

Financial Administration Act

nothing whatsoever to do with accountability. It is the reverse. What it does is increase Cabinet control over the state-owned corporations and ask Members of Parliament to trust Cabinet to make the right decisions. When we go to the polls, the people will show the trust they have in this Government. This Government has given us no reason to trust it. A government that would attempt to mislead Canadians with a Bill of this nature obviously cares not a whit about the electorate, the money extracted from it and the purposes for which it will be used.

There has been the National Energy Program, the unilateral imposition of metric, the Canadian ownership charge at the gas pumps, the Liberal slush fund for Liberal ridings, the Department of National Revenue and on and on *ad infinitum*. Are we really expected to trust that Government? I am afraid not. In almost 15 years the Liberals have not been able to come up with anything better than Bill C-24. I suggest that it be defeated, as that Government will be in the next election. The new Progressive Conservative Government will show Canadians that not only can the job be done, but done without porkbarrelling and done with accountability. We will show them exactly how it can be done. I urge all Members to put Bill C-24 out of its misery, or at least ensure that it is amended to the point that it will give Canadians something they really need.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): At this time in our proceedings a ten-minute period is provided for questions or comments.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, I listened to the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart). I wonder whether he has actually read the Bill. He talked about accountability to the Government and to Parliament. Has he had the chance to check that each Crown corporation will have to table a summary of its corporate plan before Parliament? The plans will be referred to the appropriate standing committee, as will the annual report as well as any instructions given to the Crown corporations, as will a summary of all the Crown corporations held by the federal Government. This represents a continuous flow of information which will automatically be tabled in the House and referred to the appropriate standing committee. Parliament will have a great deal more information. Ministers will have the responsibility for defending those Crown corporations both on the floor of the House of Commons in Question Period and before the standing committees.

The Hon. Member also mentioned the recent Gallup poll concerning PetroCan and the support for it in the country. I thought we had been through that in the 1979-80 election. Has the Hon. Member had a chance to read the Gallup poll this morning which indicates that the Liberals have 46 per cent support in the country, the PCs 40 per cent and the NDP 13 per cent? I wonder if the Hon. Member had had a chance to read that Gallup poll as well as the one to which he referred.

● (1125)

Mr. Stewart: Mr. Speaker, what the Bill purports to do is very obvious. It is nothing more than a smokescreen. When the Bill does come before Parliament, it goes back to Cabinet and the decisions are made by Cabinet. Cabinet has full authority after the Bill has been in the House. The fact that these Bills come to the House first has no real meaning whatsoever.

The Bill does not provide for control of the subsidiaries. This is not because the Bill has come before the House but because there is no one Minister who will be responsible for a Crown corporation which makes a mess like Canadair did. As the Hon. Member knows, there is no control over the appointments of the chief executive officers, chairmen and directors. Cabinet does that. In my view, that is politburo and state control.

As far as the Gallup poll is concerned, I think it is wonderful. Just maybe those fellows over there will screw up enough courage to go to the people. Then we will see what happens.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Are there any more questions or comments? We will resume debate.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue the debate on Bill C-24, the Crown corporations legislation. I would like to draw to the attention of the House the fact that the most conspicuous examples of government mismanagement in recent years have been in the operations of Crown corporations like Canadair, de Havilland and other companies which are 100 per cent owned by the Crown as well as companies like Consolidated Computer, AECL and Devco, to name just a few.

Having been burned by some of these disasters which have stemmed from lack of control, lack of accountability and lack of lines of responsibility between the Cabinet and Parliament and between the board of directors and management of the companies concerned, the taxpayers expect the Government to make a serious effort to address this problem. They expect the Government to set in place some structures, rules and systems to help avoid a repeat of these problems which have cost the taxpayers billions of dollars and which have obviously cost the Liberal Government grave political embarrassment.

Addressing those problems should have been the objective of this Bill. It should have been the objective of the Bill if Government members had understood the problem, if they were serious about addressing the problem if they were really concerned about the loss of those billions of taxpayers' dollars and if they understood the political significance of the fact that when the average voter thinks of government mismanagement, he or she thinks of Canadair, de Havilland, Maislin and AECL. The voter thinks of Crown corporations or government investments which have gone sour.

What is shocking about the legislation that has been put in front of us today is that it simply sidesteps the problem. It ignores the fundamental problem of the lack of control and the lack of accountability which led up to this tremendous loss of taxpayers' funds. That is one major reason why taxpayers and