

Oil Substitution Act

Mrs. Sparrow: Where were they two years ago?

Mr. Waddell: I will tell you where they were. It is not—

Mr. McDermid: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Hon. Member has been up for nine minutes with one question. He is making another speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member is correct. The reason I let the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) go on for such a long period is that I had not recognized at the time that we had asked for questions and comments. He was the only one who was up. But I will give the remaining time to the Hon. Member for Brampton-Georgetown (Mr. McDermid), if he wishes.

Mr. McDermid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address that point of order. I think the point of order is out of order.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Waddell: I was in the midst of answering the question from my colleague and from the Member over there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No one may monopolize the 10-minute question and comment period.

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, am I to understand that the Speaker can arbitrarily cut off the Member when he is trying to answer a question that takes some time to answer, or is indeed answering another question that came from the floor? There must be give and take in the debate and the Hon. Member for Calgary South (Mrs. Sparrow) just indicated another question for me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will read from the committee report on the spirit of the 10-minute question and comment period. The committee envisaged that exchanges which would take place during the 10-minute question and comment period would be short and sharp. More than one Member should be allowed to take advantage of the 10 minutes available, and the Member whose speech is the subject of a question or comment should be given time within the 10 minutes to reply to the point raised. No specific rules should govern the length of the intervention, that being left to the discretion of the Chair. However, the committee did not wish to see one Member monopolizing the 10-minute period in cases where there are several Members who wish to intervene. Furthermore, the Chair should control the intervention to promote a series of exchanges to enliven debate and other constructive elements lacking in debate simply consisting of a series of speeches.

That was the intent of the committee and that is why I think no one should monopolize the question and comment period. We have one minute left for the Hon. Member for Brampton-Georgetown (Mr. McDermid) with a short reply by the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell).

Mr. McDermid: He did not have a chance to give his speech and he is trying to do it now in 10 minutes.

I want to make it very clear that the Government has provided an extension of the program for those people who signed contracts before November 8 and through no fault of their own could not complete their conversions by March 31. It was extended to the end of June. There has also been an extension on inspections in that they do not have to take place by March 31. They can take place after, but the work must be completed by March 31.

Naturally, everyone wants to get in on the program when they hear it is closing. But to extend the program for three months would cost, by a conservative estimate, \$35 million. The NDP want to just throw the money away. We cannot do that now, and there are other methods of supporting renewable energy in this country and promoting off-oil programs without increasing the expenditure the Government has had to make in the last number of years. It has been beneficial and we do not argue with that, but it is now time to bring this program to a close because we feel the Canadian people now recognize the value of going off oil and will do so on their own because of the major economic benefits to them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) with a short reply.

Mr. Waddell: Cheap reply.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Waddell: Short reply. What I am trying to say is that it is cheap for the Government. It saves 115,000 barrels a day of oil equivalent, or 25 million to 30 million barrels a year. The Government is actually going to make money on this program. I cited two injustices in northern Ontario and in Churchill. I thank the Government for its limited extension, but maybe it could consider a further extension for those particular cases. People are not lining up just because the program is ending. They understand the program better. As well, we really have a problem with lower income people who do not have the money to spend. They need some Government help and the Government is going to save money anyway. That is why we are pressing so hard to have this program extended by at least another six months.

Mr. McDermid: It is not the low-income people who are taking advantage of it.

Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in the debate on Bill C-24 during the closing minutes. It is interesting to note that when the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) speaks it is always with the great reluctance to engage in a discussion on any of the Bills before the House.

This Bill is not designed to eliminate conservation or deny the real desire of the Government to make whatever changes might be appropriate regarding alternative energy, or any