

Petroleum Administration Act

tion. The president of Paramount Resources Ltd., a Canadian oil company, states in a letter:

On October 28, 1980, the Government of Canada saw fit to confiscate 25 per cent of the interest we have earned, and paid for at great expense, with no restitution or compensation whatever . . . If Paramount was a foreign corporation, we might be enraged. As a Canadian company, I can find no words to describe the rape and plunder the Canadian government has perpetrated on our company. The government has effectively deprived Paramount of all possible profit in the future.

I quote from another letter to the Prime Minister, this time from a resident of Alberta:

I am still in a state of shock and disbelief that a Canadian government can propose such complete control over a given industry, amounting to de facto nationalization, as our current federal government has done with its national energy program and related budget proposals.

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When opposition from such a great multitude arises to any initiative, then no matter which government has conceived it, a second look should be taken to determine whether the measure proposed is really good for the country. First we saw the official opposition oppose the government's energy policies—and we still oppose them. Then we saw the western producing provinces, represented by all parties, oppose the government's energy proposals. And now we see industry and private citizens from all parts of the nation opposing them. Should this not tell the government something?

It frightens me to think of the future directions this government might take. To further state my case, I quote from yet another letter written by a western Canadian to Liberal MPs. This person expresses his deep regret regarding the government's energy proposals, and he states:

I am mad and saddened by what you have done and are doing to Canada. First, I do not think that you have properly assessed the rage of western Canadians regarding, inter alia, the budget, your energy policy and the constitution. Secondly, the discriminatory manner in which you have attacked the west and the oil industry assures me that Canada cannot become self-sufficient in oil in the foreseeable future.

I believe opposition to the government's energy policy is widespread and completely clear and that everybody in Canada recognizes this fact except the Liberal government. When I look at the direction the government is taking, I find myself past the feeling of frustration—I am sick and I am saddened because the federal government's actions will be sorely felt by every Canadian.

There is a famous saying which quite appropriately suits the Government of Canada at this time, and it is, "Forgive them Lord, for they know not what they do". Yet, I firmly believe that the government does know what it is doing. I believe it knows, as I do, that it is destroying this institution through its motion of closure and is destroying any sense of national unity by ignoring western Canada. It is attempting to destroy free enterprise in this country by taking over the oil industry. Most important, it is refusing to listen to the views of the people it is supposed to represent as a national government. I am truly saddened.

The Liberals can still turn things around if they wish. The government can still move away from the dangerous path it is

on if it realizes that for us to continue as a strong, independent nation, the foreground must be the people with the government in the background. Big government and the massive tax dollar will not make a country work.

Mr. Roy MacLaren (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, a number of previous participants in this debate have referred to the fact that Canada holds a special position in this energy-sensitive world. Our resources in oil, natural gas, coal, and uranium are envied throughout the world. Unlike most of our industrial partners and competitors, we remain a net exporter of energy.

Just as Canada holds a special position in the world, the petroleum industry holds a special position in the Canadian economy. It produces a commodity of unrivalled and pervasive importance. No industry has undergone or is undergoing more rapid growth. The energy industry underpins and dominates our economic strategy. However, despite Canada's position of strength there is, however, reason for some concern. While Canada is energy self-sufficient, it is not oil self-sufficient. Oil currently provides about 40 per cent of our energy needs. But for every four barrels of oil that we consume in Canada, one must be imported from a foreign country.

The supply of oil from foreign sources cannot be relied upon. The outlook in the Middle East is unpromising. The Iranian-Iraqi war has affected the supply of oil to many countries. Some have warned that supplies may be insufficient to meet future demand. After the confused and contradictory policies of the previous Conservative government, which greatly offended a number of our friends in the Middle East, the Prime Minister's recent tour has done much to retrieve our reputation there. However, to establish a truly independent Canadian foreign policy, we must have an independent Canadian energy policy. After all, foreign oil is expensive oil, and unless we act now we will have to buy more of it. The world price will continue to be unsteady, erratic and unpredictable.

For that reason, among others, the government has proclaimed a goal of oil independence for Canada. In this we have asked for the support of all Canadians. We expect to become self-sufficient in oil within ten years. And in reaching this goal we believe that Canadian consumers would prefer to pay Canadian prices, not prices set by cartels elsewhere. We believe that Canadians will accept the need to support both at the gas pumps and as taxpayers, Canadian production—not foreign development.

How do we eliminate the foreign barrel of oil? The national energy program provides the answer. First, by encouraging more exploration and development in Canada, we can replace foreign oil with Canadian oil. We have set aside over \$300 million so that we may use our oil more efficiently. A second approach is to substitute other more plentiful energy found in Canada for foreign oil. We have allocated \$1.6 billion for our off-oil program. Our third approach is to restrain the total demand for oil through a major effort at conservation, for which we have provided over \$1 billion in federal funding. Finally, to provide for our more secure energy future, there is