Canada Oil and Gas Act

That is a Colonel Gadaffi kind of morality. That is a Third World, banana republic dictatorship kind of morality. It really is disgusting and shocking to hear Canadians who supposedly believe in democracy justifying that kind of behaviour.

In a sense, I suppose, politically, the members of the New Democratic Party have it made. On the one hand they say Crown corporations and government intervention are good. They say Petro-Canada is good. Then, on the other hand they say that because the government fills Crown corporations, including Petro-Canada, full of political hacks, it is therefore bad. They criticize political hacks, but they like Crown corporations. They have it made. They spend half their time demanding more government intervention and the other half criticizing the blazes out of the government for doing what it is doing with the authority it has as a result of that intervention. They cannot be separated; they come together.

If we are to have a government creating Crown corporations, agencies and bodies and making appointments, we are going to have political hacks. They cannot be separated; that is exactly what happens. How can we morally or intellectually justify creating more opportunities for political hacks while, on the other hand, become disturbed about putting political hacks into positions?

Probably the most stupid aspect of the argument made by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway was the question of Petro-Canada's being responsible. The hon. member said, "Of course it is responsible; it is responsible for ensuring our energy security." How can it be held responsible? What magic occurs? What magical qualities does Bill Hopper, the president of Petro-Canada, have that are denied to Bob Blair, the president of Nova and Husky, or Bill Richards, the president of Dome, or Riddell, the president of Paramount Oil and Gas? What magical qualities does a person acquire when he becomes a president of a Crown corporation which are somehow not attributable to others? Why are Canadians who are running oil companies owned by Canadian individuals as shareholders inferior intellectually, morally or in any other way to Canadians who work for the government or for Crown corporations? I wonder if the hon. member at some time could explain to me why it is that Canadians who work for private companies are morally and intellectually inferior.

Mr. Waddell: They aren't.

Mr. Andre: Could he explain to me why it is that employees of companies other than Crown corporations are dishonest. The hon. member said that corporations are terrible and disgusting and that their directors are disgusting.

Mr. Waddell: No. Show me in Hansard.

Mr. Andre: The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway said that Petro-Canada is necessary if we are to become self-sufficient, which means that the rest of the industry will not work and cannot be trusted.

Then the hon. member talked about government intervention. I wish he would talk to Tommy Douglas and find out

something about the oil industry, because if he spent a little time with Tommy Douglas, he would recognize that a company or an individual involved in the oil industry cannot acquire land, cannot run seismic tests, cannot drill a well, cannot put in a pumping facility, cannot put in a pipeline, cannot put in a refinery, cannot put in a service station and cannot in fact undertake anything at all in the oil industry without getting the permission of the government or a licence from the government. If that is not intervention, what is it? The hon, member for Vancouver-Kingsway has an absurd notion.

I am sure he is not advocating getting rid of all the provisions of this bill. He is saying he wants all those provisions, but he wants these government regulators to regulate the government because he cannot trust the private sector, even though the private sector cannot do anything without getting the permission of the government first. Intellectually, that is absurd.

With respect to small private companies the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway admonished us and asked why we are not concerned about small companies. I ask him to read my remarks of last week when I read into the record a letter from Paramount Oil and Gas, a small Canadian oil and gas company headquartered in Calgary. Its president is Mr. Riddell. The company undertook some drilling activities in northern Canada. It spent \$10 million, which was a lot of money for that small Canadian company. Its biggest well which cost \$5 million turned out to be a duster. The company did get a couple of small gas producers in the Cameron Hills area far from any pipeline, so they are capped. For its investment of \$10 million, this company has some capped resources up there which have some value. The value is reduced now that we have the National Energy Program. However, it has some value but, if passed, this bill will confiscate 25 per cent of what Paramount Oil and Gas has up there. We will be taking 25 per cent of this Canadian company's assets.

In the mind of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway this is entirely justifiable, but every day he tells us he is concerned about small Canadian businesses. If he is concerned about small Canadian businesses, he would not so easily say, "To heck with you, Mr. Riddell and to heck with you, Paramount Oil and Gas; the Crown is taking 25 per cent because the Crown deserves it".

Motion No. 27 seeks to amend Clause 25 of the bill. Clause 25 of the bill as amended in committee and reported to the House says that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde), by order, may designate the Crown corporation to be the operator with respect to the relevant interest. In other words, the minister here in Ottawa may designate Petro-Canada to be the operator. Here are the circumstances: we want our oil and gas resources to be developed. We want companies to go into the frontier areas far away from the market. We want them to spend tens and hundreds of millions of dollars on exploration, seismology and drilling wells. And then Petro-Canada will come along and take a 25 per cent partnership, carried interest, and will pay nothing but will be