

Energy Monitoring Act

What is Canadianization, Mr. Speaker? Basically it involves the specific goal of 50 per cent ownership of the Canadian energy industry as announced in the National Energy Program. According to an article which appeared in *The Globe and Mail* of Thursday, May 28, 1981, Professor Donald Daly of York University believes that, in the decade which began in 1980, Canadianization could cost Canadians \$56 billion. At a time when Canada cannot muster the resources to launch the Alberta tar sands project or to explore the Atlantic offshore for the energy supplies we know are there, how is it going to muster \$56 billion to buy into the Canadian petroleum industry? What does the government do in order to achieve this objective? It buys a private concern at a cost of \$1.4 billion. And where is the money for the purchase to come from? It will come from Canadians through the price they pay for gasoline.

On the east coast and in the maritimes the problem is that the price of energy is too high, whether it be in the form of gasoline for transportation fuels or oil for home heating. That is the problem, but will that problem be solved by adding to the price of energy supplies at the consumer level in order to buy back the industry and get control of it? There is no real evidence that such control will benefit the people of Canada and there is no real evidence that the present practice is against the interests of Canadians. All we are going to do is buy back an industry that is now available to all Canadians—make Canadians pay for it and then force them to subsidize the industry because our resources have been exhausted through buying it back.

I know I am going around in circles, Mr. Speaker, but so is the Government of Canada. What gives it the right to do this? It was elected on a platform of keeping the price of energy, and particularly of gasoline, to the consumer at a lower level than that proposed by the Progressive Conservative Party. In fact, I have here an election campaign folder issued by the Liberal Party of Canada in which it made the promise that, if elected, it would keep the price of gasoline at the consumer level below the level proposed by the Progressive Conservative government. That promise was made at a time when the price of gasoline was less than \$1 per gallon, but today, Mr. Speaker, no Canadian on the east coast can buy even the cheapest kind of gasoline at less than \$2 per gallon. That is how the Liberal Party keeps its promises on energy. Now it asks us to approve new energy legislation to monitor energy companies and to provide for security of supply.

The fact is that the people of Canada have lost faith in the government delivering on its promises. They are not really interested in monitoring the petroleum industry and they are not really interested any more in the Canadianization of the oil industry because they know it is going to cost them more money. Who is going to pay for monitoring the oil industry? How is it going to be paid for? Where are the funds going to come from to pay for the inspectors, the boards, the commissioners, the inquiries? The money is going to come from the Canadian people, through the price they pay for gasoline, home heating oil and other energy supplies. It is as simple as that, Mr. Speaker. There is no way around it. All the costs of carrying on the business, all the costs of monitoring the

business, all the costs of government intervention in private industry have to be borne by the Canadian consumer, who is going to fork it over in the form of a tax on gasoline and energy supplies at the retail level. We would be failing the Canadian public and this House if we did not make that very clear when we talk about monitoring the petroleum industry.

The minister spoke of making plans for emergency energy supplies, but this too will be paid for by Canadians, Mr. Speaker. The price of Canadianization is great and it is unfair that the government wraps its aims in a nationalistic spirit which we all want to embrace. Every Canadian certainly wants the nation to grow, to advance, and wants the economy to become perfected. But at what price and for what purpose? In this respect the government is trying to fool the Canadian people by masking its mistakes in new programs, new concepts, new ways of doing things. These approaches are not new at all but are simply revisions of past policies. Each time the government runs through this exercise the cost to the consumer is increased, yet Canadians on the east coast and in eastern Quebec still do not have access to Canadian oil supplies and so are forced into the world market to obtain energy. As a result, they have to go begging to the Government of Canada for help.

I can say with some pride, Mr. Speaker, that I rose in this House at a time when the consumer price of gasoline in my constituency of Halifax West, Nova Scotia, was in the area of 75 cents per gallon. I said on that occasion, February 15, 1979—and hon. members can find my remarks in *Hansard* for that day—that if the government did not take prompt and effective action it would not be long before Canadians would be paying \$2 a gallon for gasoline. How right I was. Today, Canadians are paying \$2 a gallon for gasoline and more. The unfortunate part is there is no hope for any reduction in price in the future. At the same time, however, our neighbours to the south in the United States of America who had exactly the same problem we had moved to correct their problem. They are now paying less for gas in the State of Maine than we are in the maritime provinces.

• (1640)

That is the kind of effective action the Americans have taken. I have an article here before me which indicates the Americans have their problem well in hand and are winning the energy battle. That is the difference. The Americans are using the free enterprise system. They are using the resources of the people of the United States to win the energy battle. On the other hand, we are using the resources of the federal bureaucracy and the Government of Canada in a nationalization program which is causing us to lose the energy battle. That is why we have to resort to this kind of flim-flam legislation and all this nonsense about monitoring and alleged security of supply.

We are losing the battle and I can give one example. Through the National Energy Program, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde), backed by the