

Energy Supplies

questions that are currently receiving urgent attention from the government and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Before concluding on that point I think I am justified in saying that my exposition or recitation of all the activities in the field of energy under the leadership of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, it seems to me, is a clear rebuttal to the very unjustified charges made against him by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: I just want to say a word or two about the Tories and PetroCan. It mystifies me why they are opposing this national petroleum corporation. PetroCan is presently a major instrument for ensuring secure energy supplies for this country.

An hon. Member: Nonsense.

Mr. MacEachen: It is a major instrument for ensuring secure energy supplies for this country. I repeated the sentence in the hope that the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham would repeat his retort, namely, "Nonsense". I believe that is the kind of attitude that will be very harmful to him and his party when they go into Atlantic Canada seeking votes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: There is clear evidence to all of us that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) wants to abolish Petro-Can, allegedly because it is a threat to free enterprise. He is mistaken. It is not a matter of free enterprise, not a matter of public enterprise versus private enterprise; it is not socialism versus free enterprise. It is Canadian interests versus international interests; and it is Canadian enterprise versus multinational corporations.

Petro-Canada has a central role to play in exploration and supply. To abolish it would be to place our faith, as the Tories apparently do, in the multinational companies. It would also be to exclude Canada from major international activities in the oil field.

It was interesting to me that the eloquence of the words of the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham had hardly escaped from his lips when I picked up today's *Globe and Mail* report on business and read that the government of Newfoundland has committed ideological deviationism because it has not gone along with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) in his efforts to dismantle Petro-Canada. In fact, the *Globe and Mail* tells us that Petro-Canada, the federal energy corporation, has become a major partner in the Eastcan group of France and will take over as the operator of the consortium's offshore exploration program in 1980, according to Newfoundland energy minister Brian Peckford. The report goes on to say:

[Mr. MacEachen.]

● (1640)

Petro-Canada will assume full control of offshore drilling in 1980, a turn of events the minister views as "a major decision in shaping the future development of our offshore resources."

When the government of Newfoundland decided to associate Petro-Canada with offshore exploration so vital to that province, they viewed it as a major decision in shaping the future development of our offshore resources. In our view, the decision to create Petro-Canada was a major decision in shaping the future development of the petroleum and energy interests of Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just a word about the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent). I always try to pay a little attention to his comments. Last night they were somewhat amusing. Certainly they were amusing to me as one who laboured manfully during the period of minority government, to which period in our history the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby made reference last night. I quote him as follows:

When the minister waves the flag about Petro-Canada I recall some private conversations in that period when the Liberal government of the day was by no means enthusiastic about Petro-Canada, the two-price system or the pipeline.

In fairness, the hon. member referred to those three elements—Petro-Canada, the two-price system and the pipeline—as the cornerstones of the evolving energy policy for Canada; I gave him credit for recognizing that reality. But it is the next sentence I found difficult to accept. He went on to say:

In order to survive a crucial vote at Christmas, 1973, and to protect their hides they accepted all three items which were almost literally forced down their throats—

Then, with an innocent rhetorical flourish the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby turned to another subject by saying: "But that is history." Well, of course, it is not history. The hon. member was obviously hallucinating last night when he attempted to ascribe the evolution of these major energy policies to a repentance before a vote in 1973. All I say is that my memory of these things does not coincide with that of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. I see that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is smiling. I hope he is smiling in approval of my history and not of the bad history given us by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. I reject outright the suggestion that these policies were forced upon us because we were afraid to lose a vote.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): We will have a little talk about that.

Mr. MacEachen: I reject that assertion and I believe the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby will agree with me upon reflection. We both realize these were major policies embarked upon at that time by the Government of Canada and that we are continuing to add to the energy potential and the energy security of this country by bringing before the House the measure in the name of my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I do not know who will be proven right with respect to the