

The Budget—Mr. Darling

Mr. Miller delivered a paper at a finance meeting on September 19 and it was known then that MacEachen had oil problems to face but he had to worry about two things—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but I must advise him that his allotted time has expired. Nevertheless, he may continue with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Darling: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleagues also. In closing, let me point out to the good people of Ontario, and in particular to the people in the riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, that the electors of Ontario who voted for the northern magus—or the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau)—got a government which flies in the face of massive public opinion. For example, it rammed through the metric system when a great percentage of the population was against such a system. Second, was its measure concerning gun control; we know what the great majority of Canadians feel about that. Third is the unpopular bilingual program. This has cost literally hundreds of millions of dollars and a great many people are still unhappy about it. Fourth, the unilaterally shoving through of the constitution over objections by seven of the ten provinces with certain of the Prime Minister's "pet" amendments to be added before it comes to Canada.

Little or no help for small business is forthcoming from the present government. I heard the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Bussières) commenting on what has been done for small business. I can tell you that small business is being throttled by red tape, and government bureaucracy until small business people are almost ready to shoot I do not know how many of the civil servants. There is not too much in the budget to help small business.

With one-third of the total population, the people of Ontario should take special note of the amount of money which comes into the province of Ontario as compared to what the province of Ontario pays. This way people could see what grants are paid to Ontario. Assistance has been requested for the tourist industry through several departments, particularly the small harbours branch. DREE payments to Ontario amount to \$20 million a year compared to over \$100 million a year to the province of Quebec.

I have mentioned the great increase in gas prices. The Prime Minister said in 1974 that there would be no wage controls. He said he was absolutely against that. He told us he was resigning, but he was resurrected from the political grave thanks to the wily Cape Bretoner. The CN tracks were going to be twinned from Winnipeg to the coast. Have we seen or heard anything about that? Next we might hear the ridiculous statement that the post office is self-sustaining.

So I come to the Post Office, which does not have a nickel for its deficit shown in the budget. It is just as if it were on its own and self-sustaining. That is the stupidest thing I have ever come across. The Post Office deficit last year was \$400

million. Will we now be faced with a charge of a dollar for a stamp? This is just another example that comes to mind.

I can see a great scenario unfolding. Certainly the wily, prince Machiavelli from Cape Breton has done a masterful job. I say to every Liberal member that he or she should get down on his or her knees every night and thank God that he is on that side of the House. But the Cape Bretoner will have to be repaid in some way. I forecast that he will be the next prime minister when the northern magus retires. Mind you, it will be for a short period of time. He will probably look across to the NDP who are going to lose their seats next time. Probably righteous Robbie might be put in the Senate and made minister of finance for a period of time. Then I foresee a leadership convention and the hon. member for Saint-Maurice (Mr. Chrétien) will become the next prime minister. But I can tell you that this side of the House will be moving over there. A Conservative government will be the next government, and I am looking forward to that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gary F. McCauley (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in this debate and to follow such a distinguished speaker as the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling). He is an entertaining speaker but I do not put much faith in his crystal ball gazing.

An hon. Member: You are against MacEachen, are you?

Mr. McCauley: This is an historic moment in our country's life. Canada runs the risk of becoming the most highly educated third world country in the world. Our energy bills are strangling us. Our work force lacks technical skills. Our economy is largely controlled by foreign interests.

This budget is making the right moves to alter those trends and to put us back on the track. By concentrating on our energy problems, the budget will help solve other problems. If we develop our national energy potential, we will no longer be in debt to, or at the mercy of, OPEC. We will create thousands of jobs and train workers in valuable skills at the same time. In addition, we will develop new energy technology and expertise that can be exported. Thanks to Petro-Canada, more of the money that goes for energy will be kept right here in Canada.

Despite what we hear from opposition benches, this is a good budget. It is fair to people, to industry and to the provinces. Obviously there are some who disagree with that assertion. I am afraid they are inclined to use political rhetoric to encourage divisive forces in various regions of the country.

● (1750)

The hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) and his colleagues in this debate so far have been spending a lot of time taking us all on a verbal stroll through the graveyard of Tory budget proposals laid to rest by Canadians last February. The hon. member and his colleagues are arguing over tombstones. In his doomed December budget the ex-finance minis-