

Petroleum Products Controls

● (1610)

As I said a few moments ago, we are shipping out our conventional crude and natural gas, and the end of those supplies is in sight. We have a life index for oil of probably between 12 and 17 years, and a life index for natural gas of 27 or 28 years. That does not mean that we will not have any energy at the end of those periods. On the other hand it does mean that we will need to turn to more expensive forms of energy, such as oil made from tar sands, gas made from coal, natural gas procured from the Arctic and the Mackenzie Valley. We ought to be conserving this cheap oil, not only to give the Canadian people reasonably priced crude products, as at present, but, as well, because our whole industrial strategy in the world depends on our preserving our competitive advantage by having cheap energy to produce manufactured and processed goods for sale on the world market. This government, in my opinion, has never understood the use of energy as a tool in our struggle to win for Canada a place in the durable goods markets of the world and thereby create more jobs for Canadians.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that unless the government starts now to deal with the short-term energy crisis, we will have thrown away our trump cards when we come to deal with the long-term energy crisis, for that is the crisis which will determine whether Canada will survive as an important manufacturing nation in the world.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is any significance in there not being an immediate reply by the government to the motion moved by the NDP. I think that all the evidence shows that all political parties at this moment of Canada's history are turning their deepest thoughts to this problem in an effort to find some way of grappling with the question of energy and Canada's future. I do not think it is trite to say that our future as a nation depends on our wise use of minerals and our wise use of energy which, by God's grace, we find in Canada.

I wish to commend the ex-leader of the NDP for his statesmanlike presentation of what he terms as the short-term approach. At first he ignored the long-term approach. Near the end of his remarks he came down, I think, on the right side by suggesting that ultimately we will need to grapple with this long-term question. I share with him his concern that the government for ten years, not four, had avoided grappling with the issue of a national energy policy, a national mineral policy and a national resource policy. If one peruses the records of this House since 1963, one will find frequent questions asked by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) and other hon. members of the House, including myself, with regard to our need to move in this area.

I am not going to spend all my time in dealing with generalities. As I say, I wish to commend the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands for his speech today. It shows that real thought is being given to this question. I am glad he changed the attitude which was evident three years ago when, in this House, he commended this government for its efforts in trying to sell more oil in the United States. All I can say is that in 1970 the hon. member said

[Mr. Douglas.]

we should sell more oil to the United States and that the government should do everything it could to sell more oil in that market. Today, he has come round to another way of thinking and said that we should not do that.

Mr. Peters: The hon. member has been reading the wrong *Hansard*.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): The hon. member says I am reading the wrong *Hansard*. I have a copy of *Hansard* in my hand, and if the hon. member wishes, I will quote for him. I am simply commending the hon. member for his change of attitude. I am not going to go over the political history of the trapeze act that the NDP has carried on for the past 35 years in Canada. It has shifted its position whenever the wind has veered. I am glad to welcome them on board, so to speak, and commend them for their position, which I hope is constant.

An hon. Member: And who is jumping on the band wagon now?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, there is an energy crisis today. Its size and scope has been outlined well and ably by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands. This is not a new crisis, in the opinion of some. In 1952, the Paley report of the United States, which had been asked for by the president in 1944, was published. The purpose in commissioning the report was this: The American government wanted the experts involved to tell the American people about the huge consumption of their strategic resources during the fighting of the war and what the future would be for their industrial complex. That report of 1952 warned that by 1980 the American Republic would be facing serious deficits in strategic resources of minerals, oil and gas.

In 1959, the Netschert report outlined this shortage in a different form and put it even more strongly. In 1963, the Landsberg report of the United States put the question in wider perspective. It warned the United States that it could get off the hook only if it used more expensive renewable resources. So, one cannot say that we have arrived at our present situation without warning.

As I say, today we face a crisis. This crisis has not only to do with a temporary shortage of supplies because, after all, there are plentiful sources of energy in the world. Rather, the crisis has to do with intermediate or short-term supply and price. At present the United States, an industrial nation, and Japan and western Europe, also industrial areas, are desperately short of the traditional fossil fuels, oil, gas and coal. Of all industrial nations, with the exception of Russia, Canada is the only one that can look with assurance at the future in the short term and in the long term. We have proven supplies for 15 years for oil, 30 years for gas and, when you take coal, we cannot even begin to estimate how many years of supply we have. If we add up all our resources, according to conservative estimates our potential reserves of oil, gas and other energy resources will last us about 500 years at present consumption rates. So we, ourselves, are not in a precarious position.

As the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands pointed out, if we take this backlog of resources and use them to correct the American mistake of the past 25 years,