

Canada Oil and Gas Act

I want to say to government members, those who are listening, those who are reading and those who are chatting, that it might serve them well, since it is not yet too late, to think a little bit about whether or not they are in fact maximizing their return on this huge investment that has to be made.

Mr. Kelly: Have you read it?

Mr. Deans: Have I read the bill? Yes, I have read it. I have reread it. I have carried it back and forth to Hamilton on my weekly visits. I have sat in my office in the middle of the night fretting over it. I want you to know that this bill has been committed to memory.

An hon. Member: That is your fault.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deans: I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that in having committed the bill to memory, it has distressed me.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: You should be committed.

Mr. Deans: My colleague asks me whether I dream about it. I want to tell hon. members that I have nightmares.

An hon. Member: Tell us how wet your pillow is.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deans: The kind of comment that flows at this point is a reflection of the lack of concern by Tories and Liberals for the future of the country.

Let me suggest to government and Conservative members who, noisy though they are, still have a grain of common sense left somewhere, I am sure, that they should take a moment or two to compare what we have recommended in our amendments with the recommendations contained in the major Canadian projects and major Canadian opportunities book produced by a joint effort of business and labour in Canada. I think this is probably a blueprint for the future of this country if it is read, understood, utilized and instituted. I will summarize an interesting article written by Deborah McGregor in the *Financial Times* of Canada, dated June 22, 1981, I hope she sends me a note thanking me. Part of the heading reads "Canadian content is crucial". Deborah McGregor writes:

Essentially, the 96-page report is a resounding vote for the use of Canadian content in the \$440-billion worth of major projects planned across industries from energy to defence over the next 20 years.

That is exactly consistent with what we are saying. This whole approach is what they are dealing with, and we have to give recognition to that. The article continues:

It is an unabashedly nationalistic document—

We are all nationalists these days, even the most right wing Conservative is a nationalist in his or her own way.

Mr. Crouse: That is hard to believe.

Mr. McCauley: Not the Conservatives.

Mr. Deans: Let me put it again because I can hear hon. members muttering, and I want to be sure you all hear it. The article reads:

It is an unabashedly nationalistic document, arguing that emphasizing Canadian content—whether it be in the form of manpower or supplies for the project—is crucial to the country's industrial well-being.

Please note the words "emphasizing Canadian content". The group goes on to explain in its report that there is absolutely nothing wrong with spending your money in your own best interests. They also point out that there is nothing to be ashamed of in taking Canadian tax dollars, which are to be spent in Canada, and using them to build an industrial base for Canadians.

● (2050)

The report goes on to make some recommendations. I see my time is running out but I want to run through these recommendations quickly with you because I can tell from the way you are listening, Mr. Speaker, how interested you are. This is the first recommendation, and I want hon. members to listen because I know they have not read this and I want them to hear it for the first time. The first recommendation is:

That a special agency be set up, run by labour and business but funded by government, to monitor planning on major projects and to ensure that project sponsors comply with Canadian content guidelines. Chief among those guidelines would be that first preference be given to Canadian owned suppliers in the planning and purchasing for projects.

I would like to see any member stand up and tell me that he does not want to see Canadian industry assisted by Canadian tax dollars developed in Canada. Let him get up and tell me he does not want the benefits of the jobs, and he does not think we should give preference to Canadian companies in the development of the Canadian industrial sector as a result of megaprojects that are, we hope, about to create energy self-sufficiency.

An hon. Member: It's in the bill.

Mr. Deans: The bill does not contain it. The second recommendation is:

That companies be willing to pay a premium of up to 3 per cent of the total project's cost for Canadian content.

The bill does not contain that. The third recommendation is:

That Canadians should have full access to top managerial, technical and professional jobs on the projects.

The bill does not contain that. The next recommendation is:

That where foreign capital is needed for projects, it should come in the form of debt instead of equity, so that Canadians have the fullest opportunity to share in the ownership of the projects.

The bill does not contain that. Finally it is recommended:

That skill shortages among Canadian workers be improved by a variety of means—

The recommendation goes on to tell us what they are.

To conclude, what I am saying is simply this. We have seen how badly the natural resource base of the country was