

The Address—Rt. Hon. John Turner

hon. gentleman, the Minister sitting attentively in the House, will advise us on an appropriate occasion.

I am sorry that the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens) is not here. He is conducting a fire sale on Crown Corporations such as de Havilland, Canadair, Eldorado, TeleGlobe, and apparently Fishery Products International, according to yesterday's release. There is also some suggestion about getting out of Petro-Canada. All of this is being done without any study or analysis of what the impact of the sale of these firms would be. If there is anything that needs more study it is this. I hope we will know the Government's position very soon.

I asked questions about these sales. What are the terms? Who is eligible to buy these corporations? Will foreign companies be allowed to own our aircraft industry? Who assumes the debt? What will be the impact of these sales on Canadian technology and Canadian jobs?

I remember when the Right Hon. John George Diefenbaker sat in the House. He regretted for a long time the sale of A.V. Roe and the closing down of that plant.

Even the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), a former Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, said the following about the proposed sale of one Crown corporation: "There is as much chance of Fishery Products International being sold to the private sector as me going to the moon". I do not know if the Hon. Member is here but he ought to check with Marc Garneau.

[Translation]

These important economic changes are not even mentioned in the throne speech. They should be debated in the House, because they are too important to be left to the discretion of one minister. I hope the Minister of Finance will give full attention to these issues in his economic statement tomorrow.

[English]

The promise of lean government seems to apply to everyone but the Government itself. Restraint is for others. Its ministry of 40 is the largest in Canadian history. The first thing the Government did was almost double the budgets for Ministers' political staffs.

● (1550)

Mr. Chrétien: Political commissars.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Then they appointed political chiefs of staff. On Jack Webster's show I called them "political commissioners".

Mr. Chrétien: Under Erik.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): There are political commissars for each Minister at \$80,000 a year per head.

Some Hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I know that an aide to the Prime Minister describes these changes as, and I quote this invisible aide, "a slight upgrading of the salary structure but

not a major one". All I can say is welcome to 1984. That comment will get the George Orwell prize for double-speak for sure.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): What next do we have? The next time the Prime Minister and his colleagues go with their staff to Meech Lake, perhaps it will be a dacha for each one of the Ministers and for each one of the commissars.

This is the Party that spoke so fervently about the rights of Parliament. Not only are these commissars paid more than Members, but they have more access to Cabinet and more influence than Members and they will be the Prime Minister's eyes and ears in every Minister's office in every department.

Mr. Chrétien: Nielsen.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Yes, I am going to talk about the Deputy Prime Minister in a moment.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deans: He is not worth talking about.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I am afraid that this vast assembly of Tories elected by the people of Canada, those who sit forlornly in the back-benches and in the wings will be the forgotten men and women of the country, the forgotten men and women of Parliament, because their authority has now been taken over by the commissariat.

Some Hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Gauthier: They are the book ends.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): The Tories, Mr. Speaker, promised open and generous government. They are giving us secretive government, closed government, a very centralized government, even at this very early stage. Why? Ministers must get approval from the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). I congratulate him sincerely on his post. He and I have known each other for years, before he sat in Parliament. We have flown over his constituency in his plane. Nearly "bought it" once!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that Ministers must now get the approval of the Deputy Prime Minister before making public statements. The watchwords will be, "Have you checked it with Erik?"

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): As a matter of fact, Members are not allowed to have a drink with our colleagues