

Government Orders

consistent with Reform Party policy that we should have less power at the centre.

I will never forget the hon. member saying that as an expert in constitutional law he would tell me that it will not be possible for the central government to either create or enforce such arrangements because there is no leverage. I am now very pleasantly surprised to hear that he has come around to the policy the Reform Party had pronounced before this budget came out and which he now feels is doable.

I have a practical question for him. Even though the Reform Party says that it would support this kind of an effort, does the hon. member really believe that a maverick province like Alberta would slow down its efforts to privatize and rationalize medicare by for example allowing more of the services to be provided by the private sector? Does he believe he could get from Alberta agreement of the nature he thinks is necessary if even at the present time, when there is a threat of withholding funds, this province, according to the minister, apparently is doing all those nasty things?

Mr. McWhinney: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to respond to the learned hon. member. He has, in spite of his dour mien, a delightful sense of humour for those who know him very well.

I do recollect this debate conducted at a distance of 3,000 miles with bad telephone connections. I feel his telephone connection was not as perfect as mine on this. When he presented his shadow budget I did suggest to him that perhaps he had not paid enough attention to structural problems of government, that he had to spell it out.

• (1725)

By the way, I should never be as egotistical as to suggest in a public debate or elsewhere that I was an expert in this or in anything else. The hon. member will remember Lord Justice Denning's reply to somebody who quoted to him somebody and said "This is an expert". Lord Justice Denning replied "Is he dead?" The answer was "No, milord, he is among the living". Lord Justice Denning said "Well he is not an expert. The only expert accepted by the common law is somebody who has been dead for 20 years." This status will undoubtedly occur to the hon. member at a certain period in his career.

What I did try to suggest was that he needed more work on examining the unstructured approach to co-operative arrangements between the federal government and the provinces he was presenting. I think the hon. member will recognize that there are gaps in his armour. I know he is an expert on the South Seas, on skiing, and on very many things, and I respect his knowledge of economics. However, on this thing I did suggest that the Reform Party program was rather light.

To return again to his basic question, I think it is a matter of changes in attitude. The attitude of federal-provincial relations is different from what it was 20 or 30 years ago. One sees the arrangements in the province of Quebec, a province where the government is committed to a program of separation from Canada. But if we look at the structure of administrative arrangements developing between the two governments, there is

a good deal of solid empiricism in that. I would predict that the Premier of Alberta will also recognize the advantages of co-operation.

We have no objection in this government to privatization. In fact if one examines the budget there is great emphasis on privatization. Getting rid of the CNR is something the hon. member himself has proposed in the past. If one in looks at it, we are very much into privatization too. However, in the examination of national standards, we will use friendly persuasion to ensure co-operative—

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): In accordance with the order made Monday, June 5, 1995, and pursuant to Standing Order 78(3), it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of third reading of the bill now before the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Call in the members.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 243)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Anderson
Assad
Augustine
Bakopanos
Beaumur
Bernier (Beauce)

Alcock
Arseneault
Assadourian
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Bellemare
Bertrand