

Canada Oil and Gas Act

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. gentleman said that there was no social content in the budget of December 11. This is the budget which had the energy tax credit to help lower-income Canadians meet the inevitable higher costs of energy. The budget of October 28 does nothing for lower and middle-income Canadians. I do not have to give my own authority for the budget of December 11. In the Canadian Tax Journal—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Kitchener (Mr. Lang) rises on a point of order.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) says that I am bringing up the previous budget. This is what has been coming from the opposition since this Parliament was presented with the last budget.

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This is a point of debate, not a point of order.

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, we only have to look at the Canadian Tax Journal, volume II, issue 2, put out by the Osgoode Hall Law School and the Canadian Council of Social Development to see their analysis of the budgets of the last ten years in the 1970s. I will send the hon. member a copy, although I do not know if he can read these kinds of articles. He will see the conclusion there that the Crosbie budget of December 11, 1979, was the most progressive in the last ten years, and it was the most progressive because, for one reason, of the energy tax credit. The article says that it changed the flow of income for the first time in ten years from upper and middle-income Canadians to lower-income Canadians. That is what the budget did and that is what hon. gentlemen opposite voted against, and that is what the hon. gentlemen to our left voted against, the political nymphomaniacs who cannot wait to rush into bed with the Liberals every chance they get. That is what they voted against, the most progressive budget of the 1970s.

I will not spend any more time on the hon. member for Kitchener. He said the Liberal party stood firm. The Liberal party has never stood firm in its life. It is the party of vaseline, it is the slipperiest party that Canada has ever seen, it is a party of flexibility. They are so flexible that their principles have flexibility. They are the original India-rubber men and women. They will double track the railway, we heard last January from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), and all they have done is to doublecross the country!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to appeal tonight to people of reason. There may be a few on the opposite side, but I am not worried about the opposite side. I am speaking to the people of Canada who watch this House on television.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: We are opposing this bill, Mr. Speaker. Why? Because it is part of a process that threatens Canada as a viable, continuing democracy.

There are three things necessary for a viable, functioning democracy. The first is that we have an effective parliamentary system which keeps the government and the executive accountable. We no longer have that. We can see that in this House when we hear the jackasses braying whenever their masters on the government side tell them to bray. We have committees in this House that have no power, that have to haul the government by the sleeve to ask a question. This House no longer has any independent power. So long as there is a majority, the House will have no power, and so long as this majority is slavishly devoted to keeping their noses and their mouths in the trough of patronage, and keeping the government in power, there will never be any—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has been listening attentively and would again like to call attention to the fact that we are debating Bill C-48. I invite the hon. member to address his remarks to the bill.

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, if you will be patient with me, I am just about to elaborate that point. We have before us Bill C-48 and we see in it why the House has no power. Just look at page 1 of Bill C-48 where you will see that:

"allowable expenditures" means expenditures made in relation to an interest that are approved by the minister;

The minister has total power under this bill, not the House. Then let us look at page 8, clause 20, where you will see why this House has no power, why this Parliament is as ineffective as a tame tabby, a toothless, tame tabby, a pussycat without any claws. That is what this House is. Let us look at page 8, clause 20, which reads:

The governor in council may make regulations for determining the level of Canadian ownership for the purposes of this act—

It is not this House. There is no one in the oil and gas industry today who knows what the governor in council will decide tomorrow, or next week on what will be the criterion for Canadian ownership. This House has no say because the government has a blind, tame majority, interested in nothing but keeping themselves in power.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: Let us just go on to look at clause 22, which reads:

Where it appears to the minister that a matter relating to the Canadian ownership rate cannot reasonably be determined by applying the applicable regulations or rules in any case or class of cases, he may make the determination or authorize it to be made in accordance with such criteria as he considers appropriate.

Is this what will govern the oil and gas industry in Canada in the future, with all the power in the hands of the minister? Who is the "he" in the clause? It is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde). He is the one who will have the control in the future over the rules that decide whether or not you are Canadian-owned. Tomorrow he can say