

they were not able to focus some of the resources of the budget on their departments, and on the areas of Canada which need them. I am particularly disappointed in the actions of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Harquail), but I will come back to that again in a few moments.

As far as the housing needs of this country are concerned, whether hon. members opposite agree or disagree, a large number of Canadians—over four million of them—would have benefited from the measures we intended to bring in to relieve property owners and taxpayers of this country who qualified for the mortgage interest and tax payment credits.

We also had every intention—and I was disappointed that we were not able to bring in a shelter allowance—to help those people who did not own homes but who were renting, and I am confident that this would have been done. This particular type of assistance, which would have brought relief to several million Canadians and which involved co-operation between our minister of finance and I, never occurred, and I was hoping very much, if hon. members opposite felt constrained about it because of the fact that this program of ours was a matter of controversy, that the housing minister would have had the clout and there would have been enough wisdom to have brought in a shelter allowance which would have done a great deal to help many Canadians. However, that was not done. Instead of that we get the MURBs.

The MURBs provisions are not entirely regressive. They are useful to people who want to invest money as a tax relief dodge. They are useful in an indirect way to stimulate some housing, but they are almost a pitiful gesture of any meaningful assistance with respect to housing problems.

Then we look at the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. There is not a more sincere or dedicated minister in the House than the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. De Bané). What does he get in this budget to help disadvantaged areas of Canada? He gets one positive measure. He gets the tax credit of 50 per cent for industries which meet certain criteria in parts of Canada which are particularly needy. That is better than nothing, there is no doubt about that, but again it is a far cry from taking into account the need to do something meaningful to make up for the kind of economic shift to which I referred earlier.

● (1620)

One of the reasons I am disappointed in the Deputy Prime Minister—and there are many reasons—is that when I hear him speak, I think that perhaps he has forgotten he comes from the maritimes. I think he speaks for the Quebec-Ontario axis of the Liberal party. He mentioned yesterday that he was down home travelling in the Atlantic region, as if that were a rare event. I hope it is not, because a member whom you and I know very well, Mr. Speaker, a former member of our party in Nova Scotia, Donald MacInnis—“fighting Donnie” they used to call him—who used to fight very hard for his people, used to say, “Just because you get where you’re going, you don’t

forget where you’re from.” I think the Deputy Prime Minister should pay a little more attention to that kind of philosophy.

I have in my hand—I referred to it earlier in the House—a speech made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). The former premier of Nova Scotia who is now Minister of Labour (Mr. Regan) was with him. They entertained the Halifax board of trade on January 25, 1980, and on that occasion the Prime Minister made some very definite promises. One promise in particular will soon be a year old come January. These promises have been referred to often, and obfuscated. I asked the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources about them a few months ago, and a few weeks ago and he said that nothing could be done because the NEB is holding things up. I am referring to the oft-promised natural gas pipeline in Nova Scotia. Here is what the Prime Minister said as it appears on page 10 of his speech, if any hon. members opposite want to refer to it. He was speaking about the virtues of switching to natural gas, an alternate energy source, and he said:

But in order to switch, people must have access to gas. Nowhere is access needed more than in eastern Canada. I am announcing today—

Remember, that was last January:

—as part of our program, that a Liberal government will take immediate action to ensure the full co-operation of all parties in the construction of a natural gas pipeline to Quebec City and the maritimes.

It was only a few days ago that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources gave the undertaking that, pursuant to this latest promise in the budget, he would, if necessary, bring in a bill to carry out that undertaking. So months and months have been wasted. The Prime Minister went on to say:

The pipeline will have reversible capacity so that maritimers will have the opportunity, both to use western natural gas now and to send offshore gas to central Canada later. Like the railroad in the 1880s, energy pipelines in the 1980s have the potential to be a steel link uniting the nation.

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) is trying to close some of the railways in Nova Scotia that were built as fulfilment of a direct promise to induce Nova Scotia to come into confederation. We will go into that on another day.

Are we forgetting, because of the lack of clout or lack of attention of the Deputy Prime Minister—perhaps he is more concerned with aspiring to be the prime minister for a few months than he is in taking care of his own people—are we forgetting that we are going to be deprived of the opportunity to develop a petrochemical industry in Atlantic Canada—I hope in Nova Scotia, in the Strait of Canso area—if we do not do something soon to get that pipeline which has been promised so many times? Are we going to see the natural gas from the high Arctic and, the Sable Island shelf, and from Newfoundland, transported by ship up to central Canada? Are we going to be keepers of pipelines only? Will we not have an opportunity to use that feedstock in an LNG terminal, that natural gas we have, to develop a petrochemical industry and target it for export offshore? I see the hon. member for South West Nova is concerned, as she should be, because I know she wants to see Nova Scotia—

Miss Campbell: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. All I was concerned about, as the hon. member should be, is that I do