

Income Tax Act

isters, as well as statements by people in the industry. The only favourable comments I can find in this magazine are some statements made by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, but the other 15 or 20 statements are extremely critical of the National Energy Program. I think the minister would learn a lot about his government's programs and the effect they are having on the nation if he would read this magazine. If he has not, I would suggest that it would make great reading for him tonight.

The statement by Mr. Robert H. McClelland, minister of energy, mines and petroleum resources for the province of British Columbia, is headed "Significant Slump Expected". I will not read his statement in full, but in part it reads:

—unless the federal government seriously reconsiders its positions, the outlook is very discouraging.

Then there is considerable detail, similar to what was in the two letters I received this week.

The next article to which I will refer is by Mr. Selby W. Porter, president, Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors. This is not a multinational firm nor does it have anything to do with OPEC. He states:

The combination of the recent federal budget, the national energy program, the lack of a pricing agreement for crude oil between the federal government and the producing provinces, and the declining gas sales and exports to the United States, combine to ensure a downturn of exploratory and development activity in 1981.

How on earth can we become self-sufficient when every oil company and drilling company is winding down?

Mr. Porter goes on to say:

The outlook for 1981 in the present circumstances is dismal for the contracting industry; with a forecast of only 5,800 wells to be drilled in 1981, and as a consequence we are faced with the prospect of a large surplus of equipment, service facilities and personnel.

This doom and gloom story goes on. Here is a statement by Mr. Jack M. MacLeod, chairman of the board of governors, Canadian Petroleum Association. The heading of his article is "Self sufficiency goal slips away". Here is another statement: "Canada's potential continues to be frustrated by the failures of our national policies."

I cannot find any statement anywhere which gives this government any credit at all for any of its energy or budget policies. I do not know whether this minister wants to make a statement today as to whether the government is looking at changes, is concerned, or whether this is all false information which these people are handing out.

If the minister would like to take a few minutes to make a statement as a start, we would certainly appreciate hearing from him. The explanation to date from the energy minister was meaningless. Perhaps this minister might have a better explanation as to what corrective measures the government is going to take.

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Chairman, I have a few opening comments and then I would like to ask the minister some questions. I

assume he is in the House this afternoon to answer some questions.

Mr. McKenzie: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, I wish to rise on a point of order. I do not like to interrupt my colleague, but if the minister is not going to answer any questions, could he inform the House that he is refusing to do so? That way we will know whether we are wasting our time here, and we will just have to make 20-minute speeches. I allowed time for the minister to answer, and he seemed to be rising. Then you recognized the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River. Let us hear from the minister if he wants to answer any questions.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: My apologies to the hon. member for Winnipeg-Assiniboine. I did not realize the minister was rising. We will ask the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River if we may continue—as I ought to have done earlier—and hear the minister in reply to questions.

[Translation]

Mr. Bussi res: Mr. Chairman, I believe that if we start replying to all the questions asked after each speech, we shall never be able to conclude the clause by clause consideration of this bill. However, as concerns the specific question asked by the hon. member at the end of his speech having regard to the energy policy of this government, I would like to repeat that the position of the government as expressed by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is quite clear and very well-known. Not only have the views of the government concerning our energy program been expressed today during the oral question period, but they have also been discussed many times in the last few weeks during the oral question period and outlined during the debate on certain bills. I do not believe that our position in this regard is ambiguous. What we want is to develop the energy sector in Canada and to Canadianize the industry while meeting the objective of self-sufficiency.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: The hon. President of the Privy Council on a point of order.

[English]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the hon. member from North Carolina—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Pinard: I am sorry. I am referring to the hon. member who just rose on a point of order and I apologize to him. I just want to bring to his attention that there is an understanding that we deliver general speeches on clause 1 of the bill. I understand that questions will be posed when we are at clause by clause study of the bill. I hope that we can come to the clause by clause study of the bill as soon as possible so the minister will be in a position to answer all of the questions that will be put to him.

May I add that when the hon. member was asking questions, the minister could not clearly understand what was