

Energy Monitoring Act

I never got a satisfactory answer to that letter and I propose to press on until I do get a satisfactory answer. If I can translate that into English, Mr. Speaker, it means this, that in 1979 the department had a way of looking at industry profitability which was different from what the monitoring industry did in 1980. If it had used the 1979 way of looking at it, the industry profits would have been \$1.59 billion greater. Why is that important? It is important because if we are going to have a monitoring industry it might as well work and it might as well have an accurate picture of the industry. I set that out, Mr. Speaker, for more argument in committee.

This bill also deals with amendments to the Energy Supplies Emergency Act; and the hon. member who last spoke dealt with this matter. I note the report states that:

The technical amendments to the Energy Supplies Emergency Act have been made to ensure that there is clear authority for the steps necessary under that act in the event of an emergency that would warrant use of this legislation.

For example, the present act enables the Energy Supplies Allocation Board (ESAB) to make regulations to authorize banks to perform functions relating to the issuance of rationing coupons.

This must be one of the only requirements that this government has ever brought out about getting tough with the banks. If there is some energy emergency, it may force the banks to issue rationing coupons. I note that this report continues:

With the amendments, this responsibility now is extended to apply to trust companies as well.

As far as we are concerned, Mr. Speaker, these amendments are non-controversial and can be supported.

The third act, Mr. Speaker, which is amended by this bill is the Oil Substitution and Conservation Act, which was enacted in 1981. That act provides the government with the means to implement a number of oil substitution and conservation measures proposed under the National Energy Program.

We heard the minister, in answer to a question from the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) today, say that he felt that there had been some success in Canada in terms of substitution. Now, there had been success, but I wonder whether it is because the government has run the economy into a recession that we are having conservation, or is it really because the government has brought in wise measures that have forced Canadians to conserve? I am not sure. I think it may be the former rather than the latter.

In any case, as a result of the Canada-Alberta energy agreement in September, 1981, the Alberta government agreed to pay moneys to the federal government in order to assist programs for expanding markets for natural gas in the provinces east of Alberta. The amendments to the Oil Substitution and Conservation Act provide clarification of the necessary authority in respect of such programs.

We generally support the substitution away from oil, Mr. Speaker, but it seems to me that the government program is incomplete here in two ways. One is that there is incredible pressure on the government, and there will be soon again, to export natural gas. I sometimes feel I am the only one in the country who seems to be noting that there is this great pressure all over the country to export our natural gas. I draw the government's attention to this problem. If we pass a bill like this, it will encourage substitution of natural gas—which we

are supposed to have in abundance—for oil, which we sold out shamelessly in the late 1960s and in the 1970s when we were at one point exporting one-half of our daily production. Let us not do the same thing with gas. Let us not build a series of pipelines and connections to people's homes for natural gas and then turn around in 15 years and say there is a natural gas shortage. That would be a real tragedy. That is what we did with oil. People have said that it cannot happen again. It happened with oil and it could happen again with natural gas. It is important that this be pointed out.

This was one of the bases, Mr. Speaker, of our trust in the pre-build of the Alaska pipeline. We said "Do not pre-build a section of this line and export a lot of natural gas forever through it; hold out for the whole line to be built up to Alaska and be careful with natural gas exports." There are other ways in which this problem can be handled of shut-in natural gas and the demand for cash flow from small companies that have found natural gas. Let me suggest two. One is a natural gas vent, a suggestion of mine which I think was taken up in the National Energy Program. I have not seen much happen to it since it was announced, until now.

Mr. Lalonde: A suggestion about the National Energy Program. It was too late.

Mr. Waddell: The second suggestion was that they might consider a proration system of gas in Alberta so that the small gasoline companies can share in some of that market with the big boys. That might alleviate their cash flow problems and therefore perhaps fine down a little bit their demands for the export of our gas.

This bill will make reference to COSP, which is a substitution program that pays people to substitute. In committee, it might be useful if we examined this program. I know that we do not have time for very many questions in the House of Commons, and if we ask them we are liable to get insulting answers anyway. There need to be more questions put and answers obtained in committee as to why it is taking so long for the government to get applications from people for conversion to natural gas and so on. Why is it taking so long for these applications to be processed and why is it taking so long for the government to get cheques out to people? I think we can pursue this in committee.

The government released what they call a DSEP background in which they talked about the Canada oil substitution program and the conversion assistance program and the distribution system expansion program. In Ottawa one has to be an expert in all these terms—COR, PIP, DSEP, COSP and so on. One has to be careful about what they all mean!

I noticed on the DSEP background, page 2, something which I find rather interesting:

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In addition to contributing to the off-oil goal of the NEP, DSEP expenditures this year will generate new jobs and economic spin-off benefits as expansion projects proceed. Economists predict that direct employment, primarily in construction, will reach 2,000 person years. It is estimated that total employment, including indirect and induced will reach 7,500 person years. This includes