

The Budget—Mr. MacKay

summed up the attitude of members of Parliament of all parties in responding to the needs of their constituents. He talked about the man who was willing to sink half his present repute for the freedom to think. There was more to the effect that this same man, be his cause strong or weak, would gladly risk the rest for the freedom to speak. That is exactly what members of Parliament want to do—have the freedom to speak—and if the government co-operates they will do that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1640)

Mr. Waddell: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. Waddell: I did not want to interrupt the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) when he was speaking because he is such a fine speaker. I have admired him for a long time, even before I came to Parliament. For one thing, he was always accurate with his information. I know the hon. member did not intend to mislead the House, but he and some of his colleagues, especially from British Columbia, have been misleading the House. He did so today by stating the New Democratic Party's position falsely with respect to a resource control amendment to the constitution. The hon. member must know that the position is quite clear—it adds to the ownership of provincial resources by dealing with interprovincial trade and other matters.

The hon. member must also know that it is just illogical for a party to advocate an amendment which is less than the existing situation. So he should not mislead the House by indicating that the New Democratic Party is pressing for an amendment which would result in less than the existing constitution allows the provinces. Indeed, it is more. I ask the hon. member not to mislead the House in that way.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I will recognize the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) because the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) has indicated to the Chair and to the House that this is a matter of privilege. The absence of a motion and of argument to that effect lead me to believe that we are into a matter of debate rather than of privilege. The Chair does not have the right to reach a conclusion before any input is made on the subject. My current inclination is to advise the hon. member that he does not appear to have a question of privilege. I will now hear the hon. member for Central Nova. I want to emphasize that what I have said to the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway applies equally to the hon. member for Central Nova.

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the intervention made by the hon. member for the New Democratic Party. He is quite right. In some policy matters, such as the environment and civil rights, there is a certain amount of agreement between our parties although we have disagreed in other areas. I welcome his assurance that he is saying now that what he really supports is ownership and he does not want to see the

resource base of the provinces undermined by the federal government. He does not want to see the provinces lose what they now have. I welcome his correction, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to misstate the NDP position but that was the way I understood it. I understood that having lost their chance of any leverage they now find themselves like a eunuch. They are a minority party in a majority parliament which they probably went too far and too fast trying to accommodate.

Mr. Waddell: We want something for our region.

Mr. MacKay: I very much respect the NDP members who come and came from British Columbia, particularly my good friend Stuart Leggatt. I think it is terrible that with 40 per cent of their caucus from British Columbia, including the fine justice critic from Burnaby, they are not being given an opportunity to sit on the constitution committee.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be able to participate in this debate. First, I want to convey my congratulations to the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) on behalf of my constituents on the presentation of his first budget to the Parliament of Canada. The budget will clearly establish a sound basis for the economy over the long term by taking the necessary steps to deal with the problems in the area of energy. This includes Canada's reliance on oil imports, the deficit, productivity, employment, and inflation. Furthermore, the budget introduced and tabled by the Minister of Finance will continue to strengthen the stronger regions of the country, like Alberta, and assist those other regions which are somewhat less fortunate.

I also want to congratulate the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) for introducing a national energy program which allows Canadians throughout the country to participate in and benefit from this prudent and responsible national energy program.

I represent an area in this country which, over the years, has experienced more than its fair share of what I would deem to be economic casualties, these casualties being exceptionally high unemployment, slow economic growth, sky-rocketing energy costs and, yes, a high rate of migration of young people who have had to leave their communities in search of economic security and go elsewhere to pursue their careers. But despite these setbacks my constituents from the towns of New Waterford, Glace Bay, Dominion and the counties of Cape Breton and Richmond remain loyal to Canada. In remaining loyal to Canada I suggest they are good Canadians. In being good Canadians I believe they are excited about their future and they are very eager to play a meaningful part in realizing the potential of our region and, indeed, our country.

Notwithstanding this sense of optimism, we are aware of those problems. We are aware that the solutions to those problems will not be easy to find. This budget, unlike the previous one, attempts to address those issues in very specific ways. But before I go on to this particular budget I would like to review the previous budget introduced by the hon. member