

The Budget—Mr. Mazankowski

cost of living increases which have occurred since that time. If the Hon. Member takes the time to look at the budget papers he will see it is a pretty insignificant measure, costing the Government very small amounts of money this year and next year. As perhaps some of my colleagues have pointed out, it is further proof that the Government does trust Canadians and we are trying to pass this small benefit on to them.

Mr. Mazankowski: You cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the House that over four years this budget gives some \$4 billion to the private sector, the business community, through tax breaks and other incentives. At the same time it increases personal income taxes. My question to the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) is, how does that differ from his call for tax breaks to the private sector? Is this budget not in fact a supply side budget giving incentives to the private sector, and is essentially a Conservative budget, as mentioned by one of the Liberal Members?

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, it is basically a difference in philosophy. The Hon. Member would like the federal Government to take over the whole economy. As a matter of fact, their economic policy would see the total Canadian economy run like a massive National Energy Program. I do not share that view, Mr. Speaker. I share the view that the private sector can provide real, meaningful, long-term wealth and generate jobs. I do not believe the Government is most suited to do that. It is really a difference in philosophy.

Mr. Breau: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member makes the case for depoliticization of the economy. He talks about trusting the private sector. I suggest to him that begs the question. The question is, who has the responsibility, politically and morally, for the affairs of the economy? It seems to me there is a need for both. Would he not agree that it is a question of political accountability and that judgment cannot be absolute as to when you trust the private sector more or trust the public sector more?

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it may be compelling and interesting to talk about greater depoliticization of the economy, but the Hon. Member is a very practical politician. He issued on behalf of his caucus a statement some ten days ago which asks for greater politicization of the economy. How can he square his philosophy with the philosophy of the Lougheed Government, which has had the very good philosophy, in my view, of putting aside money for the future heritage of Alberta? That is clearly a great politicization of the economy which is unparalleled in this country, and I agree with it. So how can he square his philosophy as a Conservative from that Province with the philosophy of the Lougheed Government, which has been for greater politicization of the Alberta economy?

Mr. Mazankowski: Well, first of all, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. I think it is a good question and I hope I can respond to it effectively. Essentially what I am saying, and what I think our Party is saying, is that we opt for

a system of incentives rather than grants. Grants require that sort of discretionary power, whereas incentives can be applied in a more across the board fashion. I do not want to be simplistic, but essentially that is the way we view it.

With respect to the Heritage Trust Fund, I think upon reflection, if the Hon. Member would examine the accounts of that fund, he would see that a good portion of those dollars has indeed been invested in hospitals, schools, housing, and in really filling the public need, which would in most Provinces be filled through the normal budgetary process. In this particular case, we identify the resource revenue and ensure that future generations recognize the money was not squandered, that it was used to improve our lifestyle. I do not see it as politicization to look after the needs of senior citizens, to look after the sick and disabled, to improve education. I do not think that that is political. That is meeting a need.

● (1210)

Mr. Breau: It is not the private sector.

Mr. Mazankowski: The private sector is clearly involved to some extent. However, what I am saying is that that is quite different from generating real growth. I should also say that the Heritage Trust Fund does provide funding for agriculture and small business. There is nothing political about that. It is handled in the same manner as the Farm Credit Corporation.

Is the Hon. Member suggesting that the Farm Credit Corporation is a political organization? Is he suggesting that the Federal Business Development Bank makes its decisions on the basis of politics and not sound economic—

Mr. Breau: Yes.

Mr. Mazankowski: Oh, he says "Yes".

Some Hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Mazankowski: I find that to be very abhorrent, because I do not believe the Farm Credit Corporation—

Mr. Breau: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think the Hon. Member and I were involved in an intelligent dialogue. The way the Hon. Member is using the word "politicization" is not the same way I was using it. It may be because of my background, or the translation from the French language. What the term means today, when I use the word "political" in debate, is the greater interest on the part of the public sector in the affairs of the nation or a Province. It does not imply partisan, political judgments. It means that a political act is on behalf of the public interest. That is all that it means. The real meaning of the word "political", from the Greek culture, is "caring for people".

Mr. Mazankowski: I appreciate the Hon. Member's remarks. I do not think that he and I really differ much concerning this issue except that I differentiate between the social need and the economic need. I have not criticized in my speech today, nor I have ever criticized, the Government for further advancing the facilities to meet the social needs, the