

they will continue to support. They are in bed with the Liberals on the national energy plan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McDermid: Get your tongue out of your cheek.

Mr. Robinson: The Canadian Oil Substitution Program was to have run until 1990 but as it stands now it is going to terminate on March 31, 1985. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the axe fell effectively for Canadians on November 8, not just on this program but on many other important social and economic programs as well, including environmental programs, cultural programs and a whole range of other important programs. We have already seen with a vengeance in the Province of British Columbia the kind of restraints which have been foreshadowed by this federal Government. The termination of this very important program is simply a further illustration of the ideological closeness between the federal Conservative Government and its allies, the Social Credit Government of British Columbia.

This is a program which has actually met with considerable success. At the time the program was introduced, the home heating sector was 37 per cent dependent on oil. In fact, according to the officials within the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the program has been successful. Almost a million units have been converted from oil to alternate sources of energy. I would note that the program, had it been allowed to continue, would have resulted in over one million homes being converted from oil to other forms of energy. We are saving oil.

The Canadian Home Insulation Program is another program which is being axed by this Government. I note that the existing criteria in fact have been changed recently in a way which is certainly harmful to my constituency in Burnaby. I know, Mr. Speaker, that in the coming days and weeks other Hon. Members on this side of the House will be taking the opportunity to draw to the attention of the Government our very serious concerns about the extent to which the Government has been in bed with the Liberals on the national energy plan and are now attacking important energy conservation programs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

● (1600)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS— MOTIONS

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for the House to proceed to Item No. 175?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Senate Reform

SENATE REFORM

MOTION TO NOTE REPORT OF SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills) moved:

That this House takes note of the report of the Special Joint Committee on Senate Reform, tabled in the House of Commons on Tuesday, January 31, 1984.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in support of the motion that the House take a serious look at the report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Senate Reform. As you know, the whole question of Senate reform is once again a hot issue with Canadians. They want change, there is no doubt about that, and we have a very short window within which to make the appropriate changes.

I want to express my thanks to those most recent appointees of the former Prime Minister who have raised the issue anew by obstructing the will of this House as expressed in a unanimous resolution of all Parties. It may well be that we will now have some degree of Senate reform and I hope Members will look at the Special Joint Committee report with a view to pushing the Cabinet and provincial executives towards its adoption. We know the primary reason for those Senate appointees attacking this House was really to get at the status and power of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner). He is, of course, no friend of theirs. Their secondary reason was to embarrass the Government. In fact, what they have done is to embarrass themselves. They have shown their true stripes and as a result we may have a satisfactory conclusion to a selfish act on their part.

My goal today is to urge the Cabinet to use this special report as a starting point. If I had my way, I would ideally like to see a resolution put before this House adopting the regulations and then use Section 38 of the new Constitution Act and put it to the provincial Premiers and legislatures. If they take the report to the people, they may be surprised at just how popular it would be. I also want to urge Members of the House, particularly the hundred or so new Members who, given all the pressures of becoming a new Member of Parliament, have not had an opportunity to read the reports from previous committees of the House on this issue, to have their staff dig out the Special Joint Committee report on Senate Reform because it is a worth-while document.

The committee reported in January, 1984. It was composed of some eight Senators and ten Members of parliament. I was fortunate enough to sit on that committee for the last half of its hearings and the report stage which took about a year to prepare. The committee travelled to every province, each of the two Territories, and over 300 submissions were made by individual Canadians and groups from across the entire country. I believe it is an important contribution to the ongoing process of parliamentary and Senate reform. I may say that it is a practical report because it was drafted by practical working politicians. As such, it reflected the balance which is necessary in this country between the federal the provincial levels, as well as the balance between a lower House which is elected on the basis of representation by population, and an