

**Mr. Johnston (Westmount):** Mr. Speaker, when the House adjourned at six o'clock, I was discussing the attitude of the English community towards the francization of Quebec. I was explaining that we, English-speaking Canadians, have no intention of leaving Quebec because we are very pleased with what is now happening in the province. We see a dynamic, multicultural and bilingual society which could become the most dynamic society in North America if the economy is not overly weakened by the present political uncertainty.

[English]

Notwithstanding these very positive attitudes all of us in the riding of Westmount have, it is also fair to say that all Montrealers and all residents of my riding, be they Francophone or Anglophone, are fearful of what may lie ahead. We have heard our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and others say on a number of occasions that the health of the Canadian economy is inseparable from the subject of national unity. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I know there are many Canadians who may not share that view, but we who live in the riding of Westmount know that view to be correct.

Daily we witness an exodus of talent, French and English, young talent, often the children of friends, sometimes to other provinces in Canada but quite often to the United States. Daily we witness the exodus of businesses and assets. We see businesses closing and families displaced, as I indicated before, again sometimes to other provinces in Canada, but again quite often to the United States. The professional community in the city of Montreal, be they lawyers, auditors or professional counsellors, have been presiding over transactions of this kind on a daily basis for the last several years.

I ask you, is it any wonder that the people of Westmount are more sensitive to the problems of national unity and the relationship of those problems to the economy than Canadians elsewhere in this country?

[Translation]

—as we say in French, to ask the question is to answer it.

[English]

Imagine my disappointment when I attended the first ministers' constitutional conference several weeks ago here in Ottawa and listened to the discussion about entrenching given rights and freedoms in our constitution, hearing Premier Lougheed declare that as far as he was concerned such entrenchment was unnecessary, that Alberta had a bill of rights and that the legislature of any particular province would be able and should respond to the needs and the will of the people at any particular time in this regard. I sat there and thought to myself, how would Premier Lougheed feel were he an English-speaking merchant in the third—perhaps the second, but probably the third—largest English-speaking city in Canada serving almost exclusively an English clientele, unable to erect a sign on his premises in English? So much, I said to myself, for the protection that is to be afforded the minorities of this country, not only in Quebec, but by other provincial legislatures.

*The Budget—Mr. D. J. Johnston*

Returning for a moment to the budget itself and the economy, I would point out that during my campaign I learned that in Westmount, economic issues are of as much concern as elsewhere in Canada. The people in Westmount want lean, tough government. That message came through loud and clear. They endorsed the policies introduced in 1975, the tightening up of the money supply, the basic freezing of the civil service over the last several years, and cutback in government expenditures. Furthermore, the mandate they gave me was: you go there and make sure these additional budget cuts and this economic plan of August are implemented. They approved the policies of this government as shown overwhelmingly by their vote on October 16.

As I said earlier to day, I am confident they will approve wholeheartedly the very responsible and very economically sound budget introduced by the finance minister last week.

● (2012)

I was very pleased, as, I noted, was the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), at the added incentive given to research and development in this country. This is very important to all of Canada and particularly to my province, Quebec, where, in the relatively near future, we must establish competitive high technology industries to replace those which we regard as being in the *secteurs mous* whose years are obviously numbered.

I was also heartened by something for which I have been asking for years, and that is a re-examination of our Income Tax Act to see that it is fair to all Canadians. A careful look should be taken at the concept of tax neutrality—namely, that Canadians in the same financial circumstances should bear the same burden of tax. I am not by any means satisfied that this job is being done, but certainly in many respects this budget is a step in the right direction.

I might say that I learned several things this afternoon from the Leader of the Opposition, though none had anything to do with the budget. This leads me to conclude that fundamentally the Conservative party endorses the principles set forth in the budget. One of the things which came through loud and clear was that members of the Conservative party have an aversion to Crown corporations, which apparently is not shared by their colleague, Mr. Peter Lougheed. I too favour greater private sector participation wherever possible, but understandably the private sector looks to the competitive return on investment that it can derive from any particular area of endeavour. Those returns are not necessarily readily available in the capital intensive energy areas in which Canada is required to invest in the latter part of this century, not only for our generation but for that of our children, our grandchildren and for the future.

Hence, nineteenth century Conservative philosophy is not appropriate to the kind of capital intensive energy situation we are facing in Canada today. By the same reasoning that I heard this afternoon, I would think that the Leader of the Opposition should postulate that private industry in the United States should be financing outer space exploration. I would doubt that he would even convince General Motors of the