

Income Tax

be looked at in that light, but it has no relationship whatever to national unity. You can stretch the discussion very far in this House if you want. For example, on the question of a subsidy for the insulation program, that is in this bill because when the program was announced by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, in collaboration with the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, they said the program would involve \$250, untaxable.

This is not really my program, but I am ready to defend it. I am defending the position of the government, but it is stretching the rules of this House a bit when we get involved in a debate in which I am not really the minister responsible for a program. It so happens that when the program was debated in the House of Commons, it was known that it was in the package; but the time to debate it was at the time the program was presented to the House of Commons, and not at this time. We started with a program that had relationship to the cost of oil in the maritimes. The production of electricity in P.E.I. is 100 per cent dependent on imported oil, and in Nova Scotia it is dependent on oil to the extent of 83 per cent. This program was well received there. We have tried to find a way that would extend the program somehow across the land with the resources we have available.

I do not blame the hon. member for suggesting that we should make it equal across the land whatever the cost is. This is the policy of his party, the NDP, to spend as much as you can; the public sector should do everything. I do not agree with that policy, but I accept it. What puzzles me in a debate like this is the position adopted by the official opposition. They are always criticizing us in this House because of the level of government expenditures. They say we are terrible about spending and we could not care less about it. However, his colleagues here are asking us to extend this program without putting a tax on, which would cost the taxpayers \$500 million over a period of seven years. The same people are telling me not to spend so much money. The hon. member should talk to his friends, because it would cost \$500 million more to adopt what he is suggesting this afternoon. Members of that party are always suggesting that we spend more and more, and then they get up and complain because of the level of government expenditures. I hope that hon. member will talk to the hon. member for St. John's East.

Perhaps I should point out that the financial critic for the opposition party, the hon. member for York-Simcoe, has chosen to absent himself from the House today. Perhaps that is because he knew his colleagues were going to put pressure on me—

Mr. Paproski: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a question of privilege. Our financial critic will be here this evening. He was delayed because of flying conditions in this area. I do not think the minister should make that kind of statement at this time. He should withdraw that statement.

Mr. Chrétien: I am very pleased that the hon. member has raised that question of privilege, because yesterday I was in

Toronto talking with the executive of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Your friends.

Mr. Chrétien: I did not happen to be here. I am always caught in the middle. Because I was not here yesterday, I have to excuse myself. I would have preferred to be here in order to listen to the remarks of the hon. member for Joliette, the hon. member for St. John's East, the hon. member for St. John's West and the other Tory members from Newfoundland. The hon. member for Provencher indicated that this was a bad policy. Things would be worse if the Conservatives were in power.

● (1652)

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, I am interested in the erudite remarks of the hon. Minister of Finance. He understands the economic background of the requests made by various parties. My party believes in universal benefits for everyone. The minister has indicated that he is willing to negotiate those contracts up to \$1.4 million with any of the provinces. Perhaps that would mean one would not receive \$250—

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has referred to \$1.4 million. I should like to point out that the figure is \$1.4 billion. Apparently there are 1,000 million in a billion.

Mr. Peters: I thank the hon. minister for correcting the figure I referred to.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his allotted time has expired.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Chairman, I should like to return to the subject raised by the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich concerning the principle of the roll-over. All of us agree that this concept of rolling over from one type of property to another is now being recognized to a limited degree in this legislation. Some 15 years ago I recall the hon. member for Edmonton West spoke about this question at a tax foundation meeting. It has taken that long to get into the tax records of this country.

As the minister is aware, my party voted in favour of this legislation on second reading but we wanted to make proposals in order to improve it. I am concerned about the use of the words "Canadian privately-owned corporations". The original budget motion referred to the disposition of capital property after March 31, 1977, and contained provisions relating to involuntary dispositions being modified. It is the word "involuntary" which caught my attention. Surely this deserves some thought before any amendment to this legislation can be made.

The Minister of Finance and other government members have travelled to various countries of the world. They proposed to the newly-developing nations the setting up of joint enterprises with Canadian subjects on one hand and national subjects on the other. This was in an attempt to get certain enterprises started. The Minister of Finance made that pro-