

Petroleum Administration Act

On Monday my good friend from Edmonton East demonstrated again to this House his dedication to Canada on the western separatist issue. I thank him for that. Of all the members opposite, his views probably best represent the views of western Canadians. I was sorry to hear him contend that the federal government purposely did not want to reach an agreement with the government of the province of Alberta so that it might impose its own energy price policy unilaterally. I was sorry to hear him contend that the pricing regime was to be in place for ten years, regardless of provincial objections. I am especially surprised because, when he put the question to my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde), the response was very clear.

In reference to the government's decision to establish a long-term program the minister replied, and I quote from page 4967 of *Hansard*:

It was to ensure a certain degree of certainty and clarification as to the government's policy that it was decided to put forward this long-term plan. We have indicated that this is a ten-year program.

Hon. members opposite missed what the minister said next. I quote:

It would be naive or irresponsible to say that in a ten-year program not one iota can be changed, or that this is cast in stone, just like the Bible. So that is not our perception.

Is that not clear, Mr. Speaker? Further on in the same reply the minister went on to say this:

—we will reach an agreement eventually—

The willingness of this government to sit down with the provinces and negotiate an agreement which will be fair for all Canadians is part of the public record. To say otherwise is simply not to state the facts.

I would also like to comment on the remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell). Surely his perception of the world is not so blurred that he could possibly think that a revenue split of 45-45-10, with the 10 per cent share going to the companies, would be realistically acceptable. I have been involved in business for 27 years and I can tell the hon. member that his ideas, if put into practice in private business, would doubtlessly lead to bankruptcy. If put into practice by government it would lead to the bankruptcy of the nation. The people of this nation have had the wisdom not to pursue the policies of his party,—

Mr. Waddell: They would own the companies.

Mrs. Erola:—and I am thankful for that. We want to take control of our own economic destiny, as the hon. member does, but we must base our actions on realistic perceptions. Our ultimate goal of energy self-sufficiency within the decade is attainable. Our Canadianization—and I stress the word Canadianization—initiatives and our proposals, as they relate to the Crown equity involvement on Canada lands, are important elements of this package which will ensure the realization of this goal of energy security.

I would like to deal now with the mining industry for a moment. Members of the mining industry have expressed to

me their concerns as to whether the taxation and ownership policies outlined in the national energy program will be extended to the mining sector. I acknowledge that the hon. member for Edmonton East asked me on April 24 whether I could assure this House and the mining industry that the government is planning no regressive taxation, regulatory or legislative initiatives which will inhibit the orderly growth of the mining industry. I stated at that time that there would be no moves, at present, to increase the tax base. This situation still prevails, as is evident from the recent budget speech.

Let me reiterate what has already been clearly stated in the national energy program. This government believes that the oil and gas sector is a unique sector and that special measures, not required in other sectors, are needed to ensure more Canadian control.

Despite the knee jerk reaction of the multinationals following the release of our budget-energy package, and despite the initial market vibrations, which were largely expected, the gloom and doom predictions have not materialized. Indeed, I understand that the multinationals are actively seeking to take advantage of the Canadianization elements of our package. They recognize the benefits. Canadian companies investing on Canada lands will pay just seven cents per investment dollar under the new program initiatives. Such investment opportunities must be applauded. Surely if one examines the program fully, the fact that the national government, the government of all Canadians, will have a 25 per cent share of all activity on Canada lands will be clear. This will be seen as an opportunity and not as a revenue grab, as one Canadian oil company asserts in a letter to its shareholders. Such a suggestion that the holdings of individual Canadians are being reduced by 25 per cent due to these measures is clearly a distortion.

With respect to another aspect of our energy program, hon. members will be interested to know that since the government announced the Canada oil substitution program, as a cornerstone of our national energy policy, more than 5,000 Canadians have asked if they qualify. These are requests which have come into our offices. There have been between 600 and 700 calls every day. In fact the load was so heavy on one day that the special telephone system just broke down completely for two hours. I might add that the rate of calls being made shows no sign of decline.

The Canada oil substitution program is designed to reduce oil consumption to less than 10 per cent of total energy used in residential, commercial and industrial sectors by 1990. Again, I must reiterate that that seems to be lost on many of the members in the House. Indeed, it has been lost, I think, to most Canadians. It is a major national program of incentives. I would ask the member opposite who preceded me to pay particular attention to this. It is a program of initiatives to help householders, businesses and, yes, farmers, to convert their heating systems and the types of energy they use from oil to other forms of energy.

Mr. Althouse: Gas!