

Summer Recess

that gas exports of 3.7 trillion cubic feet to the United States were too high. That was what they said before the election. Last night they said they were too low. They broke their word on that question.

Before the election the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said, and I quote:

Everything has to be signed, sealed and delivered, particularly the financing plan or the financing guarantees, before we start exporting one cubic foot of gas out of this country to the United States.

That was what he said before the election. Last night he broke his word and told us that the only thing which needed to be signed, sealed and delivered was a non-committal letter from the President of the United States.

Before the election, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said, and I quote:

There must be an arrangement for swaps in this agreement with the United States.

Last night and again today he broke his word and said there would be no swaps.

Before the election he called for, and I quote:

—the initiation and completion of the Quebec and maritime gas pipeline.

Last night he admitted he had broken his word and is so far proposing a pipeline which goes only as far as the city of Quebec.

Those specific misrepresentations are important, and there no doubt are more misrepresentations. But what is even more fundamental is the attitude toward honesty of the Liberal party. I said often during the election campaign that in energy policy the difference between the Progressive Conservative and Liberal parties was not really a difference on price and not really a difference on exports but that it was a difference on honesty. We took an honest position, and the Liberal party took the opposite position.

Unfortunately, a casual attitude toward honesty has become the hallmark of this Trudeau government. There is, for example, an honest way to introduce a budget and there is another way, and this government chose the other way and not the honest way. There is an honest way to amend the Northern Pipeline Act and there is another way, and this government chose the other way and not the honest way. There is an honest way to change the levy in the Petroleum Administration Act and there is another way, and this government chose the other way to change that levy.

I will not give a long list of the commitments which were broken, but some come to mind. I was reminded the other day about the minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan). I wonder if there are government members here from the Niagara Peninsula. I see at least one. The Minister of Agriculture made a firm commitment to Ontario grape growers that he would change a tax to which they objected. It was a firm, unequivocal, and clear commitment. He then came back to office, and he broke his word.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) promised that his spending would not exceed the real increases in gross national product. That was his promise during the election campaign. He broke his word, as it has become the habit of the Liberal party to break its word to the people of Canada.

Mr. Chénier: Look who's talking.

Mr. Clark: That casual attitude toward honesty damages the very fabric of Canadian democracy, but in no field does the failure to face facts honestly more endanger the future of this country than in the field of energy policy, because we are a nation with immense potential and immense good fortune. We are also a nation which is blessed by individuals who have gone out to acquire skills and who have turned their skills to innovation, to creativity, and to opening and building a land. That is part of the legacy of this great nation, but our good fortune cannot be allowed to obscure two fundamental facts. The first is that no one else will look after Canada. We Canadians have to build on our good fortune, and we have to do it ourselves. Sometimes that means taking hard decisions, and always that means honesty. If we back down from hard decisions, our country will slide down the scale of nations.

The second reality is that energy, which can be the source of Canadian security and success, can also be the cause of Canadian decline. If we build on our own resources, we can be the strongest nation in the world. That is if we build on our own resources, but if we expose ourselves weakly to the world, we can be cut down by revolutions in Iran, by invasions in Afghanistan, and by national decisions of foreign governments taken for their own reasons and with no thought of Canada in mind.

Any of us in this House of Commons who are honest and knowledgeable about the facts know the frailty of the world energy picture. We know that demand is rapidly exceeding supply in the world. We know that the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is focusing more and more upon securing energy supplies at whatever cost to world stability. Hon. members of this House of Commons also know that we in Canada are unique among nations in our ability to protect our future against hostile foreign decisions and to protect our future by making realistic Canadian decisions here at home. That is the reality facing any Government of Canada, but the response of Canada's two recent governments has been dramatically different. My government faced those facts and for the first time in post-war history in Canada prepared a comprehensive national energy policy which would build upon the energy strengths of this energy nation. A federal-provincial agreement on that package was two days away when the Liberals and the New Democratic Party combined again to bring our government down.

An hon. Member: Poor Joe!

Mr. Clark: Since then there has been no comprehensive energy policy at all advanced by the Liberal government. Negotiations on a narrow but important part of energy policy, the part concerning price, are apparently under way. The