

is time they were changed. I believe that a company like Home Oil would be very suitable as a company participating in leasing, and leasing competitively, in the Canadian north. I would go further and say that a crown owned company ought to have devolved upon it a certain percentage of all the Crown lands that revert when one leases. That is taking a major step, and I would go that far.

The effort made by some members of the opposition to discuss the white paper on taxation is a subterfuge to conceal their policy. We have to face this question of what to do about Home Oil, and face it now.

Mr. Alkenbrack: Then, face it.

Mr. O'Connell: I will, and I should like to hear your suggestions too, Sir. The point about the north—if I have a few moments left, Mr. Speaker—is this: Many members of the House realize that it is the normal practice, when a discovery is made on a permit area, that one-half the permit area reverts to the Crown. In the area south of the 60th parallel these leasehold Crown lots are sold at auction to the highest bidder, and current revenue goes to the provincial government in that sense. But this has not been the practice followed in the north. In the north, the practice has been to permit the discovering company to take on the rest of the land that has reverted to the Crown by paying higher royalties for it. That means, in effect, that we forgo current revenues in the interests of future revenues through the royalty system. It seems to me it is time that system was changed. If indeed we run the risk of forgoing current revenue for the sake of future revenue, then we also ought to cover such risk by having an equity position through a company like Home Oil or Panarctic in the action that is taking place.

For a number of reasons similar to this, I find it wise and proper for the government to make up its mind to prohibit the sale of Home Oil and to make its best effort to find a Canadian purchaser. Failing that, it should purchase the company itself; and if it is necessary to do that, then there should not be the presumption that the company will be forced into the CDC. In my view it should be offered for sale to private Canadian companies, or to the CDC if, in the end the CDC turns out to be interested in the company.

Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, I would be quite happy to relinquish the floor to the minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Greene) if he feels like participating in the debate. I think that the two speeches by members of our party so far have made our point very well, namely that this is an urgent matter. We even have some members on the government side of the House agreeing with us that this problem is urgent. I commend the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. O'Connell) for some of the points that he made. I think he spoke good, common sense and it is obvious that he is very concerned about the matter. I suggest, though, that the members the parliamentary secretary will have the most difficulty convincing are the members of his own party. He does not have to convince us, because we are already concerned.

23966—13½

Possible Takeover of Home Oil Company

In the past, we have suffered from a deficiency in Canada of capital, expertise and technology in the handling of our own oil industry, but I do not think this is any longer true. The market in Canada for oil is increasing, the same as it is everywhere else. Other speakers earlier this evening placed on the record how oil consumption has increased and what demands in the future will be, so I will not go into that again. I would suggest that we have sufficient capital, expertise, technology and markets in Canada to handle Canadian oil. We should concern ourselves and gear ourselves to this end. As I read the Canadian political scene at this moment there appear to be three things more important than all others about which Canadians are concerned.

• (10:40 p.m.)

An hon. Member: Where are they published?

Mr. Thomson: Where are they published; they are published probably by a United States owned Canadian publishing company. This is foreign ownership. Secondly, and I do not list these necessarily in the order of importance, Canadians are concerned with unemployment and thirdly they are concerned with pollution control.

I think all parties in Canada should assist in suggesting means to accomplish or discover solutions to these problems. Hon. members in this House should not merely say what the government has done or has not done. We should contribute ideas which will help to control or help the situation.

I am very concerned about the issue being debated tonight. I feel a little bit like a pauper in the land of my birth. I wonder if I can call my soul my own.

Mr. Greene: Has he got one, Stan?

Mr. Thomson: I suggest that much of the control by foreigners in Canada has come about under the aegis of Liberal governments past and present. I do not think hon. members opposite can make any excuse for this fact. Certainly in the last few years, during which we have improved our technology and increased available capital in this nation, it seems to me that Canadian laws have made it easier for foreigners to own businesses in Canada than Canadians. It is high time we did something constructive about this situation.

Oil companies are being purchased by United States companies which want to make a profit here. Large companies are being purchased by United States interests. When are the ministers going to do something about this situation?

An hon. Member: When are they going to start?

Mr. Thomson: I can just envisage how Canadians will be in a few years.

An hon. Member: Soon we will have United States ministers performing funerals.

Mr. Thomson: Can't you see Canadians owning nothing else but a plot for his grave attending a funeral being performed by a United States firm?