

Privilege—Mr. Parry

[English]

Mr. Suluk: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to the allegation of the Hon. Member for Bourassa (Mr. Rossi) concerning what he alleges I said during Question Period. If the comments are in the "blues", then I might consider whatever it is he might be requesting. However, if those comments are not in the "blues", then I question what motivation he has in raising this matter. Knowing that he was a former police chief, he may be well versed in the art of intimidation, which is what I consider his question of privilege to be. However, knowing the Chair's concern for civility in the House I will await a decision in this regard.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Order. What is this?

Mr. Rossi: Are you the Speaker?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Are you?

[Translation]

Mr. Rossi: Mr. Speaker, I will not stand for those remarks about policemen either, because the police corps I belonged to is known as the best police force on the American continent, and I will never stand for any Member of this House using the words mafia or mafioso. Even if it is not reported in the blues, Mr. Speaker, there are three people who heard the Hon. Member back here. And speaking on behalf of people of Italian origin, I will not tolerate anyone calling someone a mafioso.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will take the matter into consideration and a ruling will be issued as soon as possible.

The Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry) on a question of privilege.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE FROM HOUSE

Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence and with the indulgence of Hon. Members, I rise on a question of privilege to offer my apologies, particularly to government Members, in that I was not back in my place at 4.30 p.m. when the House reconvened in order to answer questions or receive comments on my speech made with respect to the Budget. This arose because I attended the memorial service for the late T.C. Douglas. I would never wittingly make a speech in this House which I was not prepared to defend. I apologize to Members who sit on the Government side that I was not here to receive any comments or questions which they might have had.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate. The Hon. Member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson).

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government; and the amendment of Mr. Johnston (p. 11006); and the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Riis (p. 11009).

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to participate in the budget debate. What I truly regret is that there is so little to be said that is positive about the Budget. After hearing the reaction to its first Budget, I had hoped that the Government would in this Budget make changes to repair some of the damage done. I would much prefer it if I could congratulate the Government for having closed the gap it created between the haves and the have-nots in our society, or if I could see any evidence of a coherent economic plan showing that the Government has a realistic and workable agenda for economic growth in Canada. Unfortunately, I can do neither.

What we have in the Budget is essentially more of the same—middle and low-income families and individuals are saddled with yet more taxes piled on to the taxes they are now paying from last year's Budget, while the wealthy and corporate sector emerge virtually unscathed. Why did the Government choose to repeat itself in this way? Is it because it sees an easy source of revenue in its tax grabs from middle-income Canadians, a sure-fire source of funds which it is just too tempting not to exploit? This may be part of the reason the Government has turned again to the average taxpayer for two-thirds of the revenue it expects to take in this year.

There is also the appearance, and I trust I am wrong in this regard, of a kind of cynical gamble in what the Government is doing by piling on the taxes and spreading them out among many taxpayers regardless of ability to pay. Does the Government hope for resignation and acceptance of these measures without the emergence of an organized opposition? In this context the sales tax rebate for those who earn less than \$15,000 per year, the prepayment of the child tax credit for those in the same category, and the increase in the disability pension will offer some relief. However, these measures will not come close to compensating these groups for what they will lose through higher taxes and deindexation.

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We can choose to look at these minor proposals as signs of the underdeveloped Conservative social conscience or as cynical attempts to stifle potential sources of opposition to the Government's discriminatory tax increases.

When we compare the Government's two Budgets, we see that the Government is increasingly dependent on the middle-income taxpayer as a source of tax revenues. Even with the small relieving measures in this Budget, a single parent with a \$15,000 income and two children will be paying over \$300 more in taxes as a result of the Conservative Budgets. Money such as this out of the pockets of taxpayers will enrich