

Oil Substitution Act

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): You should be ashamed of yourselves.

Mr. Waddell: I plead with this Government. At least in the interest of justice, give it another six months. You have people lining up waiting who cannot get on the list. Tories say they should have taken advantage of it before. They are human. They did not take advantage of it before.

Mr. Deans: Maybe they weren't working.

Mr. Waddell: Now they want to take advantage of it. Now we have a big burst of people who want to take advantage of it. It is a good program.

Mr. McDermid: You will want another six months, and then another six months.

Mr. Waddell: No, it will not be another six months. I say this to the Parliamentary Secretary, that he has my commitment on behalf of our Party that we will be prepared, if the Government gives a six-month extension, since the Tories have the majority and it is the Government's way, to let the Bill go through in September with very little debate. Is that not fair, Mr. Speaker? I think it is fair.

Mr. Deans: That is perfectly reasonable.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It may be fair, but the Hon. Member's time has expired.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate. I would specifically ask my colleagues to support the proposed amendment to hoist the Bill for six months. There are very cogent and important reasons that this Bill ought to be put on the backburner for at least six months.

First, I would like to comment on the question of consultation. This Government has promised to consult before it takes action. Over the last several months, we have been told time and time again that it is the desire of this Government to consult with interested parties before taking action. What form of consultation took place with respect to Bill C-24? Were interested groups given an opportunity to address the Government and indicate how the termination of this program at an early date would impact upon various important matters such as jobs?

The Government has continually promised that it would create jobs. Jobs, jobs, jobs was the promise during the election campaign. It is my understanding that this particular Bill bringing forward the termination date of two very popular programs will result in the net loss of jobs. I am not aware of the number of jobs, but this Government should make every effort possible to ensure that jobs are not lost. I know it is very difficult to create jobs, but when the Government takes very direct action resulting in the loss of jobs, it has to be very careful and vigilant that adequate consultation takes place.

With respect to the Canadian Oil Substitution Program, that program was and is a very popular program in my riding

of York South-Weston. As the House is aware, the program provides subsidies of up to \$800 to home owners who convert from oil to another form of fuel. This program was an extremely popular program not only for home owners in York South-Weston, but for home owners across the country.

When the program was initially introduced there was a very serious concern about the shortage of oil here and it was hoped that home owners would take advantage of the program in order to ensure that we did not run short of oil at a very early date. We have, of course, other forms of fuel that are far more economical and abundant. It was the intent of this legislation to provide home owners with some incentive to convert from a limited resource to other resources that are unlimited, if you will.

I am sure Hon. Members opposite will recognize and admit to the popularity of this program. Many Canadians have taken advantage of it. It was necessary as an incentive for Canadians to take advantage of it to provide subsidies to homeowners. Those subsidies were provided and, as a result, Canadian home owners converted. What the Government is proposing is that the termination date, which was originally December 31, 1987, be brought forward to March 31, 1986.

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I suspect one of the reasons behind this particular piece of legislation is to save money. We fully recognize that the Government wants to reduce the deficit. I would simply ask Hon. Members opposite to be very sensitive to the cuts which take place and the ramifications of these particular cuts. For the sake of saving money with respect to these programs by bringing the termination date forward, the Government recognizes that jobs will be lost. One of the effects of these programs is the creation of jobs in the heating equipment market for installers of different furnaces and other individuals involved with conversion. In effect, by bringing forward the termination date, the result is a loss of jobs which are so badly needed at this point in time.

The other program which the Government is intending to cut short is the very important and popular CHIP which provided subsidies of up to \$500 to home owners to upgrade insulation in their homes. As I indicated, these twin programs are very important and have considerably benefited the country.

The proposed six-month hoist will extend these programs and will give the Government an opportunity to start consulting with various interest groups. If the Government is sincere—and I believe it is—that consultation is key, I would ask what is the program in extending or delaying the Bill for a mere six months in order to give people an opportunity to come forward? Perhaps as a result of that consultative process, the Government might become convinced, where we as opposition Members might fail to convince it, that this legislation is bad. Perhaps it will be convinced by non-partisan individuals who will be harmed as a result of the change in the programs. At the very least, the consultative process could satisfy not only