

*Energy Supplies Emergency Act*

Program, an imaginative private enterprise consortium under which, by equally imaginative provincial government policy, the average Albertan will also benefit tremendously.

● (2040)

But we should not forget that the real commercial pioneer of this type of concept was a company called the Great Canadian Oil Sands Limited, a corporation, admittedly owned by Sun Oil, an American company, that over the past few years has lost some \$90 million in pioneering oil sands extraction. That is a lot of money invested by people with imagination, ability and confidence in Canada. When we hear that the federal government intends to establish a national petroleum corporation with the Canadian taxpayers money to participate in exploration, I wonder how they will feel when, after a few years, the company might lose something like \$90 million on one project. Will they get scared and back down, leaving the Canadian taxpayer to foot the losses? Quite likely.

What we should be doing, Mr. Speaker, is giving private industry and individual Canadians the incentives and encouragement they need to explore and develop new sources of energy rather than see big government grow even bigger, with the tax burden on the average Canadian becoming ever greater. Any government which gets so big that it can give you everything you want, will also be so big that it can take everything you own. Recently I saw some facts showing that within one decade under the Liberal administration the federal budget has jumped from \$6 billion to \$18 billion a year. And it is growing by leaps and bounds. That extra \$12 billion came out of the average Canadian taxpayer's pocket, and I am not all sure the federal government is spending it to the best advantage of the people it took it from.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, might I make a plea for provincial-federal co-operation rather than confrontation, incentives and encouragement to individual Canadians rather than a "big daddy" or "big brother" government attitude, legislation which gives more rather than less freedom to the Canadian people, and a real drive toward re-establishment of a full and free parliamentary democratic government in this great country of ours. Obviously this legislation will, in one form or another, be approved. But I think it is essential, when it is considered in committee, that pressure be placed on the government to make it accede to accepting additional safeguards to the legislation, with parliamentary approval of any declaration of emergency, and some protection for provincial rights.

**Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, like many who have preceded me, I have grave reservations about Bill C-236. Most of my concerns with the bill are similar to those already advanced by several of my colleagues. Nonetheless, this bill is of such national importance that I feel it is necessary to once again articulate these concerns. After all, history has shown this to be the only possible way to reach this government. Unlike the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), not all of us have a hot line to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). While the nature and possible ramifications of the energy crisis in Canada are far-reaching and all encompassing, I am not convinced that the broad delegation of powers

[Mr. Hurlburt.]

provided for in the bill are at all justified. Like many other Canadians, I am curious to know how a government can possibly justify and defend a policy when it is not even sure of the exact dimension of the problem that policy purports to alleviate.

Furthermore, has the government given serious consideration to the concomitants of the bill? For example, what effect will this legislation have on domestic economic activity? How will it affect the free enterprise system? Also, one has to wonder if it was necessary for the government to propose new legislation in order to have these standby emergency powers, when these powers are already contained in the Export and Import Permits Act.

These are only a few of the questions I have with regard to this legislation. But they are questions which have not been properly answered by the Prime Minister or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald). Until these and other questions are cleared up, the people of this country will remain in the dark—they will be freezing in the dark soon anyway as long as we have this government—on the entire energy question.

As we all know, Bill C-236 would permit the creation of an allocation board with power to set prices for energy resources, to control imports and exports, to establish rationing and to take other actions should the cabinet decide that a national emergency exists because of an actual or anticipated petroleum shortage. These powers are broad and far-reaching. History has shown that powers like this once given are never easily taken back. But how can this government ask for such discretionary powers when its understanding of the energy crisis, as it affects this country, is so incredibly poor? We are bombarded daily with a plethora of conflicting statistics. What is apparent from these facts is that nobody in the cabinet seems to know the true extent of our energy crisis.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources have yet to provide information to prove that the country faces a petroleum crisis. Various statements over the past few months from government spokesmen have all been inconsistent and contradictory. An example of this is the Prime Minister's ever-changing position with regard to the Montreal pipeline. He was against it in 1969, in 1970, in 1971 and in 1972. He was even against it last spring, despite the fact that his own energy policy white paper clearly warned of the real possibility of interruptions and reduction in the supply of offshore oil. But now the Prime Minister supports and embraces what was originally a Conservative policy.

It seems to me that the government should be given powers like those in Bill C-236 only after it can be established that Canada will, in fact, face a major energy crisis. While it is undoubtedly true that Canada is experiencing regional supply shortfalls of Arab oil and imported products, it is also true that much of the country is not faced with an energy crisis similar to crises in the United States or parts of Europe. And while the Middle East dispute undoubtedly accelerated some domestic crisis characteristics, many of the aspects of Canada's crisis have their roots in long-standing domestic problems. The principal cause, therefore, of our crisis today is not Arab cut-offs or oil embargoes but the lack of federal leadership in anticipating and settling problems in an orderly and co-