

The Budget—Mr. Blenkarn

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I believe the grants program should be abolished and we should return to a tax allowance system that would require people to put up their own money, risk their own money and have the advantages of their own returns if they find their product.

Mr. Schellenberger: Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member brought up a very interesting point with regard to the CBC. It concerns the amount of money it spends. It is very obvious to Members of Parliament that when we watch the newscasts of the public broadcasting corporation and the private companies that come to the House, there is very little difference in the quality. Yet the CBC comes here with semi-trailer trucks, vans and four or five cameras.

Mr. Chrétien: Explain about oil. You are from Alberta so explain it to him.

Mr. Schellenberger: Could the Hon. Member tell us if he has looked into the costs of the newscasts by this public corporation and whether he feels there is any savings there, given that there are many private corporations doing an excellent job in this area? I notice there is a lot of comment on the other side. I do not know if they are concerned about this.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I am not an expert on television. However, I did have a constituent in my riding, the late Lord Thomson of Fleet. Lord Thomson said that the right to own a licence to broadcast television was a licence to print money. This licence is costing we taxpayers, who own the licence, nearly \$900 million a year. I say that there is something wrong if it is true that it is a licence to print money, because the way the CBC operates, it is a licence to go into our pocketbooks year after year. I wonder if we get our value.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, the comments by the Conservative member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) intrigued me. I am sure I heard him say just a few moments ago that he is now advocating the Government do away with PIP grants and incentives to oil companies for drilling, no matter whether they drill a dry hole or find oil. My recollection is that about two years ago when the bell-ringing episode went on for two weeks it was largely so that the Hon. Member's Party could divide the legislation and vote in favour of those grants that he is now suggesting ought to be scrapped and those incentives he is now pretending to suggest ought to be scrapped. By splitting the Bill they could also vote against those sections that called for the creation of a Canadian energy company that in time, given decent management, would return some benefits to the people of Canada. At that time the Conservatives wanted to give money to the oil companies and disband Petro-Canada. That is why the Tories rang the bells for two weeks to split the Bill. What is their position now?

● (1220)

Some Hon. Members: Shame!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McDermid: We would do it again to preserve democracy.

Mr. Blenkarn: The Hon. Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Kristiansen) I am afraid has a very poor recollection—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order, please.

An Hon. Member: His time has run out.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order, please. The Chair is finding it extremely difficult to hear the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn). It must be extremely difficult for the *Hansard* reporter. I would ask the Members please to be quiet so that we might hear the Hon. Member.

Mr. Blenkarn: The Hon. Member for Kootenay West I am afraid did not quite understand what happened during the bell-ringing episode two years ago. He certainly did not understand the Bills that were before us. He does not, I am sure, recall which Bills were which. In any event, the essence of the bell-ringing matter was whether we should have omnibus legislation. This legislation, if the Hon. Member will recall, dealt with eight separate issues where you could not vote in favour or against the Bill as it was presented.

I am pleased to say, Sir, that as a result of that period the Government has changed, and I hope will continue to change, its attitude toward legislation it produces.

Mr. Kristiansen: It is getting more conservative all the time.

Mr. Blenkarn: Legislation has to be produced in a fashion that Members of Parliament are able to consider it issue by issue, then vote for an issue or vote against it.

Mr. Fisher: Next time we will give it to you in big print and pictures.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-18, an Act to provide for the settlement of claims by Indian bands in British Columbia relating to certain lands cut off from their reserves, without amendment.

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THE ROYAL ASSENT

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received which reads as follows: