

Energy

Mr. Stanfield: For those who live east of the Ottawa valley it will cost more for home heat, it will cost more to operate automobiles, it will cost more to operate trucks, it will cost more to heat their offices, and will cost more to fuel their industry. Someone says this will be the case everywhere. The Prime Minister promised to keep prices down in the rest of Canada. That is what he indicated he is going to do, but he is going to continue to import high priced, internationally priced oil into the Atlantic provinces and Quebec. This means that not only will that petroleum cost more in absolute terms in those parts of Canada but it will cost more in relative terms, compared with those who live in that part of Canada presently recognized by the Prime Minister and his supporters as being within the boundaries of his national, one-Canada policy.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I am genuinely concerned for eastern Canada, for Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. Those sitting on the Liberal benches opposite, and so far as I know those hon. members to my left who, I thought, were genuinely interested in the problems of low income people and in the problems of regional disparity, do not seem to be aware of the economic implications and the social cost of a policy that abandons the interests of eastern Canada in a matter of serious, vital significance to those provinces.

But I must say, and I am also concerned at this, that while the government appears to have gotten some new lease on life, an extended pardon through the charity of a minority in this House, it also seems to have gotten a new lease on its old arrogance. If anything is worse than the Prime Minister's stated policy it is the rhetoric that he is using to defend it. Not only does his policy divide the country, but his rhetoric will divide it further. He gave proof of that in his performance in Vancouver.

Mr. Hees: What a performance!

Mr. Stanfield: He appears to believe it is in the interests of his national policy in this country to divide the east and the west, and to divide the producing provinces against the rest of the country. This is unquestionably the most serious matter contained in the Prime Minister's policy announcement of last Thursday. But there are other serious omissions as well.

The Prime Minister said on Thursday "it would be in the public interest to facilitate early construction" of the Mackenzie valley pipeline "to move Alaskan gas to United States markets and at the same time to make it possible to move Canadian northern gas to Canadian markets." What does he mean? Does he mean that Canadian gas will move through that pipeline only to Canadian markets? No, he does not. He does not say that. He puts it the other way around. He does not want to say that a significant portion of Canadian gas might have to move to the U.S. market to even begin to interest the Americans in waiting for this project and relying on it. He does not say that because it does not suit his purposes.

He passed off the whole question of native rights and environmental concerns in half a sentence. He neglected to mention that the Americans have been watching our

[Mr. Stanfield.]

performance on these matters. That is one of the reasons they turned down a Mackenzie valley oil line, and they are well along the way to turning down involvement in a gas line unless we are prepared to show them that we are able and willing to settle this question relating to native rights, and to make the Americans some offer that they cannot refuse. I will be interested to hear and to see how my hon. friends to my left react to this so-called policy. I will be most interested indeed to see their vote of confidence in it.

So far as the proposed Canadian petroleum corporation is concerned, the Prime Minister gave us some platitudinous generalities, and we were told that all would be revealed by the minister in the next session of parliament. Mr. Speaker, I must apologize to the Prime Minister because I am afraid I laughed out loud at that part of his speech. Surely, we must know at least one basic thing about this corporation, and there is no reason why we should not know it now. On what terms will this corporation compete with privately-owned companies? If the government has thought all this through, I would expect some minister to be able to answer that question for us in the course of today's debate.

It is obvious that tossing this project into a speech, without spelling out its basic terms of reference and modus operandi, is bound to have a discouraging effect on private planning to help find the energy resources for the future that, I agree with the Prime Minister, are so important to this country. But we don't even know, Sir, the extent to which this proposed Canadian petroleum corporation will be capitalized. At a time when continuing development is a matter of such concern to the Prime Minister, as well as to the rest of us, it is surely insane for the government to generate further uncertainty in the industry by leaving basic questions like that up in the air.

The Prime Minister's declaration of his national energy policy may exceed the fondest dreams of some, but that policy represents a nightmare for many others, including those provinces for which it offers nothing to alleviate their present difficulties and for which, in the several years ahead, that policy only means further discrimination, increased economic disparity, and further oppressive burdens to bear in the social costs of enduring this policy. Those who support that policy will become the advocates and architects of a genuine two-Canada policy. They will be supporting a movement toward regional disparity such as we have not yet seen, Mr. Speaker. Those who support it will do so that they themselves may survive, whether or not the hopes of many Canadians perish because their interests have been abandoned.

● (1550)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: It is my earnest belief that we will not have a comprehensive energy policy, a consistent policy—we shall not have any truly national policy based upon consultation and co-operation so long as political expediency rules the judgment of our national government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Today, as the standing orders of this House provide us with the opportunity to do, we are