

*Excise Tax Act*

**Mr. Milliken:** What's a billion to this Minister of Finance? With a \$340 billion national debt, what is one more billion? It obviously does not matter to him and it obviously does not matter to the Hon. Members opposite. The only person who seems to care is the Hon. Member for Calgary Northeast (Mr. Kindy) and I congratulate him for his good thinking.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Milliken:** I wish, Mr. Speaker, that he were more persuasive than I and was able to convince some of his colleagues to vote the way he has.

I know that you would like me to conclude, Mr. Speaker. I know that Canadians reject this Budget, they reject this Bill, and I suggest to all Hon. Members that when the vote comes at one o'clock tomorrow morning we vote against this Bill and reject it.

**Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Lake St. Clair):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether we are witnessing a debate or a live performance of the Royal Canadian Air Farce. I listened to the Member on the Government side moments ago reading dispassionately, almost with the numerical enthusiasm of an accountant, a list of all of the taxes, with no emotional content at all, except his glee that the numbers were so big. That was followed by a little giggling on the other side, only starting, however, because the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Mr. Milliken) had not yet taken full flight of his senses and referred to the New Democratic Government of Manitoba in what I would say were scurrilous terms. He did not say anything about the small thinking that characterizes the Liberal Government of Ontario. A presidential candidate in the United States talked about a thousand points of light, in Ontario they had only one "Starr".

This is the House of Commons, Mr. Speaker. This is supposed to be the place where the will and desire of the common people are to be reflected. I know that you will be saying that the nomenclature is to draw a distinction between the inherited nobility and the others. There is a new nobility in this country and that nobility was not established by the Conservative Government, it had its beginnings in the Liberal Government.

We have a situation in this country where it is perfectly clear that there is a relatively small number of people, powerful people, monied people, and their lawyers and accountants, who make huge quantities of money advis-

ing that new nobility how to avoid taxes. Indeed, they tell Governments, both Liberal and Conservative, how they can not only write tax laws so that the new nobility will not suffer, but as well how to convince the ordinary, average Canadian—who is not a part of that clique of old-school ties and monied network—that this is the best of all possible worlds, that he and she is being treated very fairly and that even if they are collecting unemployment insurance or welfare, they had better be seriously concerned about this deficit.

The Government of the people has been taken away from the people. It has been taken away in the form of taxes which are imposed most heavily on the poor and the middle class while those who have consistently filled the coffers of the Conservative and Liberal Parties have continued to be spared.

• (2110)

The analysis is a very simple one.

**Mr. Milliken:** That is drivelt.

**Mr. McCurdy:** Mr. Speaker, he will probably argue that there was no Carter Commission and that Mr. MacEachen's attempt to produce a truly equitable tax system was not turned down by a Cabinet that he would certainly defend, no doubt.

**Mr. Milliken:** You opposed the Budget, too. Don't give me that nonsense.

**Mr. McCurdy:** The evidence is clear. What we have before us is a piece of legislation which will add a further burden on ordinary Canadians in the form of regressive taxes. I am sure I do not have to explain that to the Member for Kingston and the Islands (Mr. Milliken). He seems well educated on the nature of the tax system. I do not know why he did not say something about this, instead of engaging in this silly little *tête à tête* with those Members on the other side who do not really give a darn anyway about the effects of this Budget on ordinary people.

Let us make sure that we have this firmly in our minds, because I want the Canadian people to have it firmly in their minds. Between 1984 and 1988, the average family of two parents and two children were burdened with an additional \$1,300 in taxes; \$900 of that was in the form of consumption taxes, in the form of regressive taxes, taxes that will constitute a higher proportion of the wages of