

Petro-Canada Act

saved; in fact, the Progressive Conservative Party cost Canadian taxpayers \$300,000 through being on strike with full pay. That is what they did. We know where the Conservatives stand—they are anti-Petro-Canada and pro-multinational. Of course the New Democratic Party is locked in with that group of obstructionists which is against the PIP grant. That is absolutely unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. Supposedly they would prefer the old depletion allowance that we took away.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway reiterated that he did not think the PIP grants were useful to industry. I should like to tell him that the PIP program is going to be very useful, particularly in Atlantic Canada. Many companies there are coming forward to make sure that they can fit in the PIP program with the exploration and activity that is taking place on the east coast. The government ought to be commended for that. But the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway wants to destroy the free enterprise system. That is not the intention of the government, Mr. Speaker; we believe that we are assisting it. I imagine the hon. member would prefer that we go back to the Regina Manifesto.

The hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) talked about the \$5 billion as being a transfer to Petro-Canada which is taking place now. That is not the case. As he ought to know, Petro-Canada is planning for the future and for the benefit of all Canadians. As the situation warrants it will be called upon to use the money that this bill authorizes. Therefore I reject his statement.

Bill C-101, an act to amend the Petro-Canada Act, is not a long or complex bill. It consists of a few clauses, most of which are technical in nature, serving to clarify and consolidate the act. There are a few changes which are not of major significance, such as the provision for payment to the directors of the corporation for the many tasks undertaken in addition to attending meetings and the payment of money that it lent in connection with the Cold Lake program. Finally, there are three areas in which significant initiatives are proposed, although it must be acknowledged that these are not new initiatives. All of them were announced or indicated in the National Energy Program.

These three initiatives are amendments to allot funds for Canertech—and obviously hon. members opposite are not in favour of that—to permit the allocation of start-up funds to Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation and to raise the authorized share capital of Petro-Canada.

Speaking of the first initiative, the bill now before us provides authority for repayment of capital that Petro-Canada has advanced to its subsidiary Canertech, and also the payment for services it has provided to the new corporation during its start-up period.

As for Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation, it has yet to receive start-up funds. This bill provides for up to \$60 million of the \$250 million that has been allocated to it for the four-year period ending 1984-85.

Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation may be a world first. There have been a number of bilateral agreements for petroleum development assistance and technology

transfer, but it probably represents the first permanent agency to provide development assistance. It is an existing idea that has been well received by the countries of the Third World and by international assistance agencies. Again, the Government of Canada ought to be commended for taking these new bold initiatives.

In the nine years since the international oil price began to climb, severe adjustment problems have not been confined to the developed countries with high energy costs. They have also occurred in middle-income countries where opportunities for economic development were often based on the increased use of imported oil. These middle-income countries, often dependent upon the export of a few commodities or manufactures for their foreign exchange, have found it difficult to cope with the tenfold increase in the price of oil. The repercussions have been severe.

For a number of obvious reasons, the large oil companies have little incentive to search for small fields in remote locations. Although there are excellent petroleum prospects in the Third World, exploration in these countries has been at a low level—not at the level that their geological potential would warrant. The countries need an assessment of their petroleum resources but they lack the knowledge and technology to do this. Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation can assist a few countries in their search for oil. It can provide the experience and the technology to assess the petroleum potential and to drill. It may also have a role in the development of the fields it discovers, but the greatest need will remain the need for assistance in exploration. Once a field has been found, the host country will find it comparatively easy to borrow development capital against proven reserves or to interest an oil company in operating the field.

This Crown corporation responds to a pressing need for development assistance that is recognized both by the countries of the Third World and by international organizations and agencies. This initiative will probably be imitated in the development assistance programs of other countries, and I am confident that members of the House, including hon. members opposite, will support the funding of Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation as is provided in this bill.

There are many parallels that could be drawn between the Canadian experience and the experience of oil-importing Third World countries. Canada has had the advantage of a rich and diverse energy endowment combined with the wealth and human resources and it should have taken full advantage of that endowment.

Mr. Mayer: And we have energy policies to lock them in the ground.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, I wish you would tell the hon. member opposite to stop rattling his chain. He is becoming a bit of a nuisance to all hon. members.

Nonetheless, we have been an oil importing nation and we have faced the problem of assessing and developing our frontier petroleum resources.