

An hon. Member: Wait and see.

Mr. Stanfield: The great majority of the members of the House condemn this transaction. Let us behave as a House of Commons; let us behave as a parliament; let us hold the government accountable when it does something wrong, for the great majority of members of this House believe this transaction should be condemned.

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to speak since our official spokesman, the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Caouette), has delivered an excellent speech to define our position on the ridiculous motion now under consideration. But having heard the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), an opportunity which was denied to me during the election campaign, because he was not seen in Quebec, I realized that I had to take part in the debate.

I remember that when I introduced a motion on Crown corporations—a motion which I put on several occasions during the private members' hour—several members opposite did not support me.

I also remember that one of them blamed me for wanting to throw light on the general administration of Crown corporations and told me that Parliament or myself did not have the authority to demand stricter control over the administration of Crown corporations.

By introducing this motion on Crown corporations, I wanted hon. members to receive not only an annual report, as for any other department or Crown corporation, but also to have a more direct control over the spending of taxpayers money, since Crown corporations are nothing more than creatures of this government which compete with private firms for rubber, rail transportation, air transport or other. The federal government is using billions of dollars through its creatures, the Crown corporations.

To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Progressive party has always supported this set of proposals, but it had fiercely opposed them at the private members hours when I introduced a motion to enable each member to really fulfill his role, that is to exercise control over and get a thorough knowledge on the management of Crown corporations.

Now the hon. Leader of the Opposition is today having one of his sympathisers bring forward a motion whereby the House belatedly blames the government for having, by a Cabinet decision, authorized the sale of Polymer Ltd. to the Canada Development Corporation.

At the time this sale took place, I, like all Canadians, observed that Progressive Conservatives and Neo-Democrats were shuttling the ball back and forth, blaming each other, blaming the government for mismanagement of Polymer Ltd. because of the transfer to a joint stock company of a Crown corporation.

That was during the election campaign. Our friends across the way were entertaining themselves and the population with such recriminations, instead of tackling the real problems experienced by our citizens and daily plaguing them.

Sale of Polymer

Today, instead of talking about its motion, one of these political parties is trying to lay a trap for the NDP in order to make them contradict their former electoral position and to annoy the government at the same time. They do not talk either about their motion or about their reasons for opposing the sale of Polymer Corporation to the Canada Development Corporation or give any motive for their position. This seems to us like an astonishing show of petty politics.

The members of our party have been requesting for a long time a specific policy on the management of Crown corporations. By moving today a motion to decry the order in council authorizing the sale of a Crown corporation to the CDC, the Progressive Conservatives neither approve nor disapprove that sale. They blame the government on a political basis only for the sale of that corporation.

Mr. Speaker, since I have been in this House, I have never heard hon. members opposite pay close attention to the administration of Crown corporations. These people do not wonder why we have no authority to ask questions or get specific information about those corporations.

And yet, when an hon. member of this House, not a progressive conservative member nor an NDP member but a Social Credit member rises and asks the government to give every hon. member the authority to control public spending within these corporations, then, Mr. Speaker, probably for political reasons these people are opposed to it.

Well this is a depressing sight for us, something which it is not pleasant to see in this House since we are supposed to deal tomorrow with the matter of the old age security pension. Members of the Social Credit Party have put four motions on the order paper. These were not progressive conservative members but social credit party members who have put forward these four motions to increase the basic pension, to lower the eligibility age to 60 and to give the old age security pension to the spouse of the pensioned person not yet eligible, as the case may be, in order to respect the family unity. And now, rather than dealing with this legislation and working on the order of the day to settle the important issue of the old age security pension, our progressive conservative friends play games with the Polymer Corporation, which is useless since this corporation has already been sold.

And even assuming that this motion will be passed tonight, what would happen? How would it serve the Canadian people? I ask the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner), leader of the Quebec wing of the progressive conservative party as well as to the hon. leader of the official opposition to tell the House what effect this motion will have for the Canadian people? Will it put more bread on the table of the poor in our ridings? Will it settle the unemployment problem? The hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graffey) finds it funny, probably because he does not know the unemployed in his own riding, but we have some in our constituencies and they do not live off the Polymer Corporation but with unemployment insurance.