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respectable is that no specific alternatives were suggested. He went on at great length to speak in very general ideological terms. I did not hear the Hon. Member for Vegreville take a stand on Petro-Canada and I challenge him to get up to say whether a Conservative Government will or will not get rid of Petro-Canada. When he has the opportunity to rise after my speech, I challenge him to get up and say whether or not the Conservatives intend to get rid of medicare. They are already eliminating it slowly and surely anyway through the aegis of their various provincial Governments. But what would the stand of a Progressive Conservative Government be on medicare? There is no honesty, just generalities. We hear no statements about what the Progressive Conservative Government would do with respect to some of the issues about which they speak at great length.

The Hon. Member for Vegreville criticized Petro-Canada in his speech. I also have many criticisms I wish to make about Petro-Canada. However, the Hon. Member lacked intellectual honesty in this area as well because, for all his criticisms of Petro-Canada, he did not allow, as he should have allowed, that all of those criticisms could have been made of the private sector corporations. He could have made those criticisms of private sector corporations that run up huge debts and that are involved in mergers that are not very productive and do not create jobs. They have to go the banks to borrow. Many of them cannot repay those loans. Then they go to the Government cap in hand to be bailed out. We did not hear anything about that. We did not hear anything about the sins of the private sector from the Tories. You would not hear that from the Tories. They are not interested in knowing what is going on; they are interested in painting a distorted picture of what is really going on in the Canadian economy.

● (1210)

The Hon. Member for Vegreville also did not distinguish between Liberal policy and NDP policy in this area. He likes to perpetrate the political lie that there is no difference between the Liberals and the NDP on these various matters. He knows very well that is not true. He knows very well that New Democrats over the years have been interested in making Crown corporations more accountable. The Hon. Member for Vegreville served for years on the Standing Committee on Transport along with the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin). He knows that no one has been more devoted to the idea of making the CNR more accountable to Parliament and more accountable to the needs of the Canadian people and Canadian communities than the Hon. Member for Regina West. Yet the same individual who has witnessed that all these years gets up and says that the Liberals and the NDP are one and the same when it comes to Crown corporations. That is just not true, Mr. Speaker. Anybody with a whit of intelligence or honesty would not have got up and alleged what the Hon. Member alleges with regard to the "great Liberal-NDP conspiracy".

On the matter of accountability, we in this Party believe that freedom suffers not just when there is a lack of accountability between Crown corporations and Parliament, but when there is a lack of accountability to the common good and to the

public interest wherever that lack of accountability occurs. We are concerned about the lack of accountability between Crown corporations and Parliament. We are also concerned about the lack of accountability between multinational corporations, the common good and the public interest. We do not single out one sector for accountability and leave another sector to do as it pleases. We want accountability for all. We want all economic activity in this country to be accountable to the common good. That is the fatal flaw in the Conservative position. It would single out government activity for accountability and allow another sector of the economy to go unhindered and unaccountable.

No one is more aware than we are, of the need for accountability, myself in particular, having served on the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure, where we discussed the whole matter of the parliamentary accountability of the subgovernment to which the Hon. Member refers. There is a real problem. But let us not concentrate on that problem at the expense of pretending all these other problems do not exist. We would not be doing a service to the Canadian people by doing so. We should want to counter the threat to freedom, Mr. Speaker, wherever we find it.

There is a problem with bureaucracy in this country. There is a problem with bureaucracy in the modern world. It does not matter really whether it is a Crown corporation or a private corporation. There are certain organizational structures which we find in the world today which are stifling, unaccountable and against which people are rightly rebelling. But let us not pretend that this is just a phenomenon peculiar to government. We find it in large corporations as well as in government. And there are problems peculiar to government, of course.

We in the NDP do not see ourselves as part of any Liberal-NDP coalition. No one is more unhappy than we are with the bad name that the Liberals have given to government. As democratic socialists who want to see more interventionist government, more active government, and who believe in a positive role for government, no one is more unhappy than we are with the bad name the Liberals have given to public ownership and to government in general over the last 14 years to 15 years. Quite contrary to what the Hon. Member for Vegreville says, we do not sit here with any kind of delight at what the Liberals do when it comes to Petro-Canada or any other instrument of public ownership in the economy. We were critical of the way in which Petro-Canada purchased Petrofina, and we have been critical of other things Petro-Canada has done.

However, I wanted to put on the record that we do not oppose Crown corporations or public ownership on principle as the Tories now seem to do, contrary to their tradition, but we are critical of the way the Liberals have gone about doing this. In fact, the NDP was the first to bring up the recent Canadair troubles, even before the Tories. My leader, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), was the first to question the Government in the House on the latest debacle in Canadair.