

"dismantle" in relation to Petro-Canada. We used the word "privatize", and we used it for good reason.

Let us examine the minister's assertion that Petro-Canada, on behalf of the Canadian people, has proved to be a marvellous vehicle. We on this side of the House are anxiously awaiting the annual report of Petro-Canada; it is due fairly soon. It will deal with the activities of that Crown corporation in the year 1981, the year just passed.

It is an oil company existing in Canada, owned by the government. The shares are not held by all Canadians but by one person, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. That one person appoints the chief operating officers, has influence on the board of directors and has put together a company. Over the years that company bought three successful companies differing in size but with one common characteristic. Every one of those companies made a profit, sometimes substantial. They paid taxes on that profit. They paid those taxes to the Government of Canada. Taxes were paid by their employees and taxes were paid on what they bought. All of that came into the government till.

Several years ago this chamber was asked to approve a bill. I was not a member of this chamber at the time. It was to take some taxpayers' money and put it in the hands of a president, chairman and board of directors in order that they could buy some successful company, which they did. I will make a prediction. It is too bad the minister of energy has left the chamber. When we get to see the 1981 annual report of the Crown corporation called Petro-Canada, I predict that the bottom line will be a red one. In spite of taxpayers putting over \$1,000 million into that company in one form or another, its management, board of directors and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources will have managed that company so successfully that it will be the only multinational, the only large company in the oil industry in Canada, which will have to report that it lost money.

• (1700)

The minister indicated that there were only three important amendments in this bill which is before us today. I believe there are more than three, but he identified three amendments which will cost taxpayers more money, and identified them as the most important amendments. The first amendment will cost \$5 billion dollars. This is a curious day to consider the question of Canadian taxpayers forking over another \$5,000 million, because in this chamber last evening at about ten o'clock the Liberal members made a choice on public policy. They are being asked to make another choice today. They indicated last evening that they were going to cut \$5 billion dollars from the provinces who could use that money for health care and post-secondary education. They said they were going to squeeze health care and post-secondary education, take that \$5 billion dollars which could have gone back to the people of this country and put it into the hands of a small board of directors who are appointed by Parliament so that they can spend that money—if they perform as they did last year—and go into the red again.

### *Petro-Canada Act*

I remind members of the House that the government recently borrowed billions and billions of dollars at rates of interest very close to 20 per cent, 19½ per cent. If that \$5 billion—\$5,000 million—is simply loaned out, you could earn interest with it. You could just keep it but if it is loaned at close to 20 per cent it means \$1 billion a year in interest. That is \$1,000 million a year. This money could be kept in the hands of the government, who are the trustees of the taxpayers' money, and spent for other purposes.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources began his remarks by indicating that our party rang the bells as a strike against Parliament.

**Mr. Lalonde:** "Strike with pay".

**Mr. Hawkes:** Although that is a perception that I hope the minister really does not believe, I suspect that he does. Our concern on this side of the House is becoming deeper and more acute every day about the rights of Canadians to be able to express themselves in a democratic process, in Parliament and other forums.

**Mr. Lalonde:** You muzzled Parliament.

**Mr. Hawkes:** When I look at the amendments regarding Petro-Canada proposed by the minister, one of the amendments proposes to give three members of cabinet—the Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board and the Minister of Energy Mines and Resources—the power to risk another billion dollars of Canadian taxpayers' money. If the government was concerned about democracy, Parliament and the electoral process, would that amendment be there? If it was concerned about democracy, would we have instead an amendment which would provide that if taxpayers of Canada are to risk their money through the borrowing authority of a Crown corporation, the opinion of Parliament on that borrowing should be sought? That is what democracy and representative government is about.

We live in a democracy—or we used to—with democratic processes. Voters elect people to come here and they give Parliament certain authority which does not exist in other parts of our society. They give us the right to take away our freedom through legislation in the Criminal Code. They give us the authority to take money out of their pockets and determine how it will be spent. During my two and a half years in this chamber, almost every piece of legislation I have seen has contained clauses which transfer that authority to take money out of people's pockets and put it into the hands of the government. There are always clauses which take that authority away from Parliament.

This subverts the fundamental principle of democracy that voters should control their Parliament. That is the reason why this place exists. The subversion which happens in piece after piece of legislation takes that authority away from elected Members of Parliament and gives it in perpetuity to appointed cabinet members, boards of directors and appointed civil servants. The authority to tax the people is taken away from their elected representatives and given to people appointed by