

Public Works Act

Western Canada Concept, the separatist rhetoric in Alberta and other parts of western Canada. It strikes me as rather strange that the member for the riding of Ontario would be using western separatist arguments to try to discredit a piece of legislation which has holes in it. You do not do that by resorting to some kind of nincompoop argument that does not hold water, even with prominent Conservatives in Canada such as the Premiers of Alberta and Prince Edward Island.

My good friend from Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) muttered a second ago that this legislation goes beyond the wildest dream of Socialist International. Certainly it goes beyond the dream of Socialist International because democratic socialist parties are democratic. We want to have open government. We want government to be accountable to the people. We want to bring government closer to the people so that people can have a say about what happens in their lives. He said there is a socialist thread. I do not see a socialist thread. I see a Conservative thread. This legislation is basically set up for the contractors, the Campeaus of the world, the big boys, the big corporations.

My friend from Spadina (Mr. Heap) said to me privately a few minutes ago that, if anything, this bill is set up for the contractors, the big boys; it is very Conservative. If you look around the country and talk about centralized bureaucracy, I know of no province in this country with a bigger bureaucracy than Billy Davis in Ontario. He has a huge bureaucracy. Peter Lougheed has a huge bureaucracy.

Maybe that is why the Conservative Party defeated us in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan government had a lean, fit, fighting and trim bureaucracy and a balanced budget that started back in the days of Tommy Douglas. We had a party that came in and promised the moon, the stars, the sun, no gas tax, free phones for senior citizens, a four-lane trans-Canada highway, a mortgage of 13¼ per cent, etc. How do you get the money? You will probably have a huge deficit. Bill Davis has a huge deficit and a huge bureaucracy. Therefore, it strikes me rather strange that when we have a bill that shows some of these Conservative tendencies of huge bureaucracies, deficits and so on, we have these kinds of distortionist arguments made by the Conservative Party of Canada.

It strikes me as a strange that they would see this kind of bill as a terrible, radical measure when one of the most eminent and sincere members of that party, the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle), one of the more principled, forthright and honest members of that party, and he has been here for ten years, said, as reported in *The Globe and Mail*:

There is, Mr. Oberle says, no intellectual basis to his party's policy. Tories talk only to Tories and very, very seldom to outsiders. The average student in the average political science class could not tell you the difference between a Conservative and a Liberal.

The Conservatives' motto is "Don't offend anybody with policy or principle, and try to be all things to all people," but that's not working. For those who feel Joe Clark does not measure up to Pierre Trudeau, there is no alternative attraction in policies or principles.

He goes on—and this is very interesting; it was pointed out in the House today by my good friend from Mission-Port Moody (Mr. Rose):

—"when you've got people all the way from Genghis Khan to Karl Marx, you cannot expect them all to stand up behind the leader and support him."

I wonder if my friend from Yukon is a Genghis Khan or Karl Marx.

Mr. Rose: "Erik the Red".

Mr. Nystrom: It strikes me as very strange, and belittling of the parliamentary process, when we hear the kinds of arguments we have heard today in light of the fact that the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party are the same. One of their most prominent members, one of the people who will be in an important leadership role in the years to come, said they are the same in principle as the party across the way.

That was proved yesterday with our good friend, "jumping Jack Horner". He was one of the most famous Conservative MPs to sit in the House of Commons. He was a leading spokesman for that party. He was the transport critic of that party and the chairman of the transport committee of the House of Commons for that party. He made a run for the leadership of the Conservative Party. He might have been leader of that party, and perhaps even prime minister. The Liberal Party named Jack Horner chairman of the CNR.

• (1500)

Mr. Cosgrove: A great westerner.

Mr. Nystrom: It is very hard to understand the song and dance we heard from the hon. member for Ontario. I do not at all think it was a reflection on the people of Ontario when he said today that this bill is dangerous because the government can now sell the Parliament buildings to Russia, lease them back from Russia and we will all be working in a communist hall.

Mr. Kristiansen: Sounds like Bill Bennett.

Mr. Nystrom: It might sound like Bill Bennett. I am not sure, but I would not want to reflect on the Premier of British Columbia.

Mr. Rose: You wouldn't? I would.

Mr. Nystrom: I think we should take this bill seriously. For that reason I am looking forward to our members on the committee putting questions at the committee stage and speaking about this bill later on around the theme of making sure Parliament makes the government more accountable and makes sure ministers across the way will not have as much power as they have today to govern by orders in council.

I cannot recall how many orders in council we have, but I know that compared with other parliamentary democracies we have literally thousands and thousands more orders in council.

Mr. Kelly: Why?

Mr. Nystrom: I do not know why. Perhaps it is arrogance. Perhaps it is because we have a government which has been in power too long.