

other countries since the end of the Second World War and the Korean war. We are not complaining about it; we are glad to have these people and glad they are willing to work. We are trying to find work for them and we are doing better than most countries.

As far as inflation is concerned, the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) put us down in thirteenth or fourteenth place. This was refuted by the hon. member from Scarborough. We are really not in that position. We are in the first two, three or four or whatever it is in those categories, so we are not thirteenth or fourteenth among the industrial nations at all as far as inflation is concerned. Our performance has been better than that of most countries.

I have no idea what the hon. member for Gloucester (Mr. Breau) was talking about when he spoke of nationalization. We are not nationalizing anything. Does the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) have anything against Crown corporations? Is he telling us he would not like to see Air Canada continue, that he would not like to see the CBC continue, that he would not like to see the CNR continue, that he would not like to see the Post Office turned into a Crown corporation? Just how are we going to perform?

This idea that the government must not intervene is rather naive. There is no country in the world which has not intervened in business. This idea of private enterprise making everything sweet and rosy is probably the most old-fashioned idea since Eve tempted Adam with an apple.

**Mr. Andre:** Why don't you read your own Prime Minister's speech. That is what he said.

**Mr. Railton:** Take your choice. You have totalitarian countries whether on the left or on the right. You have countries with so-called democratic governments. But none of those countries with so-called democratic governments can get along without intervention by sensible, responsible administrations once in a while. This is how Petro-Can will have to be regarded.

● (2132)

Petro-Canada was set up for a definite purpose. The hon. member for Calgary Centre was with me and a number of others who went up north to study energy, mines and natural resources. The hon. member saw the beginning of the Syncrude project. He saw Great Canadian Oil Sands work in the tar sands. He went up to Yellowknife, Inuvik and the Arctic islands with the rest of us. We saw Prudhoe Bay. The hon. member talks about the wonderful oil fields in Mexico. We have just as much oil in the Arctic islands and gas in the Beaufort Sea, in Alberta and all through the Mackenzie basin as there is in Saudi Arabia or Mexico. But let us get at it and make ourselves self-reliant.

It is about time we realized why Petro-Canada was set up. Canada's oil and gas industry has been taken over by foreign oil companies. Let us not kid ourselves about that. There are very few Canadian oil companies except for the ones in which we are trying to intervene. Petro-Canada is providing guid-

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ance, inspiration and leadership to other oil companies in Canada. Let us not forget that after the quadrupling of oil prices by the Arab world in 1973 and 1974 oil rigs disappeared from Alberta and the north. That was because we did not have Canadian oil companies. We did not have an oil policy which included Petro-Canada. Foreign oil companies wanted to kid Canadians into believing that we had to depend on them. That is why Petro-Canada was set up.

That government intervention was very important, and it will help ensure self-sufficiency. We have done a great deal more than has been done in the United States. It took about two years for good old President Carter's energy package to work its way through congress. We made a start a year or two before President Carter did. Because of its size and the fact that it is our neighbour, the United States cannot see our arguments because of fancy and expensive lobbying in Washington. The United States has not really listened to us, but it will be glad to do so as time goes on.

The hon. member for Calgary Centre was criticizing our social security policies. I wonder what social security program he would like to abolish. Would he like to see old age security wiped out? Would he like to see family allowances wiped out? Would he like to see medicare and hospitalization wiped out? What social security program would the hon. member like to see disappear? He talks about irresponsibility. There is probably no government in Canada which has done as much for the average citizen and the poor person in Canada as this Liberal government has done in the last ten years.

I would like to deal with the question of the national debt. If I said that our national debt per capita is higher than that in the United States, that is actually not so. Per capita the national debt in Canada is less than that in the United States, and it has come down in the last ten years. It has also come down in the United States. The figure has gone down from 35 per cent to 27 per cent.

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Oh, come on.

**Mr. Railton:** Did the hon. member not hear that two or three weeks ago? These are accurate figures, and the figure here is 2 per cent lower than the figure in the United States.

Hon. members talk about our children being saddled with this terrible debt. Is this debt not actually an investment in Canada? Listening to the hon. member for Calgary Centre, one would think he had no faith in Canada's future.

Hon. members should realize that the national debt of Canada could be paid off with one quarter of our gross national product in one year. When we think of it that way, the national debt is not so big.

I have just received a note from the parliamentary secretary. I do not know if he is attempting to correct me, but he points out that proportionately our debt per capita is lower than it was ten years ago, and it is reducing faster than is the national debt in the United States.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**An hon. Member:** That is not true.