

going on in this critical field, but is this the right way to go about getting this information? Another question that arises is: Does the government not have this information it is seeking? We now have an energy policy. Is the government saying, "We have given you an energy policy, after long deliberations, but we now need more information"? Perhaps so, but it seems a little late, after the government has announced its policy, to say, "We now need further information."

The method by which this information is to be obtained is described in clause 5:

(1) Every corporation shall, for each prescribed reporting period beginning after December 31, 1975, file with the Minister within the prescribed time a return relating to all sources and applications of funds and to the exploration, production, refining and marketing of petroleum and petroleum products in respect of

(a) in the case of a corporation listed in Schedule I, that corporation and every body corporate that it controls; or

(b) in the case of a corporation listed in Schedule II, the corporation's Canadian branch business.

So far we have not had an explanation of the distinction made in the two schedules, but no doubt that will come in due course. I think we should have it before we reach a decision on the principle of the bill.

These words immediately raise the question: Is this information not now available? In a moment I shall be speaking about the drastic measures the government intends to take to make sure they get the information, but surely we should be told why they do not have it, or why they think they cannot get it or will not get it. Clause 5 mentions "a return relating to all sources and applications of funds." I ask immediately: Are there any of these 35 companies that do not issue an annual statement? I cannot think of an annual statement issued by a company that does not relate to all sources and applications of funds. Secondly, the bill says "relating . . . to the exploration, production, refining and marketing of petroleum and petroleum products." One would assume that that information would also be there. Perhaps it is not, but I think we should be told why the information that is required is not now available from those companies. Are they different from other companies? Is there a special reason for them to be required to do this under the drastic conditions of this bill? Later on in the bill we find that the government takes to itself, or wishes to take to itself, powers to require additional information which is not covered by clause 5.

● (1450)

Another question arises here. What is meant by corporations engaged in "the exploration, production, refining or marketing of petroleum and petroleum products"? Would they include a company like Polysar? Is it dealing in petroleum products? It is not listed among those in the schedule. My information is that it has for a long time been dealing in the production of petroleum by-products.

I will come to the schedule in a moment, but this also raises the question why there appear to be no crown corporations in this list. As far as I can see, they are all in the private sector. Yet Petro-Canada is very much in this field. The last time I looked at its statement it had 45 per cent of the consortium in the Arctic islands, in which there are many private companies; it has 15 per cent in Syncrude Canada Ltd. and is involved of the Polar gas consortium; it purchased outright 100 per cent of what was once called Atlantic Richfield, now called the Petrocan Exploration Company. Is it a crown corporation? Why is it not in the list?

Does this mean that this crown corporation, if that is what it is, competing in this same field, consorting with companies in the same field, will be in the position, through the government, of having this information? It is only one of 200 companies competing in this area. Will it be the only one to have this information? Will the minister disclose it to the company? There are provisions dealing with ministerial disclosure that permit the minister to disclose any information that he thinks fit, and to anybody he thinks fit.

A moment ago I referred to Petro-Canada. I should have referred to Polysar. What I have said other than about the petroleum products, of course, refers wholly to Petrocan, which is in this field. It is Polysar which raises the question of whether it is in the petroleum products business. It, of course, has a strange history too, and there arises the question which has been asked but not answered by the government as to whether it is actually a crown corporation at the present time.

I have said that this bill, if passed, would authorize the government to take some drastic action to obtain the information it needs, or thinks it needs. I shall not read all the clauses, but I would give just a general indication. These clauses provide for obtaining the information required as to the sources and applications of funds and expenditures on production, refining, marketing, and so on. Under clause 8 the minister may require from any corporation, as defined in the bill:

(a) any information or additional information including a return of information . . . or

(b) production, or production on oath, of any books, letters, accounts, invoices, statements or other documents.

Under clause 9 a person authorized by the minister may enter "any premises or place where any business of a corporation is carried on", or where any property owned by the corporation subsists. An agent of the minister, if he suspects there has been a violation, may "seize and take away any of the documents, books, records, papers or things".

Specifically, certain subsections of the Income Tax Act apply here as though the wording in the Income Tax Act was, "the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources" rather than "the Minister of National Revenue". In other words, in this respect he is given all the powers of the Minister of National Revenue in the matter of taxation.