

Excise Tax Act

felt justly proud of this place, of this institution, and of the fine work that is done by the young men who participate.

Mr. Baldwin: You should have stayed there and not gone to caucus.

Mr. Young: I am happy to speak in support of Bill C-66. I have not spoken many times this year, perhaps four or five times only, and the record will show that I have participated much more in the work of committees than in the work of the House.

● (1600)

There are those who work to seek headlines, and those who work to get a job done. There are some members opposite who often speak in public. If one looks rather closely at what they have to say I think one would find that in all the huffing and puffing that comes out there is more puff than huff. In the past three weeks there has been much blowing of hot gaseous vapours but not a great deal of substance.

Members opposite have been quite fond of pointing to the lack of speakers from the government side. They are fond of making extravagant claims concerning the changes they have forced the government to make. They are fond of criticizing, but are not very able when it comes to suggesting what they would do. Their criticisms have been mostly destructive and far from constructive. They have suggested that spending should be cut but they have been unable to suggest where, how, and in what programs. They have been critical of the excise tax on gasoline, but they have been unwilling to admit that their measures would force the equivalent revenue to be raised through general taxation.

Under the system we have proposed the user would pay, while under general taxation the non-user would also pay. Why should we penalize the Canadian who does not own a car? Why should we penalize the senior citizen who does not use a car to get around, and whose budget already is too tight?

Miss MacDonald: Tell that to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Young: There are those who talk a pretty good game from the opposition benches but whose action is different. We have heard a lot of hollow and empty rhetoric from members opposite. Their rhetoric has been hollow and shallow even to the point of braggadocio. We have heard pretty extravagant claims from members opposite. We have heard Tory members claim that they put forward a united stand in opposition to the budget bills, filibustering and dragging things out day after day. What they are trying to do is nothing more than establish an election issue for Bill Davis on which to go to the people of this province this fall. They will not succeed because the people of Ontario will not be fooled when they realize who is to blame when they cannot get their rebate cheques.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Who put on the tax in the first place?

Mr. Young: It is hurting, is it, fellows?

[Mr. Young.]

An hon. Member: Not at all.

Mr. Young: The budget bills will be passed and the people of this province will know just who caused them to wait, however long it is. There will be many farmers, fishermen, and commercial people who will not look too favourably on the big blue Davis machine when they find out that the cohorts of the premier in Ottawa caused the delay in respect of the rebate cheques. There will be many people in eastern Ontario who will be pretty upset at Mr. Davis when they find just how his bally-hoo and phooferaw about a freeze means that there may be no gas at the pumps in this area of the country come another month or so.

Many auto workers will not be too happy when they find that the dropping of the sales tax on domestic cars really only results in the export of work to the United States. They will remember. There will be many others who will see through the rhetoric and the bombast, because when the inanities and platitudes have faded away they will find that, behind those clouds of hot gases we have suffered through for the past few weeks, there is no substance.

There have been great claims in respect of unification of the opposition in its stand on these budget bills. I suggest there is no unity and that there is not much of a stand. We had an example last Thursday when the hon. member for Okanagan-Boundary (Mr. Whittaker) commended the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) for removing the excise tax on wines which had been imposed last November. Those of us here who come from the Niagara Peninsula and who have a fairly intimate knowledge of the domestic grape and wine industry, support the hon. member for Okanagan-Boundary in his commendation of the minister. However, yesterday we heard the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Neil) take issue with and castigate the minister for this.

Yesterday we also heard the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. Dick) ridicule this change in respect of assistance to the grape and wine industry. We witnessed the same division of opinion in respect of other members of the opposition party. Some members commended the minister and others criticized him.

Last Thursday the hon. member for Okanagan-Boundary, in commending the minister, made the rather exaggerated claim that he almost single-handedly brought about the change in the excise tax provisions in respect of the wine industry. He suggested that at the very least it was as a result of the work done by his party. I should like to quote the hon. member as recorded at page 7670 of *Hansard* for July 17:

I would first like to commend the minister for taking the excise tax off wine which he put on just a few months earlier in his previous budget. At that time we in the opposition pleaded with him and tried to obtain help from the government side of the House, but none was forthcoming.

It would seem to me that the hon. member does not have too much support from within his party—if one looks at the remarks of the hon. member for Moose Jaw or the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton. It seems to me that, for all that pleading which his party is supposed to have done, there are quite a few yahoos surrounding him who would rather not have that change. One wonders for