser and Curiouser". It reads:

Mr. Trudeau's conduct was curious in more than one way last week.

An hon. Member: What week?

Mr. Stanfield: That is the week preceding April 29. I do not blame the hon. member asking, "What week?". The article continues:

At a Hamilton rally, he is reported to have said that Canada's main problem was inflation but "the opposition doesn't want to wait the few weeks or months that will make it evident that we have solved this problem."

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: The article goes on:

The last time Mr. Trudeau declared he had "licked" inflation was December, 1970. In the three years since then, Canada has had a 23 per cent jump in consumer prices. No wonder we get the cold shivers every time the Prime Minister declares that the fight is won.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Virtually every responsible commentator in the country heaps scorn upon the government's alleged anti-profiteering bill. The Prime Minister says he is proud of that bill, that he is prepared to stand on it, to put it before the country. Well, I look forward to that, sir, I really look forward to it—because surely no other piece of legislation more adequately demonstrates the arrogance, the incompetence, the hypocrisy and the sheer dishonesty of this government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: During the 1972 election campaign the Minister of Finance steered well away from the election slogan "The land is strong". He confessed that it broke him up. It will be interesting to see just how he can keep himself clear from association with his Prime Minister's favourite bill in the coming campaign. If the Minister of Finance was broken up by the slogan in the last campaign, he should really be demolished by the bill.

The budget brought in by the minister was what he called a responsible budget. How can anyone believe that this government has any real sense of responsibility when its economic policy and its budget are associated with one of the most irresponsible pieces of puffery that has ever insulted the intelligence of the members of this House? How can anybody believe that the Minister of Finance is behaving responsibly when he refuses to tell this House how much revenue his government is dropping in the current year as a result of the tax concessions granted to the manufacturing and processing industries? That is

[Mr. Stanfield.]

what he has done; he has refused to give that information. His deputy minister gave us a figure last year, not in the House but to those of us who met him. The deputy minister promised us that if we did not get an answer to that question Monday evening, we would get it Tuesday morning at the latest, without fail.

• (1640)

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): That is not what he said.

Mr. Stanfield: I was there; I heard him. I want to ask the minister through you, sir, what he is up to with this ill-advised cover-up approach, refusing to give information of the sort that was given quite freely last year. Does he not realize the seriousness of the suspicion and distrust that will follow in the wake of his refusal to divulge this information?

We already have the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) indicating a figure as high as \$1 billion. The minister shakes his head. Until the minister gives us the information he is doing a very grave disservice to the manufacturing and processing industries, because suspicions will be rife. I do not know how anybody can tell the hon. member for York South he is wrong in what he is saying if the minister is not prepared to say anything. Is this an example of responsibility on the part of the Minister of Finance?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Stanfield: In his oration yesterday the Prime Minister suggested—in fact he said it, I don't know how many times—that it would be irresponsible to throw this government out. I say it would be the height of irresponsibility to leave this government in.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: But I suppose we have to make some allowances for the peculiar logic of anybody who has nothing to offer the country and so must build an election strategy on attacking the opposition and promising half a billion dollars to the oil companies.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was so anxious to tell the oil companies how much they could expect to get, and how they could expect to split it up, that he gave them some figures to indicate what they could expect from the present Grit government or a future Grit government. So the Prime Minister has revealed his election platform on these two main themes—attack the opposition, and give half a billion dollars to the oil companies.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: I would say that his attack on the official opposition has all the staying power of a wet match. And, of course, it isn't hard to know how the match got wet in the first place: it was obviously dampened by that