

officials and experts concerning our supplies and national resources.

The Social Crediters were of course absent from these meetings, Mr. Speaker, and if there exists a lack of information within their party it is because they did not take part in the discussions of the committee which was considering this problem.

Moreover, I advise the hon. member for Charlevoix to ponder the information found in the energy policy for Canada. The first stage is the analysis of this point which he appeared to support and which is incorporated in the bill under review. The hon. member suggested that this would increase the division between the various areas of Canada. I suggest to him, with all due respect, that if he should review the bill, he would realize that we are aiming at unity. As regards the allocation of supplies we do not want to encourage regional disparity but prevent that some be favoured at the expense of others.

That is one of the aims of the bill.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I was also interested to hear what the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) said. Of course, I was not aware of the fact that we were supposed to carry out a clause by clause study of this piece of legislation. I was under the impression that we were supposed to discuss and analyse the principle of this bill. Evidently, the hon. member for Peace River has quite skillfully taken the tack which has been previously taken by the party of which he is a member, namely, that of avoiding discussion on the principle of the legislation because discussions on principle may lead to discussions on policy and we might soon become aware of the complete absence of any policy of that party with regard to energy. The hon. member stated that he has no facts upon which to come to a decision with reference to this bill.

First of all, he did not indicate whether or not he supports the principle of the bill. All he said was that he is ignorant. That much is evident from the speech that he made. It appears that the hon. member, like the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Caouette), has been absent from the country during the past two and a half months. Indeed, I understand that Peace River is an area of Canada which is perhaps not as favoured with good means of communication as are other areas, but he must have been aware of the Middle East crisis; he must have known of the war between Israel and the Arab States; he must know of the shortage of energy in the form of petroleum in Canada and of the international shortage of energy.

Indeed, he must know that the European Economic Council is in dire straits as a result of the shortage of energy. A consultation has been taking place between France, which seems to have no shortfall of petroleum products, and Holland which has been placed on the Arab embargo list. Evidently, the hon. member for Peace River has not read the news relating to the serious situation in the United States where certain pundits have foreseen an unemployment level of up to 12 per cent. Neither is he aware of the difficulties of the president of that country with regard to his energy advisers, Mr. Love having resigned the day before yesterday.

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Undoubtedly, he must be aware of these facts because he must have been advised by some researchers of the presence of force majeure clauses in most of the supply contracts. He cannot plead ignorance of that matter, and he must be aware of the repeated replies of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources when the latter stated that force majeure clauses might result in a shortfall of some 200,000 barrels a day. Again, he must also be aware of the fact that we in Canada are vulnerable. There has been a difference of opinion today between the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the president of Imperial Oil as to whether Canada has been placed on the Arab embargo list.

He must be aware also of the fact that we will become vulnerable if we are placed on the embargo list. Surely, then he must recognize that since Canada imported 900,000 barrels a day of petroleum from offshore sources during 1973, if indeed there is an embargo which affects Canada, and if that embargo is added to the one facing the United States or if we are affected by the force majeure clauses contained in the supply contracts, we may be facing a serious shortage this winter. I am surprised that the hon. member has no information, because during the question period in the past three weeks the minister has been ready and available to provide information. Picayune questions of picayune importance have been directed to his attention, such as the reference to the force majeure clause. These questions are asked not because the opposition is interested in what it means but simply in order to score political points. Again, the same situation applies to the constitution of a technical advisory committee, which is not a policy advisory committee, relating to supply of petroleum. Mr. Speaker, these are the picayune matters which are directed to the attention of the minister and which, to my mind, explain the absence of knowledge of the hon. member for Peace River and I am sure, after listening to the speeches and contributions of members of the Tory party, of all its members.

● (1730)

The hon. member also suggests that the government ought not to have introduced this particular bill. We are very much aware that on Monday there will be a motion of non-confidence presented by the opposition. I would hope that this bill could receive third reading before Monday. I am sincerely hopeful of that, because this government is responsible for the maintenance of order and good government in Canada, whether or not there is a parliament sitting. It may well be that as a result of the next vote we will be defeated and this parliament might have to be dissolved.

I see the hon. member for Kent-Essex (Mr. Danforth) shaking his head. He is agreeing, as any irresponsible member of parliament would agree, that it would be a good thing for this country not to have a parliament sitting during a period of crisis, a crisis the like of which we have not seen for some time. Surely, the hon. member realizes that we could be without a parliament to pass effective legislation relating to these problems that we might be facing for a period of four or five months, not just any four or five months but those four or five months when the crisis would be at its height. That is the time when in Canada we would indeed be feeling the utmost