

Energy Supplies Emergency Act

pipeline was in operation now any shortages of energy in eastern Canada could be avoided.

Mr. Speaker, we do have severe transportation and pricing problems, but these could be solved by federal-provincial consultation provided that an atmosphere of good will can be maintained. At the very least, we should give no thought to passage of Bill C-236 until we see the outcome of the federal-provincial conference of first ministers on energy in January. The preceding member, the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle), elaborated on this point at length. The atmosphere of that conference will be crucial in achieving joint federal-provincial policies and programs on the use of Canadian energy. If this bill passes before the conference is held, it will produce more confrontation rather than the consultation which is so desperately needed to solve energy problems.

● (2130)

I believe that the extreme coercion involved in Bill C-236 could only be justified under exceptional conditions, and then subject to the consideration of justice. Thus, we come to this question: In the absence of any clear demonstration of a national emergency, why does the government want such a club in the form of an energy allocation board? One answer to that, a deeply troubling one, is the predilection of this government for authority.

With the benefit of hindsight, Mr. Speaker, we know the government overreacted to the crisis of October, 1970, which led its taking exceptional powers under the War Measures Act. The government did indeed trample on individual liberties and civil rights. It depicted the crisis as greater than it was, then stepped in to save the country with dictatorial action. Many members were later sorry that they had given their consent to the War Measures Act. If the public had known at the time the limitation of the crisis, it would never have supported the sweeping deprivation of civil rights.

I point out to you, sir, and to members of the House that the wording the government used when it sought these powers in 1970 is very similar to the wording used in seeking the present powers. On October 16, 1970, speaking in the House when he introduced the War Measures Act, the Prime Minister said:

The government recognizes that the authority contained in the act is much broader than is required in the present situation, notwithstanding the seriousness of the events.

He went on to say:

To those who will voice concern at the extent of the powers assumed by the government under this procedure, I can only say that I sympathize with their attitude, and applaud them for speaking out. I hasten to suggest, however, that the legislative record of this parliament in the field of individual liberties contributes unequivocally to its credibility and good faith.

We know what the credibility and good faith of this government have been like in the intervening years. May I draw your attention to the words used by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) in introducing this bill last week. As recorded on page 8442 of *Hansard*, the minister said:

In spite of its efforts, the technical committee is unable to advise the government of the precise extent to which international crude oil deliveries to Canada will be reduced. However, the committee has recommended that the government plan for possi-

[Mr. Roche.]

ble curtailment as great as 20 per cent for these areas which are dependent on overseas oil.

Thus, we see the government once more coming to us with an evaluation which is not supported by facts. Actually, in the present situation the facts have not been outlined which led the government, in its extremity, to seek these powers. The government's swift and unnecessary use of extreme powers in 1970 makes it imperative that before we ever again give such powers to it, or one of its created boards, it must prove to us that a crisis really exists. Denis Smith, one of Canada's distinguished political scientists, has summarized the situation in the following way:

At the moment of decision, when it has been forced to choose between participation and the exercise of the state's authority, the Trudeau government has always opted for authority.

There is a second and even simpler explanation for the government's motive in presenting this bill. We have seen how the political balance in this House has sent the government scurrying leftward to start a national petroleum company. We have seen the vigour of the Prime Minister's attack on Premier Lougheed in Vancouver last Friday in which the Alberta premier was depicted as an oil baron blackmailing his fellow Canadians. We saw the strange performance of the Prime Minister yesterday in linking the record of the Alberta members in this House on the energy question to, of all things, the language issue.

Responding to the assurance of the member for Peace River, that Alberta members want to secure the supply of oil for the people of eastern Canada, the Prime Minister said "... I wonder if he could assure a supply of Alberta members to Quebec on the bilingual policy." When I objected to this tarnishing of Alberta members as bigots on the bilingualism issue, the Prime Minister responded "... it is more important to Quebec to have acceptance by Canada of the bilingual policy than to have a gallon of oil from Alberta." Linking bilingualism and energy is a feat of political legerdemain that can only divide Canada. To pose the energy question in these terms is an outrageous, irresponsible act of the Prime Minister.

Over the past few days and weeks, Mr. Speaker, we have seen the strategy of isolating Alberta forming in the minds of the Prime Minister and those Machiavellian figures who stalk the east block. That strategy is: Alberta versus Canada on energy; Alberta versus Quebec on language; Alberta squeezing or freezing the Maritimes; Alberta the bad, Trudeau the good. What an election issue! What a dream! Let us not be so naive as to dismiss the idea that this government would try to create such an election issue. This is a government that uses, and abuses, national unity for its own political survival.

Mr. Lalonde: Don't confuse Alberta with Alberta Tories.

Mr. Roche: But the Prime Minister should take note of a basic fact: Albertans are Canadians first. We have contributed our share to the development of Canada and we will continue to do so. As the *Edmonton Journal* remarked:

Albertans do not back the witless slogan, "Let the eastern bastards freeze in the dark". Albertans recognize that the national oil policy of a federal Conservative government which gave us an Ontario market benefited us. It benefited Ontario too, and that is