

The federal government must challenge this concept. I am not saying it must immediately take provinces to court, because I hope this will not be necessary. But this concept ought to be challenged around the negotiating table and resolved, like most constitutional challenges, by agreement without necessarily sticking to the exact letter of the law. The BNA Act must surely be one of the most flexible constitutional instruments ever created. If an agreement is desired, it is always possible to reach one within the context of the act. I hope agreement will be reached around the negotiating table as a result of bargaining, the offer of *quid pro quo*. But if the difficulty cannot be resolved in this way, the issue is so serious to the country that the federal government must assert its authority and, if necessary, have the matter resolved in court. Bill C-236 directly sets up a situation which will result in such confrontation. I do not think resolution of this question can be deferred. It is not at all clear where the authority for this bill originates. It could be argued that since energy supplies are of critical importance to the health and well-being of our people, if not to their lives, the federal government could declare all energy sources to be for the general advantage of Canada or for the advantage of two or more of the provinces, and thus act under section 92(C). Alternatively, the bill could be brought to the House of Commons under the constitutional authority of the trade and commerce section, 91(2), or it may be, and this is probably the case, the federal government has brought it in under the emergency section. The assertion would be that an emergency situation exists in Canada and legislation is therefore possible under the section providing for action to ensure the maintenance of peace, order and good government.

Such an assertion could probably not be challenged as long as the bill was related to a specific time period. It seems to me, though, that this is an emergency which will not pass away in a few weeks' time or in a year from now. The whole issue of energy supplies and distribution is one which promises to involve this country in important decisions of far reaching consequences for many years to come, and for this reason it needs to be resolved soon to the greatest extent possible.

I shall leave it to historians to decide why the Liberal party has moved in connection with energy in a way few of us expected it to do. Many of us thought we would be concerned with an election this week instead of debating energy policy here. Looking at the situation today, it seems to me one of the reasons is that Canada was fortunate enough to have a minority government at a crucial stage in its history. Had there been a majority government, I doubt very much whether we would have seen as good an approach to the energy issue as now seems to be the case. The unhappy situation in the Middle East has certainly created difficulties for Canadians as well as for many other nations. However, it may turn out to be one of the occasions which caused Canadians to wake up to the need to do something about energy.

Looking over Canadian history, I have often been persuaded that the Canadian tendency to be affable and easy-going is a positive disadvantage at times. Canadians are seldom moved to do great things unless a crisis obliges them to take action. The Middle East situation has created a problem not only for us but for the entire world, since oil

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is now being used for diplomatic and political purposes. But in the end this may turn out to be a good thing for Canada. It may, as the expression goes, smarten us up to the need to make plans for our own future.

It is easy for members of the House to be critical of the Liberals. I know that members of my own party, and I myself, have been extremely critical of the Liberals for failing to build a pipeline to Montreal. Members of the Conservative Party have risen on numerous occasions to criticize the Liberals for not taking action in this field. I suppose one could go back to 1961 and say that the prime minister of that day lacked sufficient foresight. The point is, though, that Quebec did not want this pipeline. It would have been impossible to build a Montreal pipeline, given the attitude of the people of Quebec; there must be at least some willingness on the part of the people who reside in a province before a pipeline can be built there.

Members of my party have for years, in discussions with their colleagues in Quebec, urged upon them the need to build a pipeline. Only six or eight months ago, when we formed a special committee on energy to discuss this question with people in the provinces, I remember saying to one man in Montreal, "You may have trouble about ensuring a supply. A pipeline really should be built in Quebec." To which he replied, "I would rather trust the Arabs than Lougheed." That was the feeling at the time. We know the west has grievances. We know the people there are upset about bilingualism and some of the things they believe parliament is doing for Quebec and French Canada. But Quebec, too, has very real grievances.

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It is an unfortunate fact in our history that these mutual suspicions have prevented us from doing what should have been done a long time ago, and that is to build a pipeline into Montreal. I think the time has passed for this kind of recrimination as to who thought about what first, and who warned whom about the crisis. The pipeline has to be built now: I think everybody would agree with that statement, including the people of Quebec.

I am sorry the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in his comments today during the question period tried to equate bilingualism with getting oil to Quebec. They involve different kinds of problems, and in some way this obscured his answers rather than contributed to a solution of the problem. While bilingualism is important to the people of Quebec, as they have a right to feel comfortable in their language in this country which is theirs and mine, they still need oil. One does not live by language alone. Oil is still important and we should see that we get it to them.

It may be that speculative speeches of this kind with reference to history and what history might think about us is of some value. If we consider the debate during the last couple of days, we will note it has been very difficult for speakers to be heard above some of the background music of various members. At least I am able to be heard; perhaps not listened to, but at least heard. I do appreciate not having to scream my words over the heads of all those around me. There may be some value to a speech of this kind that does not attempt to hack away at who is right and who is wrong in respect of this situation.