

Mr. Lawrence: Obviously the applause from the NDP benches for that type of program comes as no surprise. What was surprising, however, was that from the federal Liberal benches during the course of the remarks by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands, there was equal applause for some of those sentiments respecting a governmental Crown agency. The minister of the day nodded his head and grinned, indicating that is perfectly correct.

Those two are not the only alternatives; they are not the only choices, no matter how much the socialists and near socialists believe those are the choices to be presented to the Canadian people.

There is another choice, and that other choice is obviously far preferable, not only in the short run but in the long-term interests of the development of Canadian resources by and for Canadians, and that other choice has to be, and it should be our position, that Husky Oil and the development of the heavy oil fields be undertaken by Canadian interests, by Canadians through the Canadian private sector, not the Canadian public sector.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lawrence: I suggest that is completely distinct from the position taken by the hon. member who has just sat down, for the NDP socialists, and completely distinct from the position which I know the minister has taken, and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) undoubtedly has taken through this whole sorry mess which has led us to this situation today. That position has been that the only answer has to be Petro-Can or a Canadian government agency bidding for the shares of Husky. I say we disagree profoundly with the principle that a federal governmental agency is the only answer to Canadian control of Canadian resources. Specifically in relation to this matter, we believe that Petro-Can should not control the Canadian development of heavy oil in this country.

Our position is that Canadian private interests can and should be encouraged to develop Canadian resources, and the very obvious and determined present national federal government policy and concept, directed right out of the Prime Minister's office, has been and still is to discourage any other development but that of Petro-Can. We think this is wrong, that it is folly, that it is unfair and highly discriminatory, and it certainly can never serve the Canadian long-term interests either in heavy oil, energy generally or, for that matter, in the Canadian resources field generally.

Heavy oil development has not proceeded as it should have, and there are many reasons for this. We just heard the argument presented to us, and the socialists and the Liberals of this country both claim this, that it is the fault of foreign, specifically American, management and control of the present land—the present land owners, in particular, Husky Oil of Canada. Husky Oil of Canada at the moment is obviously controlled by foreign interests—by American interests. We believe it takes at least two to tango.

Natural Resources

Our enquiries, and I have reason to believe they have a very great modicum of authority, have led us to believe there certainly has been a concept and plan, emanating from the very top of our present federal government, which have brought home to Husky over a period of the last three months, in no uncertain terms, that come hell or high water this present federal government is going to permit only Petro-Can to develop the heavy oil potential. We say this is wrong, heavy handed, and discriminatory. It is against our concept of what Petro-Can was set up for in the first place, and it is against the long-term interests of Canada.

How many more federal government agencies will be required to bail out, take over, or buy back some of these fields when they come on market? Are we forever going to be required to rely on the half knowledge of federal governmental people, in particular of persons in the federal government at the political level, in taking over these fields as they may become available in the future?

I agree completely that control should not have passed from Canada in the first place, and perhaps that is a damning indictment not only of this government but of all past governments. In any event, it has happened, and it has happened by a number of ways and means which can be directly related to the policies and principles of successive federal governments, not only in the energy field and not only in the resources field, but also in the tax field. There is no question about that. Nevertheless, it has happened, and the facts speak for themselves.

The Canadian resources industry generally is dominated by foreigners. The Canadian energy field industries are dominated by foreigners, and the Canadian petroleum industry is dominated by foreigners. However, do you really think it is the government of the day that we should continually be looking to in order to bail us out of the situation we are in as a result of these past errors and failures? God forbid! I do not care what the political complexion is of the government of the day. This is a wrong, heavy-handed move. If I had my "druthers", for instance, not only would I move specifically to make sure that that the Occidental bid was never countenanced by the government of the day, but I would also move to make very sure that the Petro-Canada bid was withdrawn as well. It is a wrong move to encourage, and it is wrong to use a heavy hand, as this government has been using over the last few months, to discourage and to drag its feet in respect of that heavy oil development.

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The heavy oil development should have been well on its way by now, but it is not. It is not the fault of foreigners but of the footdragging of this government and its numerous agencies in the field. Husky Oil has known for some time, and let us make no bones about it, that they were not going to be permitted under this government to develop that heavy oil field. There is no question about that whatsoever.

The hon. member spoke the other day of collusion between Occidental Oil and Husky Oil, and that may well be the case.