

Summer Recess

An export tax was added. We talked until we were blue in the face about what this was doing to production. It made no difference to this government. It just does not care.

The government would not consider our amendment to the excise tax bill. The government thought up this tax and it is going to get its pound of flesh, even if it destroys life in this country. The government says how well it manages this country. All it does is to spend money.

An hon. Member: Like a drunken sailor.

Mr. Taylor: A drunken sailor spends his own money but this government spends the people's money and is not giving value for it. When is it going to get our industries working? There is a lot of potential in this country. There would be co-operation if the government brought in a bill to develop this potential. I was in the legislature for almost 40 years. Never once in that time was closure brought in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please.

Mr. W. Bennett Campbell (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, this being the first occasion that I have had an opportunity to address this House, I want to say that it is indeed an honour and a privilege for me to serve the people of Cardigan in this House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Campbell (Cardigan): Before I address the subject at hand, I want to pay tribute to a great Islander who preceded me as Cardigan's representative in the House of Commons. All of us who counted Dan MacDonald as a friend considered ourselves richer for having known him. There are many in this chamber and on Parliament Hill who share that experience and understand the special place that he had in the hearts of Islanders.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Campbell (Cardigan): It was impossible to spend five minutes with Dan MacDonald without feeling that your life was touched in a rather unique way. He will always be remembered as an example of a high degree of courage and devotion. We will remember him for his sense of humour and his genuine concern for others, especially those with disabilities or those who were victims of misfortune. He will also be remembered for never believing he himself was handicapped.

● (2300)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Campbell (Cardigan): I am very honoured to represent Cardigan, and I will certainly endeavour to uphold the example of excellence set by Dan MacDonald during his years in this House.

My remarks will be influenced to some extent by the fact that I recently fought a byelection during what was the most intense period of the constitutional debate. Conventional

wisdom would suggest that the electorate would use byelections to show its displeasure with the party in power. Indeed, in all three of the recent campaigns the opposition used the slogan "Send Trudeau a message". They did!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Campbell (Cardigan): That message was loud and clear. In all three cases, in three out of three byelections, victories in different parts of the country demonstrated the frailty of the opposition arguments.

During the byelection a number of major issues arose which related directly or indirectly to matters before this House. The people of Cardigan—indeed, the people of Prince Edward Island—were concerned about economic conditions which affect their daily lives. They were concerned about paying the highest energy costs in the country. They were concerned about the major effects these costs would have on production and marketing. They were concerned about their electrical and home heating costs as a result of changes in oil prices, which affect each and every one of us.

In addition, there was a critical need in Prince Edward Island for a greater degree of economic growth to make our province more productive and more self-reliant, and to provide more employment and investment opportunities for its people. Over and over again the need for more jobs was raised during the recent byelection campaign. The people of my constituency share the desire of all Islanders for secure and meaningful employment in their own province, and surely that must be an objective for this nation of ours in order that we can ensure that economic opportunities are realized in all parts of the country to make each of them better places in which to live and work.

I was a member of the government of Prince Edward Island during most of the 1970s. We were committed to achieving a higher standard of living through the development of our resources and other opportunities for economic growth. We entered into various cost-sharing agreements with the federal government which related directly to our social and economic objectives.

The inability at the moment of our present provincial government to maintain a harmonious relationship with Ottawa indicates an unwillingness on its part to co-operate. In my opinion, the government of P.E.I. does nothing to enhance employment opportunities in my province. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the government of my province has reneged on its responsibility for job creation and has left this void to be filled through federal initiatives.

In fact I sat in the gallery in the legislature during the last provincial session to hear the minister of labour of our province say he had no direct obligation, or his government had no direct obligation, for job creation in P.E.I.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Campbell (Cardigan): The particular needs of P.E.I. are not met by each and every federal program, but collectively