

Effect of Budgetary Proposals

tax system. Let me read the statement of the Leader of the Opposition on October 14, 1971, as reported at page 8694 of *Hansard*:

So far as corporations are concerned, there would have been a much more beneficial effect on investment and incentives—and this would not have cost the government a cent—if the minister had announced that he was going to defer implementation of those parts of his tax reform bill relating to corporations.

These small changes that were made to close some of the loopholes through which corporations climb did not satisfy the Leader of the Opposition. He wanted the Minister of Finance to throw them out the window. This is the gentleman who cries about the small businessman not having the necessary money. I cannot help but remember that when we had before us in this House the regional development incentives bill that hon. gentleman moved a motion and in his speech said, on June 6, 1969, recorded at page 9848 of *Hansard*:

If someone happens to get his hands on a few thousand dollars or even on a million dollars he may not really need, I do not think we should worry too much. After all, the government can recover that money eventually through taxation.

He did not even take the trouble to note that incentive grants under DREE are not taxable.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: This is the thing with which we are presented, and when this motion contains reference to something being inequitable I must remind this House again of the statement made by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) on June 22, 1971, less than two years ago, when he was the financial critic for his party.

An hon. Member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: Don't look for happiness in that direction, my pleasant and corpulent friend.

I remind the House again of what the hon. member for Edmonton West said on June 22, 1971, as reported at page 7222 of *Hansard*:

—some people think that you can have equity between taxpayers. That is impossible in this country and anyone who suggests otherwise is not aware of our financial and economic requirements. It is absolute nonsense to talk about equity between taxpayers or within the income tax system.

This country can do without a government composed of gentlemen like that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1710)

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, we do not intend to vote for the motion because it is a meaningless ploy. I want to say to this House—

An hon. Member: Say it in English.

Mr. Lewis: I could put it in English if I thought it was worthwhile, and if I thought members of the Conservative party would understand it.

I want to spend the few minutes I have left, because I believe I am limited to 20 minutes if I remember the rule correctly, dealing with some of the positive aspects of

[Mr. Lewis.]

what is before us. On behalf of my colleagues and myself, I completely reject the kind of policy presented by the Leader of the Opposition. I think it succeeds—and this is really a remarkable accomplishment—in being even worse than that of the Liberal government and one really has to be an artist to accomplish that. The proposition is for more corporate tax concessions or greater corporate tax concessions and the implication in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition is that the resources which are now entirely in foreign hands will remain in foreign hands. He does not intend to do anything about this. Also there is the fact that our minerals are in foreign hands and 50 per cent of our manufacturing is in foreign hands, and he is not going to do anything about this.

When it was suggested that oil exports be controlled, his members from Alberta and the Premier of Alberta objected to any kind of limitation in respect of the export of oil or gas. The only thing the Leader of the Opposition would do would be to make some tax concessions to his wealthy friends who invest in little businesses. I understand he, himself, has had some excellent experience. I suggest that will not do the thing that needs to be done in our view. Let me in the very few minutes I have left indicate what that is. What this country has needed, and needs now more than it needed anything in its history, is an economic and social plan that will cover all areas of this country and that would give Canada some economic and social goals for the benefit of all the people of Canada and which would serve all the regions of this country. We need, starting from now if it were possible—and neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives will do that—to eliminate all the tax concessions which have been given to corporations in this country and which have resulted in a distortion of our economic development where all the resources of this land are being yanked out at breakneck speed and exported elsewhere across the world instead of being retained for future generations of Canadians.

I challenge the Conservatives to say that they are ready to remove the tax concessions and tax holidays which have been given to corporations through the tax statutes of this country. We need that which my friends to the right will have no part of, as they have often indicated. We cannot build small business in the disadvantaged areas of this country on the basis of private entrepreneurship or on the doctrinaire stuff which oozes out of the Conservative and Liberal spokesmen every time they talk about the economy.

An hon. Member: Doctrinaire!

Mr. Lewis: Doctrinaire. Free enterprisers are the only doctrinaires left in this country and it causes immense harm to the development of Canada, to its economy and to social objectives. We have said many times, and I repeat today, that the only way in which the small businessman can be helped, and the only way in which the disadvantaged areas of this country can be advanced economically, is by giving direct assistance through public investment to the small businessman who wants to open a business instead of sending him to private investors who will then receive a tax concession while somebody else behind them will receive another one. Then, you not only make a contribution but lose some more money out of the revenue of the treasury at the expense of the ordinary