

Supply

Referring to the Leader of the Opposition.

—over-simplifies and he is wrong. As he himself has noted (elsewhere in the country), Conservative governments have not shirked from using the state to preserve and strengthen the country's economy and culture.

Conservative governments have nationalized railways, created Sir John A. Macdonald's National Policy, the CPR, the Bank of Canada, the CBC and Ontario Hydro, bought Suncor and Pacific Western Airlines, extended the welfare state and been patron to artists—

Traditional Canadian conservatism has recognized that Canada is not a scaled-down America, that it is a small population living in a vast land beside a vast giant, and that it has required the glue of the state to maintain its existence—

Mr. Clark spoke of a fleeting political fad that is not even our own.

• (1740)

That is from the *Globe and Mail*, an observation on the recent contribution to debate about Crown corporations coming from the Conservative Leader. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that our habit—developed on both sides of this House in a proud Canadian tradition—of using Crown corporations is one endorsed and preferred by Canadians across the country. We only need to look at the coast-to-coast approval given to PetroCan's retail operation by Canadian consumers.

Mr. Anguish: That is not the issue.

Mr. Fisher: In my own city, in Streetsville, there was a little gas station owned by a Petrofina dealer and the man said to me, when I asked him how he liked being a PetroCan dealer, it was great to go from the bottom to the top in one leap. He has subsequently confirmed to me that his business has leapt up by over 20 per cent. I think it is important for us to know that these Crown corporations have constantly been supported by the Canadian public. It is equally important to note the pattern of the Tory Party to attack them continually and find ways to undermine their credibility.

I thought the Hon. Member for Laprairie (Mr. Deniger) gave us an excellent analysis of the behaviour of Tory Members in asking questions of the president of a Crown corporation which would have revealed vital secret commercial information. It was not information important to public policy; it was information that any corporation would normally prefer to keep confidential. The people in the Tory Party know that, yet they pursued that line, quite possibly to the detriment of the corporation.

I think it equally important to note that the Tory Member who just spoke who went on about his love for Crown corporations in principle, once again brought out all the code words and secret attacks guaranteed to undermine the public's faith. We saw that in 1980. We saw the Tory Party talking about its dislike for PetroCan and the need to wind it up. Through the period leading up to the 1979 election, we heard the increasing attacks on PetroCan from Tory Members. Then they got into government and in the 1980 election tried a flip-flop by saying they were going to support PetroCan in the future. But the public would not buy it any more, and instead of letting PetroCan be thrown out, the public threw out the Tory Party.

We have heard them in my area talking about de Havilland, and just the discussion of selling de Havilland brought back memories of Tory behaviour with the Arrow, the way the Tory Party under Diefenbaker destroyed the aerospace industry in this country some 20 years ago. Liberal Governments have worked hard since to rebuild and restore the industry to the pride it once had before Diefenbaker got his hands on it. I heard all that in 1980, and it was just the hint that the Tory Party wanted to sell off de Havilland which caused those kinds of concerns among electors in my riding.

Equally disturbing, I think, here in this House has been the reliance by the Tory Party on cheap personal attacks. We have heard it over and over again. The Tories know that if they cannot directly attack a popular institution, then they will attack the man running it, and try to demean the institution by demeaning the man. Well, let me ask what Tory over there is prepared to match his record of international contributions to the hungry and poor of the world with the record of Maurice Strong?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fisher: What Tory in this House is prepared to stand up and say that he has contributed as much to world progress on cleaning up the environment as has Maurice Strong? What Tory on that side of the House is prepared to say that he is as good a businessman as Maurice Strong? None of them are.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fisher: I know personally because I know Maurice Strong personally and rank him as a man whose contributions have improved my life. I believe that an unprincipled attack like the one we have been hearing has to be proven. Let them stand up here and offer what they think is the evidence on the personal attacks they have made. They do not have evidence; they have slurs and innuendos, and a great Canadian like Maurice Strong, who has national and international business credentials, finds his reputation being dragged into the gutter. I think the Members should offer some evidence, and they should offer it outside the House as well as inside the House.

Mr. Kempling: Where does he live? He does not live in Canada.

Mr. Fisher: When they have the courage to do that, maybe—maybe—we will begin to take their personal attacks a little seriously. But not until we see them stand up on their feet in and out of this Chamber and back up their charges with evidence. I challenge each one of them, Mr. Speaker, to stand up and offer evidence.

There is the Hon. Member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) coming back in. Let him prove, as he just implied, that Mr. Strong made \$1 million personally from the sale of Petrofina to Petro-Canada. Let him rise in this House and say that he has evidence of that.

Mr. Andre: I got a statement from the Minister that Strong's company collected that fee.