

*Oil and Gas*

Bell), I think it was, suggested we should turn off the lights in Ottawa government offices and set an example.

● (2040)

I should like to conclude by hoping that tonight's discussion will give the minister the incentive and the encouragement to stand up to his party. Let him tell them that he is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; that he has an obligation to the people of Canada, and will not let them down. Let him accept some of these suggestions and for once do something.

For ten years questions have been asked on this side of the House about when we are going to have an energy policy. The government has been asked what is their oil policy, what is their gas policy, what is their policy on research into non-renewables and what is the possibility of research into renewables. But departmental officials take the flat stand, and the minister backs them up, that they are only concerned with those things that are non-renewable. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has jurisdiction over all resources, not just non-renewables.

I know that not 50 years but seven years from now the source of alternative supply will be increasingly the renewable type of resource, at prices of around \$4.50 a barrel for oil and 37 cents per thousand cubic feet of gas, prices that are much lower than today's. These renewable resources are available all around us, in the garbage of our cities, the animal waste of our farms, the sawdust and the bark of our forest industry products. These will provide us with renewable resources and with energy at cheaper prices.

However, nothing is being done along this line because of this worship of the fact that traditionally the department has only been responsible for non-renewable resources and its officials would not be caught dead dealing with such a thing as biomass, the Anglo-Saxon for which is "cow manure". I have known cases where civil servants have been asked to do this sort of work, but they say, "This sounds like agriculture so let's turn it over to that department". Then the Department of Agriculture replies, "This sounds like energy; let's turn it over to them". I have even known a case where the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) has studied a certain proposal and said, "It sounds like agriculture to us" and around the circle we go again.

The minister and his colleagues were elected to make decisions and to give instructions occasionally. So for heaven's sake let them make decisions and take them, at least on such an important subject as this, out of the hands of civil servants who do not want to muddy their feet by raising such mundane subjects as garbage, animal waste and bark. These, Mr. Speaker, are some of our many renewable resources.

I think I have made my point. I hope that all members of my party feel the same way as I. When it comes to facing a challenge before our nation on any issue, I hope hon. members opposite will never find the Progressive Conservative Party lacking in positive proposals.

[Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain.)]

[*Translation*]

**Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I should like to congratulate the New Democratic Party representatives for having brought up this matter of extreme urgency, especially for the eastern provinces and in particular for the province of Quebec. I know that we shall probably not solve much tonight but at least, Mr. Speaker, we shall have had the satisfaction of hearing the minister, who certainly has something to say about the oil question, and this will probably reassure the population.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the situation in Quebec is far from being reassuring. The election fever in Quebec is now over. As soon as it is, the prices of all types of products are increased, and we must think of the crises that always follow elections.

We are still influenced by the fact that for months the governments kept quiet, probably not to affect their electoral campaign; they have said nothing to the people who are really apprehensive at the thought of the coming winter.

I think that now is the time—and for that I wish to congratulate my hon. colleague from the New Democratic Party—to tell the population what could happen this winter. Will the minister call for fuel rationing? No one knows. But I am sure that the minister knows it more than we do. We have only the newspapers to keep informed, and we read again tonight that Japan wants to secure its supplies. I quote:

It is a well-known fact that some big countries embassies have often a plethora of personnel, which have been accused, more than once, of being pseudo-diplomats, responsible in fact of intelligence work, not to speak of spying.

Unafraid of accusations of this type, Tokyo has announced recently that it will appoint "oil attachés" to its embassies in important countries which are at the same time oil producers and consumers "so as to be aware of what is going on . . . of what is afoot on the oil front and thus better secure supplies to Japan in times of crisis." Their first appointments should be made shortly.

In another column headed "President Nixon and Energy", one can read and I quote:

President Nixon will announce this week new measures to deal with the shortage of energy in the United States which should be much more serious next winter than United States authorities were willing to admit up to now.

In another column the Netherlands, France, Italy and Greece are mentioned. It is an oil rush. And what is happening to us in Canada, one of the countries that will be running after supply? I think it is time for self-examination. However, I would not want to reject all the blame on the federal government. Today, people in Quebec as well as in the Maritimes ask: What is Ottawa going to do, what can it do? I think that by the same token that will be a good lesson to separatists and show them that they often need the central government because successive administrations in Quebec were somewhat at fault. When there was talk of a pipeline, they feared being fed and accommodated by the west. Today we are caught and unfortunately it is a bit late to wake up.

Quebec is ready now but the oil is not there, conflicts worsen and we are faced with a *fait accompli*. That is why we are still happy to be able to go to the central government so it will try and reassure somewhat the people on