

Sale of Polymer

• (2050)

Mr. Speaker, it is extremely sad to find out that while thousands of unemployed in Canada are waiting for their cheques to live, while they are called swindlers by this government, while ministers are asked questions and give no answers, the Progressive Conservatives dissent. They accuse the government of selling Polymer Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, while conflicts exist—I hope this will interest the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe, if he is still a Quebecker—between the government of Quebec and the government of Canada about the guaranteed minimum income, there was a time, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP, the Progressive Conservatives, the Liberals, Peter, James and just about everybody found it funny when the Creditistes called for a guaranteed annual income. The laughed at the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette). They said that the hon. member for Témiscamingue was dreaming in colour. Well, today, these same peanut politicians, under the pretext of getting votes, sponsor measures for a guaranteed minimum income, but none of them has the nerve to come out squarely in favour, even though this is where the problem is for Canadians, and not for Polymer, which is in a good position, with regards to the Canadian Development Corporation, to solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I make this speech with a bit of bitterness, because I am tremendously disappointed to see professional peanut politicians waste the time of the House with pointless motions, while unemployed Canadians—in the constituency of Lotbinière and elsewhere—demand positive action, while provinces are confronted with a financing problem and expect the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) to propose solutions if he has any, while a piece of legislation on old age security only needs serious members of Parliament to care for it, so that the pensionable age is lowered, so that Parliament can act to give something to the Canadian people.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it is time for these things to be stated in this House and to take to task the hon. members opposite to whom I recognize the right to condemn the government. At least they should have the courage to blame the government for not introducing measures earlier on guaranteed income security, unemployment or any other question that really affects our fellow citizens instead of worrying about the sale of the Polymer Corporation Limited.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the hon. leader of the Quebec wing of the former Progressive Conservative Party will wake up, so that he can then wake up this party.

[English]

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, Webster's dictionary says—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: They would not know what that is.

Mr. Fairweather: It is all right; I have all evening.

An hon. Member: So have we.

[Mr. Fortin.]

Mr. Fairweather: Webster's dictionary says that hypocrisy is the false assumption of virtue or the simulation of goodness; pretending, in other words, to be better than we are. Is this because we always want to be better, or only that we want to fool people into thinking we are? Mr. Speaker, last Friday the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), as reported at page 2541 of *Hansard*, said the following:

The CDC has become an extension of Power Corporation of Canada, which I find to be a nest of Liberal birds—

An hon. member, undoubtedly sitting behind the member, said "Vultures", and the hon. member for York South went on to say "or probably vultures, Mr. Speaker". Well, Friday's vultures have become Monday's mocking-birds. The hon. member for York South went on to say:

There are people representing Power Corporation or who were earlier associated with it on the board of directors of CDC still acting in the only way they know; they never think in terms of the needs of the people or the needs of the country but think as directors of whichever corporations they headed in private enterprise. This is the kind of distortion which has been made of a good idea, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Friday's good idea becomes Monday's abdication.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fairweather: You have had a great deal of time, and I hear your laughter; but the truth is that you mocked on Friday and you become mockable on Monday.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fairweather: The truth also is, of course, that if this party put forward a resolution to nationalize the Canadian Pacific Railway, the New Democrats would have a catalogue of excuses for running away from that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: They wouldn't let you go that far.

Mr. Fairweather: We built the Canadian National and we might as well build the Canadian Pacific.

On Friday last, the leader of the NDP condemned this sale with what he then called "all the honour" that he had. He has now shifted that "honour" to "vigour."

An hon. Member: To common sense.

Mr. Fairweather: My dictionary defines "honour" as "respect; highly conferred dignity upon," and then, in commercial usage, it says "to accept and pay bills when due." Curiously, and somewhat prophetically, it goes on to describe "honourable" as being a person's intentions in courting a woman.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fairweather: The courtship is there; the courtship we are witnessing between this government and the New Democrats is public—but it could scarcely be called honourable.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!