

Canada Oil and Gas Act

better—might be, “Yes, we have no bananas, we only have Pierre.”

The economic climate in this country, which has declined visibly and dangerously in response to the centralization policies of this government, has proven discouraging to foreign capital and has aroused the anger of other countries, particularly our best trading neighbour. The government's failure to deal with inflation in a rational and sensible manner has perhaps been the most visible cause of the lack of confidence.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) has one plan, one policy, one program; simply to ride out inflation on the backs of low-income Canadians. This kind of legislation has put that sort of policy, or lack thereof, into effect. It is measures such as this, and there are more to come, just as we have had already, that are the reason we have inflation and misery. It is the reason we have usurious interest rates. It is why young Canadians face a dismal future unless, of course, they are invited to share some of the palatial homes of the members of the Liberal cabinet and some of their aides who seem to have no trouble at all in getting mortgages at no interest and repayment terms that I have never seen in my 30 years of legal practice. That is why capital is leaving this country.

The irony, Mr. Speaker, is that much of it is Canadian capital. This legislation deserves utter and complete condemnation. It never should have seen the light of day. As a northerner on behalf of all northerners, I appeal to the government to have second thoughts about imposing this bill upon us. My concerns must be directed to the over-all national disaster that this kind of legislation, if passed, will visit on our future development generally and on one specific industry particularly.

I would like to thank hon. members for their indulgence, even though I did not get through all my notes. I hope to have the pleasure of participating again before the debate on the bill is completed.

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate my colleague from the Yukon and House leader for his contribution to this debate. It is much appreciated and very wise in terms of the advice and observations offered. I hope some hon. members on the other side were paying attention to what was being said.

● (2040)

As the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) and other members of this party have indicated in their speeches, we are unalterably, totally, unequivocally, absolutely and 100 per cent opposed to confiscation by the Crown of privately owned assets. We consider that to be immoral, improper, unjustifiable and the kind of thing that is worthy only of the basest of tyrannies and dictatorships and of the kinds of banana republics described by the hon. member for the Yukon. There is no precedent for this anywhere in the democratic world, albeit there is only a small handful of democratic nations on this earth. Fewer than 20 per cent of the nations belonging to the

United Nations are in fact democratic, but we are supposedly democratic, and there is no example in any democratic country of the kind of confiscation described in Bill C-48 and partially in Clause 28 which we are trying to address in Motion No. 23 currently before the House which seeks to amend Clause 28 of this bill. This bill provides for the immoral stealing of privately owned assets by the Crown. Twenty-five per cent of those lands held by industry or individuals in the so-called Canada lands are to be vested in the Crown, and the Crown may transfer them to Petro-Canada.

If this bill goes through unamended—and I fervently hope that will not be the case—and Petro-Canada is given all the lands called for by this legislation, the 25 per cent of existing Canada lands plus what Petro-Canada already has, the Crown corporation will have exploration lands under its control for exploration for the oil and gas thereunder, hopefully, amounting to some 135 million acres.

Let me put that in perspective. Exxon Corporation, the largest oil company in the world on a global basis around the entire earth, has a total of about 130 million acres. Our Crown corporation, Petro-Canada, will have under its control more acreage than Exxon Corporation, the largest oil company in the world, which is many, many times larger than Petro-Canada. Whether we hate it or like it, we have to admit that Exxon is a pretty successful oil company. If Petro-Canada were to have the same number of geologists, geophysicists and engineers per acre to explore this area properly as Exxon has—that is, if Petro-Canada is to do as effective a job of exploring this land as Exxon does of its global lands—then, in downtown Calgary, for the new headquarters Petro-Canada is building on a square block, a building of 853 storeys would have to be built to accommodate these people. That is what would be required in terms of staff and office space in order to accommodate the number of people necessary to undertake an adequate exploration of the land we are stealing from the private sector to give to Petro-Canada via Bill C-48. I do not hesitate to say that my ten-year-old daughter would say, “Gee, Dad, I don't think that makes a whole lot of sense.” There are enough backbenchers opposite whose collective experience and wisdom is at least equal to that of my ten-year-old daughter: I would like to think that, but I hesitate to do so.

The motion we have before us, Motion No. 23, would amend Clause 28. Clause 28 says that the federal government will only steal, or confiscate, 25 per cent of those lands upon which there was no oil or gas production prior to December 31, 1980. Originally the bill said 1976, but it was amended to read 1980. Motion No. 23 in the name of my colleague, the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson), merely amends Clause 28 to say that the state—Big Brother, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) and Petro-Canada, all those wonderful people who are confiscating those lands—will only take 25 per cent of lands upon which there has been no discovery of oil and gas prior to December 31, 1980.

The difference is very simple. The state insists on confiscating. As I indicated, there is no precedent in the democratic world for that kind of theft, but we are setting precedents with