

Canada Oil and Gas Act

● (1650)

Some member was referred to as a hewer of wood. What are we? Hewers of wood and drawers of water. Someone said passers of gas fourth class.

An hon. Member: Spillers of oil.

Mr. Waddell: Whatever we are, we are still a nation that is basically a colony. We were a French colony, became a British colony and now we are an American colony. We are not prepared to do for ourselves what we should have done a long time ago, and that is insist on a real industrial strategy. When talking about creating an industrial strategy, our ambassador to the United States said "I can assure you that this is not so". He said that we are not going to proceed to one. One can see that from Bill C-48.

I offer to the government, other parties and members very concrete, sensible, reasonable amendments which would allow us to have a "buy Canada" program in this bill. It will help small business and other Canadian business get some of the benefits in these great developments that are about to come in our country.

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, I find little pleasure in rising to participate in debate on a bill of this sort which, rather than spelling out Canadian development and planning for Canadian self-sufficiency, stagnates the opportunities which have presented themselves to Canada at this moment in our history. Stagnation of the future is not pleasant to discuss, not even for an opposition member let alone a government member.

There are some things being very seriously overlooked as this question is considered. We were called the friends of the oil industry by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell). One becomes a reasonable friend of those who will develop our oil supplies and bring us Canadian self-sufficiency in our fuel requirements, and in turn make a major contribution to our own self-sufficiency in a fiscal, monetary way as well as in an energy way. This program before us, both the National Energy Program and this bill which invokes some very unacceptable parts of the program, is not a pleasant subject for anybody who is willing to go just a little further than the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway has chosen to go.

We are looking at a program which has put a constraint upon employment. It has done this virtually coast to coast in Canada. As an over-all policy, it has been an inhibitor of our development and economic expansion rather than a developer of the same. The evidence is there for anyone who reads the *Financial Post*, *Financial Times*, *The Globe and Mail* or any one of dozens of publications which have been very careful to analyse the structure.

An hon. Member: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCain: I doubt whether the hon. member has read any or he would not have made the interjection.

We are talking about megaprojects. Megaprojects which might have taken place in the oil industry have been stymied by the greed of the federal government, not by any wish for the development of Canada, because had there been a wish for Canadian development and oil self-sufficiency, there would have been stimulation instead of stagnation. There would have been stimulants instead of sedatives. That has been the characteristic of this structure which the government has put before us.

We have the imposition of ministerial control over the oil industry under this bill to a degree that will be very seriously detrimental to the industry as a whole. Who is going to take the risk of expending moneys of their own or their stockholders in the development of further supplies of oil or gas when they know that if they get a lease from the government, they will not be their own managers? They will instead find that the government, the minister, the bureaucracy, will be the managers, the dictators of the use of the land which they have opportunity to explore. There can be no confidence by any thinking businessman if he enters into a contract under this situation.

I agree with the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway that this is an opportunity for the minister to go behind closed doors and reward any friend of the Liberal party with a contract. This is a situation in which huge portions of the industry will never dare utter a word of criticism. Contributors to political campaigns of members on your left, Mr. Speaker, once this is publicized, will be stained in the opinion of the present minister, and there will be very little hope of their getting any concessions in this structure. There will be a friendly allocation of lands as a reward for loyalty and support from those companies and their executives.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway mentioned the figure of a trillion dollars. With respect to hon. members, I think that is beyond the comprehension of anyone in this House. Is there any plan by this government whereby a trillion dollars can be raised for the development of the oil industry within Canada? Does the minister expect the taxpayers of this nation to be prepared to accept a trillion dollars in costs to develop this? Let us take a look at what has happened in some of the other countries mentioned by speakers both on my left and on your right, Mr. Speaker. They suggested that the United Kingdom had gone a different course. Unfortunately, I do not have the clippings in my hand that would be necessary to substantiate the statements, but three statements have come out of the United Kingdom in the last two years, not all from the present U.K. Prime Minister.

A move was taken by the Labour party to sell part of the stock of British Petroleum. The United Kingdom owned different blocks of that stock over a period of years—I believe it was as high as 60 per cent and as low as 49 per cent—until the socialist government of that country decided it would be advantageous to the United Kingdom to sell some of its stock in British Petroleum.

The most significant thing about that company and the government ownership of it was that the government did not