

to what the government of Saskatchewan has done so successfully with respect to potash.

Somebody over there says "Here we go". The government of Saskatchewan now has public ownership of over 40 per cent of the potash in the province. They are doing very well in expanding that industry, in amassing and keeping for the people of Saskatchewan huge profits, in controlling the industry. The headquarters of the company are in Saskatchewan. The research and development takes place in the province of Saskatchewan.

An hon. Member: What does Canada get?

Mr. Nystrom: Canada, Mr. Speaker, is getting a guarantee, first of all, that the industry will be owned by Canadians, that the profits will be kept here in this country, that the decision-making and policy-making power rests with Canadians. In this case they happen to reside in the province of Saskatchewan but still we are all Canadians. It also gives us control of the potash industry, something, I think, which is very important.

If hon. members across the way are concerned about the loss of the potash market because it is publicly-owned in Saskatchewan, they do not need to be concerned. Sales have gone up. The price of potash has gone up, and expansion in Saskatchewan has been going very well. I think this demonstrates, Mr. Speaker, that the ownership of an industry by the people of this country through the governments of this country can be very efficient and decisive in the future development of any province, or of the country as a whole.

I suggest that PetroCan should become the major oil company in Canada in co-operation with the provinces which are producing gas and oil in a similar way to that being followed by the potash company in Saskatchewan. I know the premier in my province would be in agreement with that type of position. There are already some joint ventures being undertaken between Saskoil, which is publicly owned in Saskatchewan, and PetroCan at the federal level.

I do not know what hon. members across the way are afraid of. Why are they so intent on protecting Imperial Oil? They are afraid of government. They are afraid of their own Prime Minister. At least the Government of Canada is accountable in the House of Commons. At least the Government of Canada can be questioned by committees of this House. Governments can be defeated and new ones elected, if they are not carrying out the wishes of the people. But what can the people do about Imperial Oil or about Shell, Gulf Oil or British Petroleum?

An hon. Member: Tax them!

Mr. Nystrom: Somebody says "Tax them". But how can you effectively tax some of these large multinationals? If you start doing that, perhaps they will decide not to invest in the country to the extent we need. We need a lot of investment to take place in the future, and perhaps if you tax these corporations too heavily they just will not invest. It is a double-edged sword. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, we have not been taxing them. If I had a guarantee out of the government across the way that they

Petro-Canada

would tax the multinationals, then perhaps I would be more willing to listen to some of their ideas on PetroCan.

Mr. McDermid: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is misleading the House. I have facts here that show that Shell Oil, in 1978, paid other taxes of \$138 million and production royalties of \$205 million, for a total of \$342 million—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This is not a point of order. It is a difference of opinion. The hon. member will be recognized as the next speaker and will have the opportunity to correct whatever part of the debate he feels is not right.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member for Brampton-Georgetown (Mr. McDermid) made that intervention because I have before me all the tables and statistics of the taxation of oil companies in this country. I have here those figures for the Big Five. I do not think I have the time, now, to read them into the record. I do know, of course, that some of the companies are paying taxes, but the effective taxation rate is very low in the case of many of the large companies.

I refer to Shell Oil, for example, and I find that they have not paid many taxes to the federal government. If hon. members would like me to go over all the statistics I would be very happy to do so, Mr. Speaker.

The point I have been making is that I do not see why the government across the way should be afraid of making sure that a little piece of our gas and oil industry is publicly owned. That is the position with respect to PetroCan right now. The position of our party, of course, is that PetroCan should be expanded, should be involved in all aspects of the gas and oil industry, and should become the major oil company in this country. That is precisely how we feel, and I maintain that the majority of the Canadian people support us in that position. I would be willing to debate with any member of the Conservative party in any part of my province or in my constituency on that topic at any time. It is what the people of our country want and I do not see why the Conservative government is so adamant in turning the gas and oil industry back into private hands.

The government has already done so many flip-flops, as was said earlier today, on Jerusalem, on tax cuts, on grain issues and so on. I am appealing to it to do a major flip-flop on PetroCan and keep the company for the benefit of all Canadians.

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to rise and discuss the private members' Bill C-212 introduced by the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Stollery) whose intellect and wit are highly respected by dozens.

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. McDermid: Here, Mr. Speaker, is an example of the type of government he would like to see. Government by committee, government by hearings, government by spending