

Oil Substitution Act

Mr. Young: He is brilliant and was brilliant when he was talking about this particular program. What he said is recorded for posterity at page 11099 of *Hansard* for June 30, 1981. The Hon. Member said, and I quote:

It is a good philosophy to get as many people in the low technology systems as possible to move away from the consumption of oil. It is particularly good, if the alternative is cheaper not only than the present price of oil but the future price as well.

That was obviously said by a man of great wisdom. Members will greatly benefit if they listen to the experienced Members on the government side. This particular Member was a Minister in the Diefenbaker Cabinet. He made a tremendous contribution to the policies developed by the Prime Minister of that day. We all know what happened to that Government, but it was not due to the advice of the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain. I have been at many, many gatherings and meetings around this place since 1980 and I know that the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain has said publicly on many occasions that if the Diefenbaker Government had listened to him, it would still be in office. He says it with such authority and conviction, I personally believe him.

If the Government were to listen to this particular gentleman, perhaps it would have a chance of coming back here as the Government after the next election. However, the way things are going, I doubt that very much. Some of them are very sensible people. I see my friend, the Hon. Member for Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis). He is a man of great wisdom. I can see in his eyes that he agrees with everything that I am saying. I am sure that at the caucus meeting on Wednesday morning he will advise the Cabinet that, after listening to me and my persuasive arguments, he is convinced that this program should in fact be extended for six months, as my good friend, the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) has proposed to the House. If the House has any sense, particularly the government side, it will agree to the proposal put forward by the Hon. Member. I see my time is up, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am sure unanimous consent would be available if the Hon. Member who just finished speaking would like to continue his remarks. However, I am very glad to have the opportunity to give my position on this Bill.

We have been very critical in Question Period in the House and elsewhere of the fact that this Government has not carried out the promises that it made during the course of the election campaign. What we are here to talk about today is something that it is doing which it never promised. I certainly do not remember hearing during the election campaign that the COSP and CHIP programs would be cancelled. I would have liked to have heard that from the Conservative candidate during the election campaign in my riding and elsewhere in the country. He would have been talking then about two of the most popular programs and most important programs of the Government which are being cancelled with a very short lead in time.

I do not know if Members opposite are in touch with their constituents enough to realize how serious the termination of these programs is. About two hours ago I received a telephone call from a constituent who wanted me to know that as soon as the deadline for conversion off oil was announced, he began to consider doing something about it in order to take advantage of this program. He got in touch with Consumers' Gas toward the end of January because he wanted Consumers' Gas to do the conversion. They would not even take down his name. They told him there was no point in his applying because they were not going to be able to bring him within the statute in time. He told me that there were a number of other people on his street in the same situation. If that was their situation, I am certain that there are thousands and thousands of people across the country who want to convert and are unable to do so because the deadlines that have been given just do not give them enough time.

I know that this Government is committed to trying to reduce the deficit. This is, at first blush, a program that would reduce the deficit because we were using tax money to try to help people insulate their homes and convert off oil. What a crazy program to try to meet the promise to reduce the deficit! This program is available to every single Canadian household. That is why I am so very distressed that this is the one they picked to try to meet their commitment to cut—

Mr. McDermid: That is not true.

Mr. Kaplan: Does the Hon. Member want to make a point? I would be willing to take a question from him right now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. The Hon. Member for York Centre has the floor for 10 minutes. There are no questions or answers, please.

Mr. McDermid: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Hon. Member for York Centre (Mr. Kaplan) offered the floor to me for a question in his time limit. I am prepared to ask him a question.

• (1640)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary should be aware of this. If we are going to stick to the rules which we now have, under Standing Order 35(2) each Member is allowed a ten-minute speech. If the Parliamentary Secretary wants to ask for the unanimous consent of the House to put a question, I will have to ask the House if it will permit him to ask that question.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary a rhetorical question. Will he please let me finish my speech? He can then have the floor and speak as long as he wants.

These two programs have been chosen by the Government as a means of reducing expenditures. That choice damages