

*Canada Oil and Gas Act*

corporation, and I assume they are, will obviously want you to drill that well in an area that is likely to contribute to the information or knowledge about their land next door. That is obviously what they want done. Yet, they will be sitting there as a full partner making a decision, voting on a decision as to how the exploration should be handled on this land.

There is a conflict of interest there that makes the situation hopeless, Mr. Speaker. Any reasonable, fair-minded and intelligent person, any person concerned at all about what happens to Canada lands and the success, or lack of it, of our exploration programs under those lands, has to say, "Gee, that may be not good, and not only not good for the private sector but probably not good for Petro-Canada and certainly not good for Canada".

If Members of Parliament are concerned about the welfare of Canada, and we are supposed to be concerned, then surely we must take a critical look at this and say that maybe, and quite likely, if PetroCan is to sit at the table and make these decisions, it should be there as a full paying partner. It should be there with as much at stake as a corporation, as the other person sitting at the table.

I could mention all of the things that were said to this House by ministers of the Crown in this government about the fact that Petro-Canada would be a corporation like others and would be expected to compete and to act like other oil and gas companies, and expected to be responsible. I could bring to mind all of those solemn commitments made by members opposite to remind them of the things they said and the commitments they made. Perhaps I should. Their short memory in regard to promises and commitments is well known to the House and to this country. I should not have to mention this because they are supposedly intelligent, honest and sincere, honourable members. If they are, Mr. Speaker, then they should recognize that Clause 31 in the bill is improper. They should recognize this if they want to live up to the commitments they made, and they should have PetroCan act in the way they indicated. If they require PetroCan to undertake the obligations this House was told it would undertake, then they should insist that PetroCan, once it has the land, should operate under the same rules as everyone else. They should be working partners at the table with their corporation's cash up front. They are sitting as working partners, contributing cash, so when they contribute to a decision, their cash is there. When they make a decision, they should have as much at risk as do other partners to that decision. That is the only way you will get the proper kind of decision-making, Mr. Speaker.

Although the time is short, perhaps I should speak about the question of responsible government, about commitments made by presidents of the Treasury Board, prime ministers and ministers of finance, about the impropriety of government activities and government spending that are disguised from this House and from the people of Canada. That is the real impact of what is happening.

Petro-Canada is given a freebie of 25 per cent. The private assets are stolen and given to Petro-Canada. That will not show up in the estimates of this House, nor will it show up in

the blue book, nor in the public accounts of Canada. The transfer of wealth from the private sector to the Crown never shows up, unlike our tax money that shows up in the public accounts and unlike government spending of a normal nature that shows up in the blue book and is examined by the House. The House never has a chance to examine it. The public never knows about it. There is no possibility of an overview and no possibility of an examination and no possibility for any member of the House, elected by the people of Canada, to hold those executives of Petro-Canada accountable for spending our money. There is no way we can examine them. There is no way democracy can work in this circumstance, Mr. Speaker. These private funds will be transferred over to a bunch of appointed people who are accountable to nobody.

● (2110)

Even the meanest socialist who also claims to be a social democrat recognizes that if he is to believe in democracy, public spending must be accessible to a publicly-elected body. The people elected by the voters of Canada must have the ability to somehow determine how much is being spent, by whom and for what purposes. They must have the ability to hold those people to account, at least by way of public exposure, for the activities they are undertaking. In this bill there is no way of doing it. Hundreds of millions and hundreds of billions of dollars are being taken from the private sector and put into the hands of government appointees. They will be spent without any democratic overview. Even a socialist, if he is not also a communist, must agree that that is not correct.

This is why I fervently hope that there are enough hon. members in the House who are willing to say that they take their responsibilities sincerely enough as individual members to examine the real intent of the motion and the real intent of Bill C-48. Hopefully they will vote in accordance with what Canadians expect and with what this great country deserves.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) referred to the meanest type of socialist, I suppose he was looking at me. I should like to say a few words in reply.

This is a very historic night. I understand that a special cabinet meeting is taking place; perhaps it is discussing a proposal to settle the constitutional dispute. We are discussing an important matter tonight as well. There is a feeling or some hope around the building—and I say this in order to put it on the record of *Hansard*—that we can make a major breakthrough on the constitutional matter. I am sure all people in the country and all hon. members of the House would applaud it. I do not want to be out of order. I want to talk to Bill C-48.

The hon. member for Calgary Centre said rhetorically that we should speak about the real intention of this motion. All right, let us do so. The real intention of the Conservative motion is that they do not like the transfer of shares to Petro-Canada. They will block it any way they can. They have