

There would be an intensive, government-led campaign for energy conservation—

There would be "intensification of research on oil sands technology—

According to Mr. Fisher, the Prime Minister went out of his way to assure the Americans of continued oil and gas exports from the west, of readiness to have Alaska gas go through Canada to the U.S., that is, the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. He also guaranteed that the new national petroleum company is not intended in any way to replace the private sector. That has to be the laugh of the century when you look at what is happening in Bill C-48. In any event, we have now seen in this latest so-called energy strategy that it will not be 1980, which was the goal back in 1973, which will see us become energy self-sufficient. Now the goal is 1990 and, as the House knows, there are many ifs, buts and maybes included in this particular forecast. Mr. Fisher says regarding the situation now in effect:

Today steady, inevitable price rises in oil are seen as a constant. The pace of oil sands development has slowed to less than a walk. Neither an oil nor a gas pipeline has been pushed east of Montreal.

Incidentally this was written after the Prime Minister, in a speech in Halifax, accompanied by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Regan), on January 25 of this year, said, when he was talking about switching to alternate energy sources:

But in order to switch, people must have access to gas. Nowhere is access needed more than in eastern Canada. I am announcing today—

That was last January 24.

—as part of our program, that a Liberal government will take immediate action to ensure the full co-operation of all parties in the construction of a natural gas pipeline to Quebec City and the maritimes. The pipeline will have reversible capacity so that maritimers will have the opportunity, both to use western natural gas now and to send offshore gas to central Canada later.

Since that time the hon. member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby), myself, and other members repeatedly pressed the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) until finally he made the concession that perhaps they would have to bring in a bill if the NEB would not recognize what he finally conceded should be an instrument of national policy. Is it any wonder that people in the Atlantic region are cynical about the intentions of this government when it comes to energy, or indeed, when it comes to anything else?

I want to touch briefly on Bill C-48. In my opinion, it is one of the greatest disincentives to the development of our nation's energy that I have ever seen. Not only does it saddle any private enterprise corporation with PetroCan as a partner, but through the unparalleled, unprecedented ministerial discretion that this bill confers upon the minister, it allows the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to dictate to any business or enterprise which is associated, and they all are associated of necessity now, in these Canada lands, with PetroCan. By virtue of this, the minister can tell them where they are supposed to drill, when, what their production should be, where it should be delivered, to whom it should be sold, and what they are going to get in return.

Can you imagine any lumber operator, farmer or businessman putting up with that kind of stricture? If the government wanted to cripple perhaps the only source of development of

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the trillions of dollars which will make the country energy self-sufficient and, more important, help it to pay off its crushing debts, it could not have chosen a more pernicious and a more guaranteed route to interrupt that laudable objective than it has chosen.

If that were not bad enough, you should have a look, Mr. Speaker, not only at some of the unparalleled instances of ministerial discretion that I have listed, but you should consider the punitive and secretive provisions that will be used to enforce the regulations under this bill. One of the things that strikes me as being most ironic, as I hear again for the umpteenth time the government skating around freedom of information, is a provision in Bill C-48 which allows a party to any appeal to the Federal Court under some of the major requirements of the act to apply to have the proceedings held in camera. Based on its track record, based on the way it has used section 41(2) of the Federal Court Act, I have no doubt that the government will almost automatically use that provision to have in camera proceedings regarding appeals from some provisions of Bill C-48. Can you imagine anything that would be more repugnant to a democratic country than to have proceedings in the Federal Court over such an important issue held in camera?

If that is not bad enough, the provisions of the bill require that the onus of proof be on the party accused, the reverse burden, in effect the same kind of perverse trend that is coming in more and more to Canadian jurisprudence which involves quasi criminal or provincial or, indeed, criminal statutes. It is the kind of breach which was made more noticeable years ago when the breathalyser legislation was brought in. Until that time it was generally accepted that a person did not have to incriminate himself, but that has gone by the boards and ever since we have seen, for the sake of bureaucratic expedience, more and more statutes with the burden of proof being put on the accused, a very dangerous trend but one that is becoming quite noticeable in our country.

There is so much material, as the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Jarvis) said today, encompassed in this kind of motion that it is difficult to organize one's thoughts, but one thing is abundantly clear, that there is a kind of hypocrisy at large today on the government benches that seldom, if ever, has been equalled. Power to Liberals is as sex to puritans. They say they loathe it, but they really lust for it. They say that it makes them uneasy, but they itch for it. They also have a very definite feeling that power in the hands of any but their own kind contains a sort of hidden evil.

Unfortunately for the country, their grasp exceeds their reach in the sense that while they are very good at staying in power, they are showing once and for all, and this is one myth that they are debunking, that they lack capacity to take a country which has riches, which would make Saudi Arabia look like a pauper, and lead it to the kind of economic destiny that a great Liberal prime minister once predicted for it when Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that the twentieth century would belong to Canada. Unfortunately, the twentieth century has