

The Budget—Mr. Drew

Mr. Speaker: It is not possible to detect whether the hon. gentleman is now really stating a question of privilege. The preamble perhaps leading to it is lengthy and, as long as there are interruptions, I cannot hear whether the minister is really stating a question of privilege. I should like to tell him now that if the minister wishes to state a question of privilege it is his right to do so.

An hon. Member: Let him state it.

Mr. Speaker: However, if his question of privilege is one which is not really a question of privilege, he is breaking the rule to the effect that a member while he has the floor must not be interrupted.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, I said when I rose that I was rising on a question of privilege.

An hon. Member: What is it?

Mr. Martin: My question of privilege is this. My hon. friend states that I knew perfectly well that the statement I had made was not true. Surely as a matter of privilege I have the right to say to this house that the statement I have made is true. Now, in substantiation of what I have said—

An hon. Member: Do not make a speech now.

Mr. Speaker: By stating that which is within his knowledge is true the minister is quite right in stating that view on a point of privilege. I am sure that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition will not wish to say that what the minister has said is something that he knows not to be true.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I said that it was not so, and I repeat that it is not so. I also cannot help thinking of what a wonderful thing it would be if, under any conceivable circumstances, the minister were called upon to prepare a paper for consideration by a committee of this house. If he made a statement of gross mathematical inaccuracy and somebody corrected him, he would immediately rise on a question of privilege and say, "I have been told I am not telling the truth." No, Mr. Speaker; I am not going to ask the minister, because I know that that would start the flood, but I am going to point out to the minister that there is involved here a great question of health measures that were under consideration at this recent meeting and there are many details that are not touched upon. His mathematics are very far out when he gives the figure that he has now given.

But I do want to deal with one aspect. The Prime Minister touched lightly upon the fact that there might be suggestions that

[Mr. Martin.]

savings could be made, but said that the government is doing everything it could along that line. Whatever good things may be done by the Department of National Health and Welfare, may I say that one place where considerable savings could be effected would be in the publicity branch of that department.

There are a great many of the people in Canada today who actually think that the hospitalization program in this country is a result of the beneficence of the very pleasant and smiling Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin). Mr. Speaker, I only wish it were possible for *Hansard* to be in the form of a record instead of in cold type, because *Hansard* will not record the fact that practically every Liberal member opposite loudly applauded that statement. The reason is clear. They think it is true. It merely shows the extent to which they have swallowed the Liberal mythology. They have actually been fooled by their own nonsense. They are applauding, I know—and I say this in more than formal compliance with the rules of the house—believing that they actually have done these things.

But let us see just what happens in the case of hospitalization. Let us suppose that it takes \$15,000 for a bed. The dominion government pays \$1,000 for that bed, or one-fifteenth. But from the high-pressure publicity turned out, you would think it was the Minister of National Health and Welfare who was responsible for every bed that a patient can get into in Canada. I even see the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) applauding that statement, a fact which shows that the architect of some of this propaganda believes his own statement.

Mr. Garson: The Conservatives are all applauding too.

Mr. Rowe: Just laughing at you.

Mr. Drew: I welcome the applause, Mr. Speaker. After all, there is something extremely gratifying about seeing success of any kind; and never was there a greater success than propaganda of the kind that has fooled those who composed the statement themselves.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Self-hypnotism.

Mr. Drew: Yes; it is a form of self-hypnotism carried to an extremely high degree. In all these statements that are issued to the public by the highly-paid propaganda agents of the Department of National Health and Welfare, where do we see set out the portion that is borne by the provinces, by the municipalities and, above all, by the voluntary efforts of the individuals right in the communities themselves? Oh, no. Santa Claus