

Energy

the good if we could use the same persons to channel solar energy.

Mr. Speaker, I would not like my words to be interpreted as those of a waster, far from it. I have been using oil, gas and kerosene for a long time. We used to buy it 30 or 40 years ago at 25 cents a gallon. I bought some about two weeks ago at \$4.50 a gallon. It is far from being the same price. The container has changed, it has been coloured, some odour has been added to it so that it does not smell oil so much, and they find a way to sell it to us at \$4.50 a gallon.

Furthermore, I would add that I favour the energy conservation program. Last weekend, Mr. Speaker, I made a personal experience when I left the House at five o'clock like many of my colleagues. I got my bags ready and then left by car for my riding which is some 300 miles away. While driving I paid attention to the traffic regulations and to my great surprise, when I reached the station where I usually fill up my tank, I noticed that my car had consumed two gallons of gasoline less than usual. That was a personal experience.

I favour such action and measures should be taken to try saving these resources while carrying out all our daily business and doing our work in a normal fashion. Yet between that and pushing the panic button, thereby allowing prices to be considerably increased by those who have the monopoly on the exploitation of these natural resources, there is a world of difference. I would like the government, through its ministers, to keep its eyes open on that situation so that the public can take us seriously. Canadians are urged to insulate their homes properly. I support this program because it is quite sensible. I have never believed that a father, even if he is a millionaire, should encourage his children to waste. I have never believed that myself. I think that a millionaire is most able to give wise advice to his children so that they can better manage their own affairs. Someone who does not own anything cannot ask his children to save anything, because they have nothing to save, nothing to safeguard. The affluent people are those who are in the best position to try to invite others to do something so that altogether in Canada we may make better use of our natural riches, even electricity. When we are 20 miles from Montreal, I look at the street lights on each side of the Trans-Canada highway and by God, they are all turned on even in bright daylight. We are told to save electricity, to be careful, to turn lights off when there is no need for them, yet the government does not even set the good example.

Mr. Speaker, how many buildings, even those occupied by the federal and provincial governments are lighted all day long, all night long, thereby wasting energy. Yet that good example should be given, Mr. Speaker, and it is—

Mr. Marceau: Sometimes it costs less that way.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): My colleague, the member for Lapointe (Mr. Marceau), says that sometimes it costs less to

leave the lights on! Perhaps it is cheaper, so let us leave our engines running.

An hon. Member: It depends.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Yes, it depends. So I think that consuming uselessly is spending. I am convinced that the hon. member for Lapointe made a very serious reflection. Quite possibly what he said could be true in certain cases but in any event one has to be able to distinguish. One must also distinguish in the use of our natural resources.

In any case I do not want to delay unduly the passage of Bill C-19. I merely wanted to make a few remarks at this stage to further urge the government to be careful vis-à-vis those who have the possibility of doing research work. They are given tax benefits. They are given benefits to allow them to be able to do more. But they should not laugh at people either. At the end of the year we should not hear about shocking profits and hidden profits on which no taxes are paid. It is important to keep our eyes open and really see how the wealth of the people is being administered because natural resources are a common good. We agree that this common good should be exploited, that it should be put at the service of the people as a whole and that funds should be voted to go further ahead, but only after it is found that they are not hiding the truth away from us so the people will be filled with hope and will co-operate in an intelligent and well-informed manner instead of being distrustful. That is the whole difference. And when you have people who co-operate with government because they are well enlightened I think that makes running things a lot easier and all people can finally benefit from it.

● (2012)

[English]

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-19 is a bill we have to put through for a very simple and obvious reason: we need access to the oil sands of Alberta to guarantee that we will have sufficient of the so-called traditional types of oil to keep our industrial machine operating. I do not like this Petroleum Administration Act, as the debates of several years ago will testify, because it is a major infringement of the rights of the provinces to control their own resources. I will not speak on that subject tonight; we had a go at that several years ago.

Tonight I should like to refer to the practical problem which this particular bill brings to mind, and I want to put forward a positive suggestion on how to cope with that problem. Bill C-19 is using the powers of the Petroleum Administration Act to control prices. That is a movement toward restriction, under the powers of trade of the government, in the economic affairs of this nation. Not only is it an infringement of the principal rights of ownership over the resources as laid down in 1867 in the original British North America Act, but it was also made abundantly clear in the amendments to the British North America Act in 1930 and 1931.