

The Budget—Mr. Tobin

Mr. Tobin: —and spouting off the line, the arguments, the concerns and the fears of foreign oil and gas companies. He did so like a trained parrot. I have always felt that the mouth of the hon. member for St. John's West was somewhat like an unguided missile. Neither he nor anyone else in this House ever knows what he is going to say next. I suggest he is still shell-shocked by the bomb he dropped on December 13.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: Because of the wit and unpredictability of the hon. member for St. John's West we have all enjoyed his humour on occasion in this House. He is a funny man, but this is no laughing matter. I want to tell hon. members that the hon. member for St. John's West said on October 29 in this House, and I quote from *Hansard*:

This is an interventionist budget on a massive scale. Now they are going to take power from the private sector. The oil and gas sector is no longer to be called private. If it is private, its privacy has been vastly interfered with.

I regret that the hon. member for St. John's West feels that the privacy of his powerful, foreign, bosom buddies may be interfered with, but we on this side of the House are more concerned about the privacy, the dignity and the way of life of the Canadian people than we are about maintaining the immoral profit levels of the foreign multinational oil and gas companies operating in this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: In case there is any doubt left in the mind of the hon. member for St. John's West, let me confirm what he already suspects. This is indeed an interventionist budget. It is a budget which intervenes on behalf of and for the benefit of the people of this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: It is a budget which tips the balance of power in favour of the people of this country. It is a budget and a national energy program which break the stranglehold which foreign multinationals have had on the throats of the people of this country. It is an energy policy made in Canada for Canadians by Canadians, and not dictated to us by some board room in the United States or Europe.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: In case hon. members opposite have not already figured it out, we on this side of the House are proud of that budget, and we are proud of that energy program.

Mr. McDermid: Talk about Norcen.

Mr. Tobin: The hon. member for St. John's West, his colleague on the back bench who is hollering to himself, the Conservative party or its buddies in the oil industry would not understand that kind of pride. No, in their fanatic dedication to free enterprise, at any cost, hon. members opposite would sell this country's future down the river in order to ensure that some foreign company's books in the United States or Europe

or somewhere else in the world, balance at the end of the year. It was that same kind of fanaticism which led members of the Conservative party to the brilliant conclusion when they were in government that the right thing to do was not to increase Canadian ownership and control of our natural resources but to wipe out totally the little control and ownership we had. Yes, the hon. member for St. John's West and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) were going to sell Petro-Canada and pass its assets over to their foreign bosom buddies.

Mr. McDermid: That is a lie.

Mr. Tobin: However, we on this side of the House and, I am sure, the people of Canada, thank our lucky stars that their visit to this side of the House was so short that no serious damage was done.

What do the people of Canada think about Petro-Canada? A recent Gallup poll indicated that Canadian support of Petro-Canada is not only still very strong but also that that support is growing dramatically. Today more than 82 per cent of Canadians want Petro-Canada involved in exploration for oil and gas. That is up seven percentage points from last year. A solid majority of our people would like to see Petro-Canada continue buying oil and gas internationally. That percentage is 61 per cent today versus 57 per cent a year ago. And 62 per cent of the people of this country want to see Petro-Canada sell oil and gas at the retail level.

What does the Conservative party say about the feelings of the people of Canada? Hon. members opposite respond by putting forward trained parrots, one after another, who come to the defence not of the Canadian people but of the poor, helpless, foreign multinationals. The head trained parrot, the hon. member for St. John's West, predicted in his speech on October 29 that the people of Canada would, and I quote, "erect statues throughout Canada to Clark and Crosbie". Well, if there ever is a monument erected to "foot and mouth disease", I can assure the hon. member that statues will be erected, but not until somebody gets that bright idea! I hope someone in this vast country—I know many are listening to me now—will take up that suggestion. I will be the first to donate to that monument.

● (1740)

We have delivered, in our budget and in our energy program, what we promised in the election. It may bring some comfort to the hon. member for St. John's West in particular to know that it was not only the budget he produced that caused their defeat. No, it was the callous and cynical approach that hon. members opposite took with regard to the Canadian people that caused their downfall.

People's memories are not short, Mr. Speaker. Some people in the House, I am sure, particularly on that side, would like to believe that is so but people's memories are not short. They remember that it was the party opposite which promised decreased taxes, low unemployment, a stimulative deficit and