

The Budget—Mr. Lewis

Mr. Crouse: Is that the best contribution you can make?

• (4:20 p.m.)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Let me say at the outset that I will accept the amendment, and I do so for the following reasons. I recognize the difficult position that the Chair is in at the moment, having particular regard to the citations which have been given by hon. members. I am quite familiar with citations 194 and 200; there is no need for me to repeat them. I must also pay attention to the fact that these citations, if they are to apply to a budget debate, were written when there was only one budget. That I think is an important point.

May I proceed further and say that I agree with the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin); the operative part of the amendment which we have before us is an increase in taxes, which could not have been discussed on any earlier occasion.

I shall also say this to the house. If citation 194 is to stand and we apply that citation with its full force, as if there were only one budget, then I would have some doubt about the presentation of the budget we are now considering being in order.

Mr. Knowles: Hear, hear.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If the house therefore has allowed the budget, then I think that the house must allow the amendment.

Mr. Crouse: Any comment?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I ought to point out, too, that if the amendment is out of order, since the amendment deals mainly with a tax increase I would have some difficulty in ruling any subsequent speeches in this budgetary debate to be in order. These are the two matters that bothered me particularly.

I recognize the force of citation 194 and I am familiar with citation 200. In the time that I have been in the house I know that we have never permitted discussion of the same topic more than once during the same session. I recognize that; but this, I believe is a special occasion. I think I must look at citations 194 and 200 with some leniency. For these reasons as I have said, I shall allow this amendment.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, in our opinion the budget which is now before the house is unnecessary and contradictory. It is thoroughly inequitable. It treats the corporations with loving kindness,

[Mr. Sharp.]

while placing unjust income and other taxes on the working people of this country.

The budget, Mr. Speaker, is designed, and designed deliberately, to increase unemployment in the next year and to slow down the rate of growth. There have been four budgets in about 18 months and five budget speeches by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp). Indeed, I am tempted to say that the minister will go down in Canadian political history as "Two Budget Mitch" who was shooting from the lip most of the time.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Lewis: Coming in the wake of three similar budgets in the short space of about one year and a half, the present budget underlines the government's utter failure to manage the economy. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the minister's main concern is the financial market. The main aim of the budget is to soothe the tender nerves of the financial institutions.

When on many occasions over the years, spokesmen of our party have said that Canadian governments too often have been influenced and guided by the views and objectives of the large financial and industrial corporations, we have been scoffed at. I say to you that this budget is proof conclusive that we have been right and are right in that condemnation.

Mr. Greene: A nineteenth century speech.

Mr. Lewis: In short—

Mr. Byrne: How about Wilson?

Mr. Lewis: This is not a budget which is just or forward looking. This is a budget which favours, ultimately, the rich and powerful corporations at the expense of the average people of this country.

Mr. Greene: The hon. member is making a nineteenth century speech.

Mr. Lewis: In my considered opinion—and I say this despite the interjections of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Greene) who may not have had time to read the budget—no language is strong enough to condemn the social callousness and economic folly of this budget.

Mr. Byrne: How about the folly of socialism?

Mr. Lewis: To cap this callousness and folly, the minister blandly jettisons the