

Canada Oil and Gas Act

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, I want to correct some of the statements made by our hon. friend, the previous speaker. Certainly one is supposed to refer to members as hon. friends, but because of some of the aggravating remarks which emanated from the vacuum which he calls a mind, I do not think one can really refer to him as a friend after all.

At this moment in time I do not stand for any policy which would accommodate the disposition by the state of Petro-Canada. Let us get that clear. When the last speaker said that this government has already appointed political hacks to its board of directors, that was true. It is from that point of view that I cannot, in clear conscience and in the service of my taxpayers, refer to any individual serving a multinational company, because I do not have the privilege of being familiar with a president, a director or a knowledgeable individual. Those whom I have met I have only met on occasion, by coincidence and not by design, and anything I have to say in no way reflects these individuals' philosophies or objectives, politically or economically. I happen to believe that if there is to be a free opportunity for people to develop and to have an opportunity in this land, we cannot put in that environment a Crown corporation to which advantages are given that are denied to its competitors. In that aspect, this bill is wrong, this socialist philosophy is wrong and this country cannot thrive under that kind of structure. My instructions shall not come from New York but from my heart and with the guidance of my constituents and the taxpayers who I represent.

An hon. Member: And Bay Street.

Mr. McCain: There are some, even those who have been known to be ministers of agriculture, who believe that we should be socialist in our structure. Whether it be agriculture or oil, I do not believe that it is efficient or that it provides our consumers or the Canadian people as a whole with the best opportunity to make a living. There must be some consideration by government for agriculture. There always has had to be and there always will be.

Mr. Whelan: All you ask for is that the government intervene. You ask for more government aid. Every time you get up and make a speech, that is what you ask for.

An hon. Member: He has got you, babe.

Mr. McCain: Let us tell the whole story. I have asked the Government of Canada and the present Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) to fulfil his historic responsibilities. Those historic responsibilities of the Government of Canada, Liberal or Conservative, have been, until his advent on the scene, a policy which assured farmers of any crop that there would be a price stabilization payment available which would be a stop loss payment for the cycle in which that crop was in danger and in economic jeopardy.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Taylor: Stay out of their business and let them get a proper price, and they won't want any of your government money.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCain: Simmer down. Since there has been agriculture and since there has been business, there have been cyclical tendencies. It has served agriculture and the consumer well to have those price stabilization payments and to have money put into the financial structures that assist the farmer. You do not turn your back on them when they are in trouble, as this government has chosen to do.

Where is the former minister who kept Farm Credit Corporation rates down to the level that farmers could afford? Where is the historic performance of that minister of agriculture who has put bridge and emergency financing in place in times of cyclical difficulties for agriculture? Where is that minister? That minister has gone. We used to think he was a gentleman by the name of the hon. Mr. Gardiner who made things tough for farmers, but they did not know what tough was until we got that city-oriented individual from Windsor as the Minister of Agriculture.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCain: His government's position is indefensible, incomprehensible and unforgivable. The government has abandoned agriculture absolutely in its time of need, and it will reflect on the consumer in the cost of living in a serious way.

Do you have any other interjections? If you have, I would be happy to entertain them.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, I have something I can table if I can have unanimous consent. It is a letter from a person in Alberta, and it says "Don't quit."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: Signed "Your loving cousin."

An hon. Member: The only Liberal there.

Mr. McCain: Mr. Speaker, it would not be difficult to get about 2,000 signatures on a petition from the maritime provinces asking "Please get out of the way and let some progressive individual replace you who would act in an historic fashion as the minister of agriculture."

The problem is that the criticisms heaped upon the Liberal Party are bothering its members a little. Anything the minister can do to deflect any further discussion on Bill C-48, this insidious NDP-oriented instrument, he will do. The minister is doing his job today, even if he does not do it in agriculture tomorrow.

Mr. Whelan: We are watching.

Mr. McCain: I have discussed agriculture in a rather extraneous fashion. Let us come back to the oil industry. I want to come back to a phrase which was introduced to this