

Borrowing Authority Act

fooled any more. People look around this country and recognize that the province of Saskatchewan has a better debt position and a better budgetary situation than has the province of Ontario. Saskatchewan does not have the big deficit Ontario has, nor the debt load per capita Ontario has. The official opposition tries to frighten people about public enterprise and about governments using the power which the people have given them to insert some control in the market place so that the average individual will at least have a voice in determining his own economic destiny. Most people recognize the value of such a procedure.

Yesterday the hon. member for York-Simcoe said that in the years 1972 to 1974 the New Democratic Party, along with the government of that time, and I quote:

—seeded the expansion in our monetary system and fiscal system that gave us the inflation we are now living with—

As a matter of fact, it was the New Democratic Party which moved an amendment to the budget which defeated the government and brought on the election of 1974. Our opposition was to the fact that the government was giving \$2.5 billion to corporations which, by the way, the Conservatives supported.

The right wing of the Tory party and the Tory party as a whole are going to have to come clean with the Canadian people. What are they talking about with respect to the inflationary fiscal policies of 1972 to 1974? Are they talking about the fact that we put pressure on the minority Liberal administration to index old age pensions and family allowances, and to improve the medical and hospital services of this country? Is it to that they are objecting? The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) asked the hon. member for York-Simcoe whether that was what he was objecting to and whether he would commit the Conservative party not to curtail those services if it took office. What was the answer? The answer was, "Give us a chance; just try us; put us in office and see what we do." That will hardly satisfy the people of Canada.

I tell my friends in the Conservative party that the people of Canada will not be satisfied with a party which says, "Put us in and we will then tell you what we will do." The Conservative party seems to be saying, "Put us in and then we will start to think about what we will do." The people of Canada will not be fooled by that technique.

The hon. member for York-Simcoe criticized members of the New Democratic Party for supporting and, in fact, urging the government to bring in legislation to set up Petro-Canada. The official opposition criticized us at the time. The hon. member for York-Simcoe was a member, as I was, of the committee which worked on that legislation. I think there were 19 sessions. At least 12 of them were the result of the objections and filibustering of the hon. member for York-Simcoe, who fought tenaciously against the legislation. That was his right, and I did not blame him for exercising it. He did not support the legislation, and he had a perfect right not to do so. However, that obsession has stayed with him, and he used yesterday's debate to criticize the acquisition of Pacific Petroleum by Petro-Canada.

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

It is time that we brought this issue out into the open. It is time for the Progressive Conservative party to tell us where it stands. For the past 20 or 25 years 99 per cent of the ownership and control of the production and refining of petroleum products in this country has been in the hands of foreign corporations. I have not heard any protests about that from the hon. member for York-Simcoe. Are we to assume that, in the eyes of the Progressive Conservative party, government intervention in the oil industry is bad and that 99 per cent ownership of the oil industry by foreign corporations is good? Is that where the official opposition stands?

Mr. Broadbent: That is their position.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): It is time the official opposition told the Canadian people where it stands. It is significant that when the Liberal government reluctantly and belatedly got around to setting up a Crown corporation—and I have been as critical as any of the slow pace at which it has moved—the opposition came solely from the Conservative party.

What is the situation now? In Canada today we have probably sufficient quantities of light crude oil to last us at best until 1990, and after that we will be dependent for oil upon the tar sands which cannot possibly meet our requirements because of the large capital investments necessary and because of the disposal of the tailings.

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The only other way we will be able to have anything like adequate petroleum supplies will be to develop the heavy oil deposits which straddle the borders of Alberta and Saskatchewan. It is estimated that there are billions of barrels of heavy oil there, but it is heavy oil which is very difficult to extract, which requires new technology, and which requires very large investments of anywhere from \$700 million to \$1 billion. The difficulty is that that territory is in the hands of private oil companies which have the leases. They have not been developing the oil, they have been sitting, waiting until the price gets to the place where it is economically viable to develop that heavy oil. Petro-Canada and the government have been pushing these companies to get on with the production, but nothing has been happening.

A few months ago Petro-Canada decided to try to purchase Husky Oil Company, which has very large holdings. All the members know what happened. Alberta Gas Trunk Company, closely associated with the government of Alberta, moved in, bid the price up and took the Husky Oil Company away from Petro-Can. I did not hear any of the Progressive Conservatives objecting to that. As a matter of fact it was the very opposite; they were chuckling with glee at the fact that Petro-Canada had been denied the opportunity to develop those heavy oil resources. Petro-Canada was not going to be able, on behalf of the Canadian people, to develop the Canadian people's own resources for the benefit of the people of Canada! The Conservatives were delighted that Husky Oil was going to go into the hands of a private company.