

*Sale of Polymer*

condemned by statesmen—I use the term advisedly—from all corners of this House, but when their statesmanship in measured by votes they are found seriously wanting.

[Translation]

**Mr. J.-J. Blais (Nipissing):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin), I did not either intend to speak on this motion but I am obliged to rise because of his few remarks.

It seems that the hon. member for Lotbinière was right to say he did not hear any substantial arguments put forward by the Progressive Conservatives. In fact, when you look at the date of the order in council mentioned in the motion you find that the transaction took place on July 27, 1972.

Why did we not hear any substantial argument today? All this mess we have seen this afternoon is a most opportunistic contortion by an opposition member, namely the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) to whom I will not impute motives. I will simply quote a few facts recorded in *Hansard* and in committee proceedings.

Last Tuesday, when we were debating supplementary estimates, an omission was found by chance. The Progressive Conservatives have been trying for a long time to find a justification to oppose \$1 items and here we find a \$1 item which was intended to rectify a situation created following the sale of the Polymer Corporation. By chance this progressive conservative member found the support of the committee whose majority were NDP members. The Liberal party was therefore defeated. What a chance! For three months the progressive conservative party waited for an opportunity to defeat the government and they found their chance. They discovered a fault! What happened then? On the next day, during the question period, the hon. member for Yukon requested the Auditor General's financial statement from the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer)—

All right, the Auditor General's report, because he asked that the Auditor General table this report.

The minister answered that this matter had some legal aspects and that the report could not be tabled before obtaining some legal advice from the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang). However, during that same week, a witness appeared before that committee and it was again requested that the report be presented to the committee.

• (2110)

[English]

At this point, Mr. Speaker, again by coincidence and based upon past experience, they obtained the consent of the NDP members who they knew would support this motion to have the report tabled for the committee. By coincidence, that motion was talked out. This was on Thursday. On Friday, we were in the House and we heard an opposition motion presented by the members of the NDP. It was a very fine motion.

**An hon. Member:** What is new?

**Mr. Blais:** All of a sudden, who do we notice in the House but the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) who listened avidly to every word that was said by the hon.

[Mr. Fairweather.]

member for York South (Mr. Lewis). What happened? In the middle of his speech the hon. member for York South heard a question posed very sweetly and succinctly by the hon. member for Yukon.

**Mr. Nielsen:** May I ask the hon. member a question?

**Mr. Blais:** No, Sir. Suddenly we heard the long-awaited reply, sweetly given in all sincerity, by the hon. member for York South; and before six o'clock, by strange coincidence, we heard the motion which is now the subject of this debate put in the House. It is not a very long motion, mind you; it could not wait, so it had to be condensed and recondensed in order not to mislead anyone as to its intent.

Then I could see the hon. member for Yukon persuading other hon. members to support this brilliant strategy to bring down the government. He must have had trouble persuading members of the opposition because every other procedure he had proposed had failed, much to the chagrin of the opposition. But here we have it again. He has won this particular battle because the motion is again before us. I pity the hon. member for Yukon and the hon. member for York South when they saw their strategy fall apart. Why do I say that this is patently another ploy, a ploy which was classified this afternoon by the hon. member for York South as being a high school ploy? I know such ploys, because I am fresh out of high school.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Not too fresh, either.

**Mr. Blais:** I recall all these ploys as if it were yesterday.

**Mr. Hees:** I don't think you ever made it out of high school.

**Mr. Blais:** Who led on behalf of the opposition this afternoon? It was the instigator, the perpetrator of this great strategy, the hon. member for Yukon. And who came lobbying some time later, with all the fervour for which he is known, but the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield)? He did not start the debate; he did not lead on this motion. He tried to smooth it over by saying: It does not matter whether you are for or against this motion, you people to the left, because it will not be a vote of no confidence at any rate.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Go on with you!

**Mr. Nielsen:** Is that a new version of the twist?

**Mr. Blais:** All I am saying, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Baldwin:** Go back to your kindergarten.

**Mr. Blais:** I was not here when this very progressive bill was voted upon, the Canada Development Corporation bill, and I thought that this afternoon I would be enlightened as to why the bill should not have been voted upon and why the sale of Polymer was not a good thing for the country. I was expecting to hear the answers to those questions as a kindergarten student and as a high school student; but I learned nothing at all. All I heard was the manifestation of a Conservative ploy that was bound to be defeated and will be defeated, as it deserves to be.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!