

The Budget—Mr. Walter Baker

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): I will say though, that the hon. member for Prince Albert did not do that; he was, at least, straightforward in his maiden speech, and I compliment him on that. He was wrong, but straightforward. His friends in that group claim they are the purveyors of virtue, that they are the only repositories of virtue in this country. I want to point out to them, and to Canadians generally, that there are some worth-while social policies in this budget, policies they ought to support.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): We promised something else in this budget; there is a ways and means motion, through which we hope to deliver to Canadians a policy which will shelter lower and middle-income families, a refundable energy tax credit of \$80 per adult and \$30 per child a year, phased in over a period of two years.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): This party recognizes that any change in policy has an impact on some groups of Canadians, and the Minister of Finance, the compassionate man that he is, showed his concern about the little man in this country and has delivered on that promise as well.

Of course there are problems with respect to the impact, say, in Atlantic Canada, of higher energy prices. I don't think the people of Atlantic Canada are likely to forget that what caused this impact was not the Minister of Finance but 16 years of neglect by those on the other side. But in recognition of their need, we have provided for grants in the Atlantic region to compensate for the higher cost of electricity generation, grants which will hold down increases affecting families in that region. We want to deliver on that promise well.

We have provided tax incentives to increase job opportunities available to young people. The highest rate of unemployment among any class in Canada exists among young people. We cannot undo in six months the consequences of 16 years of neglect, but we have started.

We want to deliver to a parliamentary committee, which we have established, a paper which will be the basis for an examination of the whole question of charitable donations so that hopefully we can revitalize the voluntary sector. There are measures in this budget to stimulate investment, to stimulate growth, and to stimulate confidence. And for once, and thank God it's happened, there is a government in Ottawa ready to tackle the problems of the country.

I noted as well, in the course of the speeches by members of the Liberal party, the crocodile tears and the misconceptions which have been a burden on the *Hansard* record of this House. They are trying to tell Canadians now that they are the party of low energy prices, that the last thing in the world they would ever consider is that we should move toward world prices. We have all heard them.

[Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton).]

● (2050)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Scott, Victoria-Haliburton): Order, please. I want to appeal to members on all sides of the House to refrain please from making so much noise so that we can hear the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Baker).

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): I appreciate your intervention, Mr. Speaker, but I can understand that members on all sides of the House would shout and complain when they contemplate the record of 16 years of incompetence from the party on the other side. I was talking about the party that would aspire to leadership, the party that would aspire to plunge the country into a winter election. I want to remind them of what they said. They are trying to say to Canada today, and to Canadians, that they are the party of low energy prices, they are the party that does not want to move to world prices. If they think they can fool the Canadian people that that is the position they take, then they have less faith in the Canadian people than we have.

Mr. Breau: You fooled them.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): One of the princes of the Liberal party, Donald Macdonald—we are not sure whether or not Donald is going to run—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): There is at least one Crown Prince left, and this is what he said in his budget speech on May 25, 1976:

—the government—

That is the Liberal government—

—has recognized the necessity of allowing prices of oil and gas to rise at a measured pace toward world levels.

That is what they said.

Mr. Breau: What was the world price then?

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): World prices in 1976, but when it is convenient, something different in 1979. Remember the speeches that they made in the course of this debate? Donald Macdonald went on to say:

The need to encourage production and conservation and to ease the fiscal burden on government points toward larger and faster increases of energy prices.

This is the crowd who want Canadians to believe they stand up for the little man and low prices of energy. Of course they do not, except that it is convenient for them to attempt to mislead the Canadian people in 1979.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): I want to talk again about consistency. There is another man practising law now, properly and appropriately, in the firm of McMillan Binch in Toronto. I do not blame him for practising law in that firm. He took a look at the rag-tag group over there and decided he could not lead them. There is nothing wrong with "Blue Eyes". This is what he said in his budget speech of June of 1975: