

Energy

The role of government is to define rules, and let people, either individually, or collectively through company structures, act within those rules and pursue their own goals. The rules should provide incentives and encouragement consistent with public policy goals. The minute you put the government in there as an active participant involved in the nitty-gritty of the details, you impose a bureaucratic burden, the cost of which will be at least the \$10 billion talked about by the Minister of State (Small Business). With a million unemployed, we could use that \$10 billion for productive activity within the Canadian economy, not simply shuffling paper around and around with nothing worth while gurgling out.

It is with some reluctance we concur with the passage of this bill. It is necessary to get Syncrude going. Were there any worth to it, I would plead for some intelligence over there, some definition of rules for the establishment of a Syncrude policy and a set of regulations that are firm and reasonable rather than this continued ad hocery. Were it worth while, I would similarly pray for a little more respect for democracy, a little more concern for the role of the peoples' representatives. A continuation of this trend does not bode well for the future democracy of this country, for the future of a parliamentary democracy. I would not feel comfortable sitting idly by watching this happen without raising a voice of concern at this time.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I wish to take a few minutes to make some comments on this bill. I do so because at second reading I made it quite plain that unless there was some improvement at the committee and report stage, I was going to vote against it.

There has been a very limited measure of improvement, as has been mentioned by the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre). It is rather nice to see that, small as the progress has been, particularly after the pitiful parody of parliamentary performance this afternoon on the part of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) during the course of the question period. It adds to my perception. I hate to say it, but watching from outside rather than inside in recent weeks, one sometimes gets the impression that this place is assuming some of the characteristics of a sick joke.

The right hon. gentleman is playing games. It was a juvenile performance, saying he was going to go and talk to the Governor General. I admit there was some fault on this side of the House. I do not deny that. However, the right hon. gentleman fought for the right to act as first minister of the Crown, and that is the way he should be acting. I was ashamed of the performance we witnessed this afternoon. It was absolutely shocking. I do not say the fault was all on one side, but the responsibility lies over there. In the exercise of that responsibility, there should be greater effort made on the part of this government, by the right hon. member and his colleagues.

I am going to vote for this bill because there has been some improvement and because, after the next election, there will be another minister and another government looking after it. If it were to be left to this government, I would have very little confidence. If the right hon. gentleman, the Solicitor General

[Mr. Andre.]

(Mr. Blais), and his colleagues should, contrary to the wishes of the people of Canada and through some misfortune, come back as the Government of Canada, they will need people like myself and my colleagues to keep them in order. I have not seen for a very long time a group of assorted dinosaurs so completely incapable of exercising their responsibilities and duties. If God so wills that we do not form the government—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I suggest the hon. member get back to the terms of Bill C-19, which is under discussion.

Mr. Baldwin: I was provoked by the raucous shouts of the members opposite. There has been one improvement in this bill, as pointed out by my friend from Calgary Centre, in clause 2(3), that every designation by the board under subsection (4) shall stand permanently referred to the committee of the House of Commons that normally considers oil and gas matters. That is a very minor degree of progress.

I say to my friends opposite that we are in a mess with regard to legislation. This and other bills are out of date. They are delayed. They are going to go to the country with a lot of legislation left on the order paper.

There should be a willingness to have clauses of this kind inserted in legislation, as well as additional clauses, such as those suggested by the hon. member of Calgary Centre, through affirmative and negative resolution to retain in parliament the right to ride herd on what government does when we have granted to government the vast power and tremendous responsibility envisaged in Bill C-19, with particular reference to Syncrude.

● (1622)

I agree with the minister and with my hon. friend from Calgary Centre that some aid of the kind proposed here is essential. But we all know it will be extended to other ventures—we may be looking at assistance involving between \$20 and \$30 million. Parliament is granting to the minister and to a small group of men and women this fantastic amount of authority, and I would always feel more happy if there were contained in the legislation the right to examine the way in which this authority has been used. This is why I was objecting earlier to the attitude taken by the government.

I realize that in the complicated world in which we live, legislation cannot always be self-contained—it may be skeletal in nature, with provision for the right to delegate authority. But it would be far easier to get such legislation through the House if parliament were given the power in the legislation to call back certain aspects for study by resolution. My hon. friend from Calgary Centre said this had been suggested but that the civil servants, the bureaucrats, the mandarins, said no. Who runs this country, Mr. Speaker? We all know it is not the minister but his advisers. But his advisers do not speak for the people. This House speaks for the people, and it must insist on its right, through an affirmative or a negative resolution, to limited debate on these issues.