

Energy

dependence on foreign oil, we could reduce our deficit, we could reduce our balance of payments problems. Most important of all, we could create an estimated 350,000 jobs for Canadians.

That is the energy situation. That is the energy opportunity. And it is about time we started to treat it as an opportunity and not just as a situation.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have an opportunity to speak this evening on the motion put forward by the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson) relating to energy policy. I was surprised to see the hon. member put forward a motion of this type and I am surprised the official critic is not here to support this motion of the official opposition. Even the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre did not stay around very long after he had made his speech. However, it is rather interesting to note this hon. member alleging there is really a great lack in energy policy when just twelve months ago if we examine the energy policy put forward by the former Progressive Conservative government during the course of their tenure from May 22 to December 13, it was not remarkable for any great amount of policy, as I recall.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Victoria is rising on a point of order.

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member speaking just now referred to my seat-mate, the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre as leaving shortly after making his speech. The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre had a long-standing commitment in his constituency and he has left for Toronto to fulfil it. I assume there is a similar reason for several other seats in the chamber being vacant.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, if we look back at one of the very first actions taken by the Leader of the Opposition as prime minister a year ago, I believe the day on which his government was sworn into office an announcement was made that the Canadian embassy would be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. We all recall what a fiasco that was and how it poisoned relations with the Arab states from which we get much of our oil. It is rather interesting to note that the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre was the minister of trade at that time, and he spent most of his six or eight months in office trying to rectify the negative impact of that action. If we think of some of the other actions taken by that government during the brief tenure in office, we do not see much energy policy emanating from it. During the 1979 election campaign there was a clear commitment by that government to dispose of Petro-Canada as soon as it came to power. But soon after that, that decision was reversed. As I recall, the plan was to sell part of PetroCan and then to give away part of it or, finally, to sell part of it so some of it could be given away and some could be kept. That national petroleum corporation which is so active in many fields in exploration and in developing transportation systems etc. was thrown into limbo during the course of the nine-month period of the Clark government.

If we look at the budget of December 13, much of it related to energy. But it was rejected first by the House of Commons and then by the country in the general election which ensued. That budget really did not set up much of an energy policy except to raise the price of oil dramatically, both the price per barrel and the excise tax which, I think taken together, amounted to \$8 or \$10 per barrel equivalent, although most of it was in the excise tax.

If we examine that budget and look at that nine-month period, I ask hon. members where do we see the actual policy statements and policy announcements? Where do we see that interest of the federal government being protected? If we look at the share of benefits we find that over a five-year period I believe it was some \$48 billion would go to the producing provinces, some \$29 billion to the industry and only \$17 billion to the federal government which had the responsibility for the oil compensation program and many other energy initiatives across the country. During that nine month period, not a single major energy project was announced.

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However if, we look at some of the Liberal actions during the past four or five years, we see a number of programs relating to energy saving. I think of the Save 10 per cent program. In 1976, the federal government decided to save 10 per cent of its energy needs during the next four years. During the period 1976 to 1980, the consumption of energy by the federal government was reduced by 10 per cent per year. It resulted in a \$100 million per year saving in energy costs for the federal government. The government is committed to retaining that 10 per cent reduction during the next ten years in spite of growth in the civil service and government activities. This is a real success story for the federal government. It is a good demonstration for the entire country.

In 1975 the Liberal government set up ten task forces in the major industries of the country. The objective was to reduce the consumption of energy by 12 per cent over the course of five years, 1975 to 1980.

They recently set a new target. During the next five years energy saving is to go from 12 per cent to 23 per cent, an increase of 11 per cent. There are now 15 task forces in the various industrial sectors working to reduce energy consumption in Canadian industry. This is a good example of the federal government and industry co-operating in a voluntary way to save energy and money, and make Canadian industry more competitive and efficient.

There are a number of other areas in which we can make substantial improvements in the conservation of energy. I hope that when the minister announces the full energy policy later this month action will be taken.

The CHIP program should be improved. There should be better inspection. I would like to see mandatory car mileage legislation. This was forecast in the Speech from the Throne. Great pressure should be put on provincial governments to implement the building code recommendations made in 1978, or perhaps something might be done through the mortgage