

oil and pay horrendous subsidies at the expense of the taxpayer. At the same time we do not get on with the job of oil self-sufficiency in Canada. We are the one country in the world which has it within our grasp to achieve oil self-sufficiency, and we are not doing it.

The government across the way says that it cannot come to an agreement with Alberta, which is one of the major producers, but this government does not sit down and negotiate with Alberta. That is why there is no agreement. There were two things which Alberta would not negotiate. Alberta would not negotiate an export tax on natural gas and a tax at the wellhead. Through its National Energy Program this government has brought in the very two things it was asked not to bring in because they threaten ownership of the natural resource.

This takes us back again to the history of our country. Western Canadians want to be full partners in this federation. They do not want to feel that they are a colony which has no control on an equal basis with the other provinces. That is all they are asking.

In Calgary we read the headline "Oil drilling is booming," but it is not booming in Alberta or Saskatchewan any more. It is booming in the United States because the industry here is slowly packing its trucks and moving individual factories to the United States. Why? The industry is doing this because in the United States it can get a return on its investment much quicker. This is much to the delight of the United States government, which welcomes these people with open arms. The United States government is not putting up any barriers whatsoever.

Mr. Daudlin: Nonsense.

Mr. Shields: The hon. member across the way says "nonsense". He is right; it is nonsense. Why does he not tell the minister that it is nonsense? I know it is nonsense. I have been there, and I have seen. Has the hon. member been to the border to watch the rigs go by? If the hon. member is saying the whole energy policy is nonsense, I agree with him. Let him tell that to his Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

The measures in the budget dealing with energy actually discourage production. How can we get people to invest the vast amounts of money required for a new tar sands plant in Cold Lake or for a new tar sands plant at the Alsands project north of Fort McMurray? Each company is requesting the minimum, which they are prepared to accept as the maximum, of a 20 per cent return on a discounted cash flow basis. When the figures are worked out it amounts to about an 11 per cent or 12 per cent return on the actual investment. That is what the companies want. Without these companies in place in Alberta and Saskatchewan, there would not be much of an oil industry in Canada. In fact there would be nothing.

● (1640)

The hon. member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan mentioned in the course of his remarks the subsidy which the province of Ontario paid to the producing provinces, and particularly to

Income Tax Act

Alberta, for western oil during the 1960s. I ask hon. members opposite to research this matter. Subsidies of ten cents per barrel, 20 cents per barrel, and one year it even went as high as 30 cents per barrel, were paid. But the total subsidy for that ten-year period prior to 1970 was less than \$1 million. I would ask hon. members opposite whether they know the total subsidy, which has now gone the other way with Alberta subsidizing Ontario, for the ten-year period 1970 to 1980. The amount stands at just under \$30 billion. Yet they ask why people in western Canada are upset—because they are not being listened to, and the government is not attempting to understand their feelings or the position in which they find themselves.

I ask each government member to search his or her conscience. I love my country, and I do not like what is happening. The proudest moment for me was the day I walked through the doors into this chamber to represent the great constituency of Athabasca. But I have watched the arrogance of the government. When I go home, sometimes I want to lie down and cry because of the attitude of the government and because it will not listen. I ask government members to go out to western Canada where they can see what is happening.

I would now like to talk on the Income Tax Act, particularly the portion which allows for the discrimination against men and women in the area of child care expense deductions. I thought that we lived in an enlightened society and in a country which would not discriminate against men and women who are single family parents. However, the Income Tax Act does discriminate. A man who supports a child or children cannot claim on the same basis as a woman who supports a child or children. There is something wrong here and the matter should be addressed.

I hope that hon. members opposite will read the national energy policy and make notes in the margin with the thought in mind of trying on the shoes of the people in western Canada who have invested their life savings in small drilling companies, small service companies, and small trucking companies. Many of these companies are now facing bankruptcy and receivership because the industry is moving away. I ask hon. members opposite whether they would feel threatened by a central government which is obviously moving toward a centralized approach to running the country. How would hon. members opposite feel if they saw their life savings disappearing and they were facing the prospect of starting over? Indeed, how would hon. members opposite feel if they felt that their only alternative was to leave the country of their birth and move, lock, stock and barrel, to the United States?

I am not being an alarmist. I am merely trying to outline what is happening in Alberta. Many friends of mine have invested every cent they have. Their wives work teaching school, nursing, and so on, to build up a small business in the oil industry. Many of these friends are now faced with the question of remaining Canadian or moving to the United States. These people are the kinds of entrepreneurs Canada needs to develop, but this budget is encouraging many of these people to pack up and move out. I hope with all my heart that members opposite will think the matter through, read over the