

The Liberal party presented a set of coherent policies for Canada and won the election. The principal reason for that electoral victory, as hon. members opposite will well remember, was the vicious tax increases contained in the then Minister of Finance's budget. You will recall his expression: "Short-term pain for long-term gain". That is exactly what we are getting in this bill, but it is going to be a little longer term pain by the appearances of it because we will have, in theory, another three years more of this government to endure.

• (1250)

I say to the hon. members opposite we can cut short that period with a quick vote on this bill. Get rid of this bill and perhaps we will get of this government and save Canadians this kind of tax increase.

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

**Mr. Milliken:** One would think that the gasoline taxes that were proposed in 1980 taught this government a lesson. It learned that Canadians did not want this kind of tax and they were prepared to vote the government out if they got the chance. I say to hon. members opposite that is exactly the position they are in today. We have more increases in the gasoline taxes in this bill.

The hon. member for Calgary Northeast has proposed that we delete the clause, including that particular increase, and I agree with him. We should vote this clause out. We should support the motions that he has moved, deleting a series of clauses from this bill.

If the government has to go to the people on this and if the people decide they want to pay more taxes on gasoline, so be it. Let us go to the people and have that decision made there. If the hon. members opposite are so confident that the people want all these tax increases, that they want this silent killer of jobs increased some more, that Canadians want to pay more for their gasoline tax and all the other taxes the government has proposed in this budget, let us go to the people and let them tell us about it in an election. If the government is so confident surely it believes it will win.

If it thinks it will win, why would it be afraid to go to an election? I know why it is afraid to go, Mr. Speaker. It knows it would lose. Those members would lose in droves.

### *Government Orders*

We would end up not having to pay these taxes. That is what is going on over there. The hon. member for Calgary Northeast seems to be the only one, at least in public, who has recognized that fact and stand up on his feet and say so. Why do the others not stand up and defend these taxes? I know why. It is a subterfuge.

My friend for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception knows the answer as well as I do. It is a subterfuge. They are trying to say that since some of their members and everybody is opposed to this tax, when the vote happens, maybe Canadians will not be watching and they will not see us vote. They will see that the hon. member for Calgary Northeast who they all know is a good Conservative member was on his feet opposing it, and they will assume that the Conservative party therefore is opposed to these taxes and they somehow got adopted by the House by some mysterious technique—osmosis or something—and the House suddenly adopted the tax by happenstance.

We know who has proposed this tax. It was the Minister of Finance and the Conservative government led by the Prime Minister. We know who is supporting this tax. It is the members who are sitting behind that government on their hands today with their mouths shut, saying absolutely nothing to oppose these vicious measures.

**Mr. Mifflin:** And they will be sorry for it.

**Mr. Milliken:** And they will regret it. We will bring that message home. The hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception and I will make sure that that message is brought home, if necessary, in the ridings where the people have been led to believe that these taxes are the work of someone else. These taxes are the work of this government, \$42 billion in increased revenue, the result of Conservative tax measures that have been introduced by this government in this House and passed with its majority.

If most Canadians realized how much more they were paying in taxes than what they were paying in 1984—and I suspect they have forgotten how low they were in comparison—then they would not have voted for this government in 1988. I think this government would face a severe problem at the polls if there was an election held tomorrow, or, indeed, at any future time.