

Mr. MacEachen: The first question asked by the hon. member—I wish the hon. member for Don Valley would—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I regret to inform the hon. Deputy Prime Minister that his allotted time has expired. He may continue with unanimous consent. Has the hon. minister unanimous consent to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): The hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald).

Mr. Lefebvre: Why don't you stand up and say no?

Mr. Gillies: I said no because he is misleading the people of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. The hon. member for Egmont has the floor.

Mr. Martin: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. The parliamentary secretary is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, before the hon. member for Egmont takes the floor, I wonder whether we could clarify the situation regarding time for speakers subsequent to the hon. member for Egmont. I think there has been general agreement that speeches be limited to 20 minutes, with two exceptions. I think the one exception on our side would be the fourth member who may speak this afternoon from here on in, and I believe the House leader on the other side would like to comment.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary is correct. There is agreement to the extent he said. I believe he would also agree that it should be extended to include the hon. member for Fundy-Royal, who will be making his maiden speech later on today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Agreed and so ordered. The hon. member for Egmont.

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, it was a most fascinating exercise on the part of the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen). I think hon. members of the House would be interested to hear the minister's views on some of what I thought were the current topics of this week, including the budget debate which we are concluding today, the report of the Auditor General of yesterday, or perhaps more interesting than anything, the proposed new Board of Economic Development Ministers, which certainly raises more questions than it answers.

The Budget—Mr. D. MacDonald

It is passing strange that the government has seen no reason today to come and explain or to give an indication to the House of exactly what are its plans in this regard. Presumably it knows, and presumably we will find out. Again, the Deputy Prime Minister has been engaged in a kind of explanation of the inexplicable, and that would cover the context of his speech today, whether in dealing with GATT or his views and thoughts on Petro-Can.

I want to do something a little unusual, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak about the budget. I am delighted to have the opportunity to do so because I want to focus upon budgetary matters from what may in the minds of most hon. members appear to be a rather unique perspective. I want in fact to focus on budgetary measures that have to do with artistic and cultural industries in this country.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the proposals in the budget before us are a short sighted and limited response to the major challenges and opportunities of the Canadian nation. Never has the need been more obvious for a new government with a fresh and imaginative approach to economic planning. There is in this budget an almost complete lack of recognition of our potential in just about every field of endeavour. In particular, the opportunity and growth potential within our major cultural industries have been entirely overlooked.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, this budget makes a negative contribution, if any, to cultural expression in Canada. The initiative taken by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) in ending the lower tax rate for personal service corporations, which perhaps is justifiable in the broad view, will have a specific impact on the arts in Canada by driving out of this country some of our most talented and successful artists and performers whose commitment to Canada has until now enabled them to resist the strong financial lure to the south.

Earlier this week my leader presented in Toronto a totally different approach in the type of positive initiatives that we would bring to government to challenge and encourage Canadians to realize our remarkable potential, initiatives which would, if anything, attract back to this country the talented people we have lost and not drive them away. He promised, and I quote:

—measures to encourage Canadian culture as an industry which can bring both income and identity to this nation.

I can assure my colleagues and all Canadians that this is no empty promise. As I said a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, it is my intention this afternoon to present six fiscal measures to stimulate the arts and cultural industries of Canada. Had this been a Progressive Conservative budget, these measures would even now be under consideration by this House.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, the cultural community of Canada is crying out for a renewed and imaginative federal presence. Yet what do we have? We have the Secretary of State (Mr. Roberts) responding by playing numbers games to explain away this government's budgetary cuts to the arts. The fact is that support available to the cultural community primarily through the Canada Council has dropped in constant dollars in recent years in terms of real value to our creative people. I find