

*Energy Conservation***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—ALLEGED FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT EFFECTIVE ENERGY RESOURCE CONSERVATION PROGRAM****Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley) moved:**

That this House regrets the government's failure to carry out an effective energy resource conservation program and, in particular, calls upon the government to answer the criticism by the International Energy Agency that "there appears to be a substantial gap between principle and practice... that the (Canadian) cabinet appears to have accepted the goal of conservation without recognizing the need to implement the goal with specific actions."

He said: Mr. Speaker, this motion, of course, represents the position of this party that the government has done absolutely with regard to energy resource conservation in Canada. In speaking to my motion, I speak not only for the people of Canada but, in effect, for the countries of the world, because the International Energy Agency, an agency of industrialized countries designed to examine what is happening in respect of the use of energy around the world, has seriously condemned Canada for doing so little in the area of energy conservation.

In a period when the world is experiencing perhaps the most serious economic problems and difficulties since the depression, it is heartening to every citizen of this small global planet that countries of the world can get together to develop international programs for conserving energy. It is disheartening to every Canadian that when that agency begins to look at what various countries such as Canada are doing in respect of the conservation of energy, and appoints a sub committee consisting of Spain, Sweden and Belgium to investigate what Canada is doing, it should come to the conclusion that Canada is doing a very little so far as the conservation of energy is concerned. In fact, it reported to its full membership that Canada is not coming to grips at all with energy conservation.

It is not very surprising that it should come to such a conclusion, because in Canada we are spending 11 cents per capita on the conservation of energy, compared to Britain which spends 19 cents per capita for energy conservation and Sweden which spends 31 cents per capita. What is the consequence of the fact that we are doing so little about energy conservation? In 1974, consumption of energy in Canada went up 7.8 per cent, whereas in the United States consumption of energy went down .8 per cent, and that consumption of energy in western Europe went down 1.8 per cent. Throughout the world, where countries are concerned about the profligate use of energy, consumption has been cut back and is dropping, while in this country consumption of energy is rising at a very extensive rate.

It is no wonder, when there is a review by an independent group of countries looking at Canada's problem, that those countries should be appalled by the things they observed. I know the government says it is not astonishing that the consumption of energy went up in Canada when it went down in other countries because, after all, the Canadian economy was for a time more prosperous than the economies of some other countries. But consider this assertion. While it is true that the Canadian GNP went up

a year ago by about 4.5 per cent when our energy consumption went up by about 8 per cent, when we compare this with the situation in a country such as Sweden, which is no different from us in respect of its location, in terms of its northern exposure, we find that there when the GNP went up, energy consumption went down.

We must face the fact that Canada is one of the most wasteful users of energy of any country in the world, and that this cannot be attributed to the fact that our GNP is growing faster than that of other countries, because this is not so. We are not using energy effectively. We have the second highest per capita use of energy of any country in the world. We use more energy, per dollar of gross national product generated, than any other country in the world.

By any measure, Canada has been profligate in the use of energy. How strange it is that now, two years after the development of the energy crisis, we must have a debate in the House of Commons about conservation of energy. How peculiar it is that two years later nothing has been done in this country to conserve energy. One must ask oneself why the government does not do anything about energy consumption and why it does not seem to care. I think the answer to why nothing has been done by the government is the fact that it does not know what the energy situation actually is in the country. The reason they do not know is that they have been fed, or used, or have had to make their decisions and policies on the basis of reports from the National Energy Board and other departments which have been fantastically wrong in their analyses and predictions. The government really does not have any foundation upon which to make any sort of policy.

● (1510)

It is to me incredible that in 1971 we could have had a minister of energy, mines and resources in this country saying that we have enough oil to last us for the next 923 years. It was nice that he could round out the figure. He also said that we had enough gas to last us for the next 328 years. I am referring, of course, to the famous speech made by that minister in Denver in 1971. Only five years ago a government spokesman, a member of the cabinet, said that we have enough energy in this country to suffice for the next 1,000 years, approximately. In 1969 the National Energy Board was saying we should export more because we had these great resources and we had everything we needed. It is evident that the government had no basis on which to make decisions, and because they had no such basis the position they have taken is that they should not do anything at all about the matter.

I know government people will say that there has been some sort of a program. What has it been? A year or so ago, when they wanted the Canadian people to become interested in energy conservation, the government published a book telling Canadians to shut off the lights; and they spent \$2.5 million on advertising it. Interestingly enough, when people wrote asking for the book, it was not even available, and what is even more interesting, \$2.5 million was spent on advertising when the total amount spent on energy research was only about \$1.25 million. What an incredible set of priorities this government has, when it spends twice as much on advertising as it does on research to find ways in which we can conserve energy.

[Mr. Speaker.]