

An hon. Member: We sure did.

Mr. Baldwin: I said it last fall.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, on that point I would ask the Prime Minister, in his statement later this afternoon in this House, to tell us definitely if the pipeline is to be built, and when and how. I believe the Prime Minister should indicate to us exactly what type of a pipeline it will be. Will it be a reversible pipeline? We say it should be.

The second point referred to in that analysis is that there should be added capacity for fuel storage established in eastern Canada. We in this party have been saying for a long time that such capacity should be built, and I say to the Prime Minister today that he should let us know if they are going to do it. Mr. Speaker, I should also like to ask the Prime Minister if he intends to implement staged price increases after the freeze but keep the Canadian price somewhat below world prices. That is our position and it is time the Prime Minister let us know what his position is.

If the Prime Minister does accept that position from us, I hope he will go the second step and offer a quid pro quo to those in western Canada on such things as transportation facilities to ensure that they can compete in world and national markets more readily than they have been doing. While the Prime Minister is speaking, I hope he will also indicate if the government is considering a home heating oil price shelter,—subsidized by the federal treasury if necessary. I mean for all Canadians who will need such assistance in this coming winter. That is our policy, and I would be interested to learn if the Prime Minister is able to agree with that point.

● (1550)

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated in a very preliminary way that we do not feel we have sufficient facts before us to properly determine whether Bill C-236 should be accepted in its many ramifications. We believe that the facts must be disclosed. I have referred to the Committee on National Resources and Public Works, but I would point out that that committee has not sat for six months, and that is the committee that was established by the House to consider energy matters. Yet, the government has seen fit to allow the committee not to sit in order to hear witnesses and attempt to arrive at the actual facts regarding the current situation in Canada.

It has been suggested to us by the government that we have a crisis.

Mr. Baldwin: Its sits over there.

Mr. Stevens: I emphasize that the committee which you would normally expect the government would have asked to look into the question of energy, suitable security of supply for eastern Canadians and a pricing program, would have been the Committee on National Resources and Public Works. Yet it has not been called for six months. As one of the hon. members has mentioned, we, on this side of the House, have asked repeatedly that that committee be called. We believe the government has not made a case to substantiate their position I hope the Prime Minister will attempt to indicate to us what case they have

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for stating there may be a major energy crisis in Canada this winter and for their belief that this crisis warrants the wide powers which the government wants under Bill C-236.

Here again, if I may, I would like to refer to the resources committee because at its March meeting, to which I have already referred, the question of a possible fuel shortage in eastern Canada was raised. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources in turn referred the question to Dr. Howland who was the chairman of the National Energy Board. Dr. Howland at that time said that based on a possible 25 per cent reduction in world fuel supplies, Canada would not have a serious shortfall for 5.5 months. I feel we should have the right to know what has caused the difference in the ensuing months. Why are we now told that a 20 per cent possible world shortfall first of all, has to be accepted by Canada because the international private companies say we must accept it, and secondly, why is such a 20 per cent shortfall going to have such dire consequences in Canada when the former chairman of the National Energy Board told us that even a 25 per cent reduction, if it were shared by Canada, would not be felt in any serious way for 5.5 months?

I feel that the Prime Minister owes this House clarification of the situation concerning the export tax, which he has said is not permanent. What does the government propose to do with this tax revenue, what new measures might they substitute? I notice that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) is with us today, and I must say how absolutely amazed I and my colleagues were that the Minister of finance and his deputy minister were not even aware that Canada has had export taxes in the past. In fact, they did not know that there is an existing statute, the Export Act, that provides for export taxes.

Surely, the government is totally adrift. They have lost their course. They have no policy and, unfortunately, it is showing up with respect to energy. During the Prime Minister's remarks I hope that he will offer a statement on how he intends to help the poor pay for higher fuel costs this winter. What steps does the Prime Minister intend to take to ensure that the poor who may feel the crisis as it is described by the government, will be relieved from its maximum impact?

So far I have touched on questions related to oil and energy generally, but I think we should bear in mind that we are being asked to approve at the second reading stage a bill that is extremely wide in its ramifications. I think it is fair to say that not only should we have the facts on matters touching on energy which I have outlined, but it is time that this government indicated to us what they believe will be the unemployment situation in Canada in 1974.

Mr. Baldwin: We know what it will be after the next election.

Mr. Stevens: What, in fact, do they believe will be the industrial production level in Canada in 1974?

An hon. Member: High.

Mr. Stevens: What will be the real growth level and what will be the rate of inflation?