

ed. Canada has nothing to fear either in the short term or in the long term. We have plenty of resources of the traditional fossil forms and unbelievable resources, as do other countries, in the form of renewables. But we do have a common need to work out industrial strategy, to use these great advantages of our great resources of water, of which we are only using 1 per cent, our great resources of energy, our great resources of minerals, wood and so on, to bring into Canada more processing without too many controls.

Now, with the rising prices of energy offshore, with the rising prices and shortage of minerals around the world, all these things can be turned to advantage. We have waited so patiently for this day to come. The day is now here and our decisions on this question of energy are vital to the achievement of a dream which is now becoming a reality. We pay higher wages to steel workers. We produce better quality steel today in Canada and we do it at a lower price. That is a comparative advantage. Let us exploit things like the petro-chemical industry, the steel industry and all the things made out of steel, by building this proper mix, by making those things in Canada for which we have comparative advantage and letting other nations of the world supply the things in which they have comparative advantage. I think the future we have talked about for a generation or more, or maybe longer, has a chance to be fulfilled in a very short time. I see the movement of the petro-chemical industry in Canada; I know the steel industry can expand, and that the wood industry just has to expand to meet the human problems and the shortage of fibre around the world.

My criticism of the NDP position is that it will force us on a short term basis to face frankly these issues raised by the hon. member. But obviously there has to be a future occasion on which we can discuss the broader long-range problems and solutions for Canada. I know that we in our party are looking forward to bringing in these alternatives. When the government has delivered its papers we shall see what it has to offer. We are prepared to offer our alternatives. Now, these decisions are for Canada. We shall be dealing with electricity. We shall deal with energy in its fossil form and in its renewable form, and I would hope we can put forward a type of long-range proposal, with short-term housekeeping responsibilities met, that could draw the support of every party in this House and most people in Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1640)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, one could speak endlessly on the motion introduced by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas), especially in view of the present government's lack of policy in this area.

On the one hand, when one ponders over the statistics and the specialists' comments on Canada's oil resources, one realizes that this country is far from being short of this commodity. Even in to-day's newspapers Canadians are given every assurance that, at least in the near future, there will be no shortage of oil or of any other natural resources for that matter.

Petroleum Products Controls

On the other hand, one must look farther than the tip of one's nose. Although there is no risk of an oil crisis occurring in Canada to-day, it is a fact that we may be faced with such a crisis, because the volume of our exports, maybe not within the next five to ten years, but in the more distant future. Any inconsiderate abuse could certainly foster this problem in Canada.

The motion before the House is divided into three parts, the first of which is as follows:

(a) Place export controls on the export of gasoline and other refined petroleum products;

We all know—as explained a moment ago by the hon. member who introduced the motion—that controls have been provided by the government for the purpose of reducing the export of crude oil (natural resources). And indirectly, these restrictions on exports have had as a result that the United States are asking for a finished product. However, I believe that we may not be in a suitable position to criticize this attitude because in a way, there have been many complaints in recent years, especially in Canada. We complain that we have only raw products, that we have not succeeded in developing our secondary industry and here, in a round about way, we have a sector where we force foreigners to come here to buy refined products. Here is an area where surely we can still improve our production, improve employment possibilities and our industrial sector.

On the other hand, the demand from the United States and other countries is growing stronger and there is an increase in prices. In other words, the United States are ready to pay a higher price because their needs are greater and indirectly the companies, especially Canadian development companies, are asking Canadians the same price that they can get from the United States, thereby pushing up prices in Canada also.

It is fine to want to restrict the export of raw products through controls and today we are wondering how we could help Canadians population avoid higher prices, brought about by a stronger demand.

In the second paragraph of his motion, the hon. member advocates the establishment of price controls or at least, indirectly, a two-price system. First they ask for export controls, then the establishment of price controls.

I believe that through control measures or through an energy commission it would certainly be possible to exercise a certain control. I do not want a dictatorial control but it remains that a government is always elected to protect the rights or meet the needs of the people. Then, it would be logical to have a national commission evaluate the country's oil supply, and consider our short long term requirements. A national agency or organization could make sure that the needs of our population are fulfilled.

Our production surplus, and our reserves—because still one must expect to have reserves—could then be sold at a high price to other countries, according to their needs. Then the situation would not be as it is now, where the Canadian population is made to suffer from whatever increase in prices that may prevail in the United States. That is one way of having prices established.

Then, how are prices set? Prices are determined in the first instance by the cost of production, plus a logical and