

Trudeau patronizes, polarizes locals

Only two important things resulted from Prime Minister Trudeau's October 29 visit to the Metro area — a grant to the Glace Bay heavy water plant, and a strong statement about women's rights on abortion.

At a \$50/plate fund-raising dinner attended by 630 loyal Nova Scotia Liberals, he



received a standing ovation as he announced the Atomic Energy Commission of Canada would receive \$95 million to begin work on the idle heavy water plant this month. By spring, he added, there should be employment for 300-400 people in the area.

Trudeau also came out with his strongest statement to date on abortion.

"In this case, I think it should be essentially the women who would have the louder say because they are the ones who are carrying the fetus. They are the ones who are victimized by bad abortionists. They are the ones who have to take the very frightening moral decision of killing something that is there inside them."

Further liberalization of abortion is not possible in the near future, however, he told the high school students

assembled at Prince Andrew High in Dartmouth:

"This is a question which divides people deeply, according to their conscience. And it is more than likely that many will refuse to vote on party lines. Therefore I see no circumstance in which we could within the next little while, pass the kind of law you are suggesting (abortion on demand)".

Since the government promised to debate the issue in Parliament, "it will as soon as we can find the time for it," he said.

Oil rights was a topic Trudeau faced often during his short stay here. At the high school meeting, students questioned him over oil royalties, and suggested that a 50-50 deal was fine with them.

"I find it refreshing that people like yourselves can

realize that you are as much a part of Canada . . . that a 50-50 deal between the federal government and the provinces not only is not unfair, but it seems fair by any standard," he said.

This rather patronizing air continued when he spoke of dealing with the provinces. "We hope that the provincial premiers will be as reasonable as the people in this room," he commented.

His dinner speech was not different in this respect. He talked for five minutes about the past magnificent history of Nova Scotia and the industries we had. Things were now surging again, even in politics, he said.

"You have a young and energetic premier who should prove to be every bit as solid a Canadian and Nova Scotian as was Joseph Howe," Trudeau

said. (He seems to have forgotten that Joseph Howe was not only a great Nova Scotian, but an avid anti-Confederationist.)

That was not the only time Trudeau blew it. The final blow came in a five-minute news conference, he reluctantly agreed to give the local press. He has never given a press conference for local media in any of his Halifax visits since 1968.

After three questions about social benefits like unemployment and welfare, he interrupted another question on the heavy water announcement to say, "I'm tired of this. I'm going home," as he pushed people aside to get out of the room.

"He's arrogant to the Ottawa Press Gallery," commented one Ottawa reporter, "but he's never been this bad."



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