

Canada Oil and Gas Act

managed in the past. We can learn from the experience of other countries which have fairly recently come into the oil and energy business and have been able to monitor the losses they have incurred. We can look at this and we can learn. I suggest to this government, before it is too late, that it put into this legislation in explicit terms the guarantees that will make sure Canada benefits from the development of Canada's resources and that they be of lasting benefit.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by dealing with the matter that is before us, unlike some other speakers in this debate we have just heard tonight. Let me just outline for the record that the matter before us is a matter of motions that basically amend Clause 10 of Bill C-48. That clause in turn deals with the matter of exploration agreements and the ministerial discretion involved in the issuance of these exploration agreements. I merely wanted to put that on the record to show that very little in legislation is ever new. Any person who has experience in legislative matters or has involved himself in legislation in the provinces of Canada or in the federal Parliament will know these are simply regurgitated provisions from other statutes. Anybody who has dealt with urban planning will recognize these provisions as what is known in that field as "contract planning".

What these provisions do is very simply this: after enacting very complicated statutory provisions with great restrictions and protections, the provisions allow you to simply set them aside, sit down with a person who may be a friend, or a person with whom you can deal at arm's length, and write whatever deal you want to write. That is what an exploration agreement can do. That is why we are concerned with this matter and that is why we want some amendments to make sure that any exploration agreement which is written will be fair and will have the protection of other provisions of the act which check ministerial discretion. That is why we are here tonight.

I could go on and talk about the specifics of the bill, but I am afraid earlier speakers have got me off that subject. I want to deal with the remarks by the parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Etobicoke North (Mr. MacLaren), because I never heard such a massive distortion of the National Energy Program and the effect it is having and is going to have on Canada and Canadians.

I will dismiss my friend from the NDP to my left by simply saying this. It would be nice to think that all Canadians were willing to sit down and pool all the resources in one pot and divide them up by the number of people in Canada. That is not the way the system works, and it never will work that way. Those people had better start to realize that and they had better start dealing with the practicalities and realities of Canadian life.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosby: Let me tell you that this country was built on initiative and incentive. It was not built on giveaways, it was not built on sharing the wealth, and it will not last for another

decade if that is the principle by which we are guided. We have to build incentives into our system, we have to encourage initiative, and we have to get Canadians working. We cannot give our resources away, and there is no reason for those who have worked and earned something to share with those who refuse to work and earn. I will stand on that principle and defend it anywhere in this country.

The hon. member for Etobicoke North, as I indicated, gave a dissertation on the National Energy Program, of which this Bill C-48, the Canada Oil and Gas Act, is an emanation. It prompted me to get the Canadian Parliamentary Guide to have a look at the background of that hon. member. I saw right away that he was once in the diplomatic service. I do not know if that accounts for his kind remarks about the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacGuigan), but I can say that he certainly is a diplomat and put the best possible light on the effects of the National Energy Program and of Bill C-48 which arises from it.

He is wrong in practically everything he said about the National Energy Program. Let me make it very clear that I am no lobbyist for the oil industry. I am a simple lawyer from Halifax, Nova Scotia. I have spent my time on the legal aid program, I have spent my time on social services, but I have difficulty getting oil companies to deliver oil to my premises on a winter night, the same as do many other Canadians. But I want to say this. The private sector, whether you like it or not, is the sector which has developed the energy system in Canada, and unless that private sector is encouraged to go on with that development, it will certainly not happen. It is as clear as that. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) is not going to man one oil rig anywhere. He is not going to bring in one barrel of oil and, in most cases, the people he has put in place to do that do not know any more about the industry than he does. If you do not believe that, go and ask anybody.

An hon. Member: That is absolute baloney.

Mr. Crosby: The hon. member says it is "absolute baloney". Unfortunately the member does not go out to the Alberta oil sands. He does not sit down with the members or representatives of Syncrude to talk to them and find out what their problems are. He does not go to Cold Lake to see what is happening there.

The National Energy Program and Bill C-48 deal with Canada lands. Canada lands, for those who do not realize it are the offshore lands on the east coast of Canada and on the Pacific coast, and the lands in the northern part of Canada in the high Arctic. The rules and regulations which relate to the development of those lands are quite different from the rules and regulations that govern the development of the land in more developed areas. When the parliamentary secretary comes before this House and reads provisions from the Alberta legislation and says that those same provisions are justifiable in relation to an oil rig that is miles off the coast of Canada and that the government should govern exploration in the high Arctic, he is simply not giving the facts, because that is not