

Oil Substitution Act

measures are all necessary if we are to be able to give to our children and grandchildren a country which still has viable amounts of petroleum resources for the future. With conservation, the value of savings grows as energy prices rise. The job impact of conservation and alternate energy, COSP and CHIP, is a great deal greater than it is in getting new oil out of the ground.

When you consider the other energy alternative, it is significant that the Government does not cut a penny from Atomic Energy of Canada despite the fact that it is spending \$340 million a year, yet after 35 years nuclear power has still not reached the point where it can support itself without the need for very heavy Government subsidies. If you want to save money, why not get it there rather than forcing poor Canadians to pay through the nose when they do not have the money?

I wish to move a motion which will have the effect of hoisting this measure for at least six months. We would like to see it put off longer because we are opposing the Bill, but it is a parliamentary device which will demonstrate what we think about the Bill, as well as being a response to the very specific needs of large numbers of people in my riding and elsewhere who are not now able to benefit from these programs, COSP in particular, because the deadline has arrived, and they can no longer get a contractor or oil company prepared to take their particular case.

Mr. Thacker: Still some rich NDP who have not taken advantage of the public purse?

Mr. Cassidy: Many of my constituents have taken advantage of this as well.

Mr. Waddell: His, too, I bet.

Mr. Cassidy: In fact, the take-up in Alberta has been stronger than in almost any other part of the country.

Therefore I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands (Mr. Manly):

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following therefor: "Bill C-24, An Act to amend the Oil Substitution and Conservation Act and the Canadian Home Insulation Program Act be not now read a second time but that it be read a second time this day six months hence."

One of our concerns is for those ordinary Canadians who were not able to take advantage of this program before, and for whom even the dollars to pay their share were difficult to acquire. They are certainly not going to be able to take advantage of conservation and off-oil measures if they have to come up with all the dollars at once. Some of these people are Canadians in Alberta and British Columbia who do not have jobs right now, yet they find that the oil bills are coming up to \$1,000 or more a year. They know they can save if they go off oil but they cannot afford to do that because the very first move the Conservatives announced was to cut this particular measure.

These programs have benefited us all by saving the energy petroleum resources we will need in the future.

Mr. Thacker: Only the rich took it up though, like you.

Mr. Cassidy: That particular statement is demonstrably untrue. This program was taken up by people—

Mr. Thacker: You took it up.

Mr. Cassidy:—on all sides of the House. I was too busy with politics beforehand to take it up or I would have done it back in 1977. I would suggest as well that if the Hon. Member feels he has a point and feels that some people on high incomes, who were paying tax on their grants, should not have gotten the grants, then it was open to the Government to have redesigned the program and redirected it to people with ordinary incomes. But I remember one of the first steps of this new Government when it came to power. The Conservatives said in opposition they were opposed to the tax increases which were due to take effect on October 1, tax increases which hit ordinary Canadians across the country. But did the Hon. Member's Party come in and reverse that tax increase which it had inherited from the Liberals? No, it did not. They imposed tax increases which had the effect of penalizing average Canadians to the tune of some \$500 million a year.

That may be straying a bit from the Bill but I would suggest that if the Government genuinely cared about ordinary Canadians, if it felt that some groups in our society had not benefited from this program, it was elected on a mandate of change and reform and it could have come in with a new approach to make sure that every family in the country with an annual income of less than \$20,000 or \$30,000 would have been assured the opportunity to take advantage of this program before it ended.

I appeal to my hon. friend from Alberta, and his colleagues, to join with our Party in hoisting this Bill for six months in order to give the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources time to take up that very valuable suggestion. If the program is to be changed, it should be changed in order to benefit ordinary Canadians who were not able to benefit from the program during the six or seven years it has been in force. I remind you that the program benefits all Canadians, because if we keep on wasting oil at the rate we are doing it today there will be none left by the time our sons and daughters come to take their places in this House of Commons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: No.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier).

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker—

[*English*]

Mr. Waddell: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I hesitate to interrupt my friend but I just want to get the procedure right. I heard you call a voice vote and I am not quite sure what happened.