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similar debates in the Legislature of Alberta. At that time, the province was the poor cousin in Canada. It had a debt of \$69 million and its people were unemployed. Agriculture was going downhill. The price of wheat had gone as low as 19 cents a bushel. Nobody had a job and 52 cents out of every dollar collected in taxes went to pay the interest charges alone.

There had been oil in Alberta to a small degree for a number of years. As a matter of fact, gas was first discovered in Medicine Hat in about 1890 and there had been some discoveries of oil in the Turner Valley area. In 1947, Imperial Oil brought in the Leduc oil well, sending the message around the world that there was a vast ocean of oil under the ground in the Province of Alberta. Then the Government endeavoured to get people to develop it. The then Minister of Mines, the late Hon. Nathan Tanner, went to eastern Canada to beg it to invest in our oil. There was nothing doing, no one would come. He went to Britain and France but no one would take up the bid. All they would say was that it was too risky. He then went to the United States and invited the Americans to invest. He promised them a fair deal if they came to Alberta to find oil. As a result, in 1947 when Leduc came in and from then on, millions of dollars were spent drilling holes that were dry. Eventually, we found a large number of oil and gas wells.

In the debate which occurred while the Minister was inviting the Americans to invest their money, I heard almost the same arguments I heard tonight in the House about Amoco. What were these arguments? It was said that we would lose jobs in Canada. That made me wonder at the time because we hardly had any jobs in Alberta. It was said by the Liberals and the CCF, the Opposition, that the Americans would hire other Americans and not Canadians. They said that the President of Imperial Oil was not Canadian and Imperial Oil had no Canadian shareholders. It was said that we were selling out Alberta. How could we sell out Alberta? The Americans could not move that oil south of the 49th if they wanted to. It was under the ground in Alberta. We were not selling out anything.

The Opposition said as it is saying tonight, that we were destroying social services. As one of the NDP Members mentioned tonight, it was said then as well that we were destroying our culture and losing our sovereignty by letting the Americans come in. It was said that the company would send all our Canadian money down into the United States and we heard the same thing tonight. Some opposition Members even said that if the Americans come in, they will sit on the oil and develop oil in the United States without developing ours.

The Alberta Government listened but it did not heed the arguments. It asked the Americans to come into Alberta to operate under our laws and under our control, as suggested just now by the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle—Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton). We now have an oil industry in the Province of Alberta that never would have existed if we had listened to the Liberals and the CCF who were so bound to keep the American money out of Alberta.

It was said that we would lose jobs. I came from an area with 90 per cent unemployment. There were no jobs. Our homes were impoverished. We had to share the food on the

table. I saw my own mother go without food so the kids could have something to eat. Many mothers and fathers did the same thing. The Opposition said that we were losing jobs to the Americans. When the Americans came, they did not bring other Americans, they hired Canadians. Those Canadians got a pay cheque instead of welfare. Who cared if the president and shareholders of Imperial Oil were American? They were spending American money in Canada, creating jobs, developing an industry that was later a tremendous asset to the whole of Canada.

It was argued that our social services would be destroyed. After the oil money started coming in, we had better social services than any other province in Canada. We even had what was called a maternity grant. At the time, 75 per cent of mothers were having their babies in their own homes. The Government felt that this was not very good because doctors were saying that we were losing too many babies. Because of the oil industry, the Government was able to provide a grant so that mothers could have their babies in hospital. About 95 per cent of the mothers gave birth to their babies in hospital and that was a wonderful thing for every pregnant woman in Alberta at the time.

• (2340)

We were not destroying social services, we were building them up. Were we destroying our culture? Why, culture never had such a boost as it did after the Americans came in with their money. We lost no sovereignty. They did their work under our laws and under our control. They did not sit on the oil. They invested and reinvested and reinvested until they found tremendous volumes of oil in several other places, a great ocean of oil under the province. There is still lots of oil there.

The Americans came to Alberta and they were treated fairly. We said that they will operate under our laws but if they find oil we will divide up the area. They would get half of it and the rest will belong to the people of Alberta. The sale of that half of the oil that was found by American companies brought tremendous amounts of money to the coffers of the Alberta Government. Our provincial debt was paid off because we permitted the Americans to come in and develop our oil industry, bringing buoyancy to the economy, and providing jobs for our people. Yes, all these things happened because the Americans came in.

What would the alternative have been? As the Hon. Member mentioned a few moments ago, the oil companies lost millions of dollars before they found oil. We were told to borrow the money and invest it. If we had done that we would still be head over heels in debt. We were told we could increase taxes. Increase taxes? We were already being taxed to the hilt. When I listened to the then Leader of the Liberal Party and the then Leader of the Socialist Party, I had to decide whether I would vote with the Government or with the Opposition. I decided our condition was so bad I would vote with the