

S. O. 29

that they can wield in the market-place and the enormous pressure which they can put on the Government.

The Hon. Member for Bow River has been around long enough to know that that happens. Corporations which own a great deal of any particular sector, whether it be oil, grain, or forests, have a power over governments commensurate with the amount of the sector over which they have economic control even though governments retain, at least in theory, and many times in practice, the control they have through laws and regulations.

I would ask the Hon. Member for Bow River to acknowledge at least that there is a legitimate concern for those who worry about the concentration of ownership in the hands of people whose fundamental or immediate agenda is not the well-being of Canada but the well-being of their profit margins or whatever the case may be. I have heard the Hon. Member for Bow River say such things about other economic institutions, particularly the banks. Oil companies are not exempt from some of the criticisms which the Hon. Member has made about the banks. I say that with respect to that which the Hon. Member has said.

The Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle—Moose Mountain gave us a bit of a history lesson on the pipeline debate of the 1950s when, he said, the Conservatives and NDP stood together as two nationalist political Parties. I agree, but I say with all sincerity that I think that main stream within the Conservative Party is an endangered species. That kind of nationalism and red Toryism which we associate with certain members of the Conservative Party and certain traditions within the Conservative Party is almost extinct. One sees very little evidence of it in the Conservative Party today. Although I respected the arguments offered, I was a bit shocked that it was the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle—Moose Mountain, who was a cabinet Minister in the Diefenbaker Government, who made some of the arguments which he made in favour of the Amoco takeover.

The Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle—Moose Mountain said that we cannot build a wall around Canada, that we cannot be satisfied to produce enough to feed ourselves. That was the example he used. I agree, but when we speak of producing enough to feed ourselves we are talking about agriculture and grain. We are talking about a renewable resource, something which, if managed properly, can last for a thousand years. When we speak of oil and gas we are not speaking of a renewable resource. That is quite a different commodity. That is something which, if not managed and controlled properly, may be used up more quickly than it should be or sold off more cheaply than it should be depending upon the economic contexts which arise.

If I have learned one thing in my few short years in Parliament it is that the context is forever changing and it is, therefore, difficult to make forecasts. However, I certainly reject the example given by the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle—Moose Mountain of producing more than we

need to feed ourselves and therefore being open to international market trends as being something that we should imitate in the oil and gas sector. I think an entirely different kind of attitude is required.

Every once in a while in the House of Commons one gets a sense of why New Democrats are New Democrats and why Conservatives are Conservatives. It is always a little harder to figure out the Liberals. This is one of those occasions when there is a stark difference of attitude, emotion, and political judgment between the New Democratic Party and the Conservative Party of Canada. It is personified in the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Masse) who has an incredibly passive attitude toward his role as Minister.

As far as the Minister is concerned this is basically a decision which must be made in the market-place and the Government will concern itself with the matter when it absolutely must. The Minister has previously indicated that the Government will not stand in the way of an American takeover of a Canadian corporation in trouble, which obviously fits this situation. That is a very passive, stand-back attitude; whatever happens happens.

The Minister had the same attitude when I asked him a question about the federal nuclear policy. The week before the Easter break I asked him what the federal Government's policy is with regard to the building of Lepreau II in New Brunswick. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said he did not know, that it was not his problem, it is up to New Brunswick.

On both occasions he pretends that the federal Government has nothing to do with it, that it is just an idle spectator and it is totally up to New Brunswick whether another nuclear reactor is built in Canada and totally up to the shareholders of Dome whether one of the largest Canadian-owned oil and gas corporations falls into the hands of an American multinational. The Government is in the political peanut gallery wondering what will happen, waiting to read the newspapers to learn what happens.

That is very, very different from the attitude which New Democrats take in both these situations in which we see a definite federal responsibility to ask the difficult questions and construct the appropriate policies to give federal leadership on these issues in order that decisions on very difficult questions about energy choices and the structure of our energy economy are made in Parliament rather than according to the whims of the market-place or whatever provincial election agendas may be in the making, as is the case with respect to Lepreau II in New Brunswick.

• (2400)

There are times when it becomes clear why members belong to certain Parties in the House of Commons. I recall another emergency debate on energy, concerning the Prebuild of the southern portion of the Alaska gas pipeline. I recall that evening in July, 1980, I believe, when the Hon. Member for