

that those members are not acting responsibly as Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, in the few moments left before we shall be called to go to the other chamber I wish to begin my remarks concerning Bill C-236. The Liberal member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais), who just preceded me, said that there is a crisis in the country the like of which we have not seen for some time. I wish the hon. member would take counsel with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie), as those ministers in the last week to ten days have been assuring us that we are over-reacting to the energy crisis and, to use a phrase similar to that used, that we are deluding ourselves into some type of recession.

One reason why the Liberal government is using this argument in connection with the energy crisis is this: ministers want to hide the fact that they know that governmental policies are bringing this country to bad times. One barometer is the falling stock exchange, which in Canada fell to a new low for the current period.

An hon. Member: How about New York?

Mr. Stevens: New York went down as well. Nevertheless, in percentage terms, our rate of fall has been more rapid than that of the New York exchange.

The hon. member for Nipissing suggested that certain of our comments concerning the composition of the technical advisory committee which was set up by the government to advise the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) were "picky". I refer members of the House to what the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said before the committee. He said that the government's decision to go ahead and seek a mandatory allocation measure was founded on the advice received from the technical advisory committee. The very bill before us today is the mandatory allocation bill to which the minister referred. I suggest that referring to our questioning concerning the composition and activities of that committee as being "picky" is tantamount to misleading this House.

Having had the opportunity to examine the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, we are not at all satisfied that those ministers know what they are doing and that the government is in a position to bring in meaningful legislation, even if it is necessary. Let there be no doubt on one point: we feel that the bill in its present form is unacceptable. It must be modified before it can receive the approval of our party in this House.

It has been suggested that we should not at this stage deal with the bill clause by clause. One need not deal with it clause by clause to show how alarming it is. Read the title of the bill. If most hon. members are not alarmed by the title, I suggest they do not fully understand what the government is seeking in asking for such discretion as is outlined in the bill. On the front page of the bill we see that it is "An Act to provide a means to conserve the supplies of petroleum products within Canada during periods of national emergency caused by shortages or

Energy Supplies Emergency Act

market disturbances affecting the national security and welfare and the economic stability of Canada—".

I intend to elaborate on what would be the net result for the government if this bill were passed in its present form.

Judging from the reaction of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, as evidenced before the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee, I would say he is putting this nation into the hands of the private international oil corporations.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stevens: By asking for passage of this bill he would make us, virtually, a pawn in the hands of the international corporations. I say that because that minister has put on the record of this House a statement to the effect that we have to accept a world shortfall. When the minister was asked in committee who had said so, he, in effect, said that the international private corporations said so. That position constitutes a complete abdication of power on the part of the government.

I have referred to the minister's statement on previous occasions. I think I ought to read it again into the record, as, apparently, many ministers and other members of the House seem to forget what the minister actually said on November 26. As recorded at page 8138 of *Hansard* for that date, the minister said:

Canada will have to share, not only in the direct cutback from Arab sources but in the general world shortfall.

We asked the minister about that statement in the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee, to learn who says we have to accept a world shortfall. In this connection it has been suggested that two questions must be considered. First, there are certain private contracts in existence which may or may not be honoured, largely at the discretion of those private corporations. The second suggestion of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was that, in any event, if we are to be good international citizens, we must accept a world shortfall.

I suggest that that attitude fits in with the attitude behind the presentation of an allocation bill such as this which confers such far reaching powers. Once international oil corporations realize the extent of the powers available to the minister, they can set whatever terms they like and the government will have to live by them.

Actually, when the Secretary of State for External Affairs appeared before the committee, I was astounded to hear him say that not only did he not have any jurisdiction for interfering with these private corporations but that, in any event, it was a private matter and that he did not think he ought to interfere any way. I suggest the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, also adopted that tone when testifying before the committee. That is the background we must bear in mind when debating this bill.

It is anything but clear as to whether the government has facts before it which would justify the measure it is requesting this House to pass. Second, it is anything but clear as to whether the government itself is apprised of the correct facts, not only in Canada, but world wide, regarding this situation. Really, it has no oil policy or policy to deal with a shortage.