

international oil companies and others have joined with me. But on the crucial issue we are now facing, the NDP has been promised possible reductions in price by the government though they do not guarantee them, and the NDP are selling out Canadians through not making the government stand up to the subsidiaries and tell them that unless they obey the Canadian will, the government will hold them responsible.

● (1740)

I guarantee that as a government we would be prepared to make that statement and to hold the subsidiaries responsible for any phony *force majeure* provision that is brought into effect. With that kind of statement, Mr. Speaker, you can see the clear distinction between the phony promises that we have had over the last 2 ½ months and all this chest-beating by the NDP that they will throw out the government. The minute they get these phony promises that the government will not raise prices as much as they thought—though there was not a single guarantee in the speech made by the Prime Minister last Thursday as to what the prices will be—the NDP buy these promises. I can only conclude that the members of the NDP are so comfortable in the seats they now occupy that they are too fat to fight and too frightened to run.

Mr. Ian Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, rarely in the history of this House has the official opposition moved a motion of non-confidence that is the equal of today's as an exercise in absurdity. If the official opposition had an oil policy, if they had a policy on northern resources, or if they had a policy on off-shore resources, then at least they might be credible. To the adjectives that the official opposition have used in this motion to describe us, I need only add one other to adequately describe their position, and that would be "non-existent". When you have no policy, the best tactics are obviously to create the most confusion possible in the public's mind. I must congratulate the official opposition for having succeeded masterfully in this regard.

This government announced a program for Canadian oil self-sufficiency on September 4 when it announced it would build the Montreal pipeline. This was more than one month ahead of the Arab-Israeli conflict. As for the noise and confusion that we have heard about prices over the past few weeks, I think the Canadian public is sensible enough to understand that east of Ottawa we have been enjoying prices that have been better than those in western Canada and in Ontario west of the Ottawa Valley over the last 12 to 15 years. If over the next few months we have to pay higher prices until western oil comes through, the Canadian public will understand. Despite all the noise and confusion created by the opposition, the Canadian public now clearly knows what is the position in regard to prices and understands it generally.

What are we going to do about future energy requirements? This is where we ask the opposition to come forward with their policies, because they really have not come forward with any clear policies on anything. As far as I am concerned, the three most important matters that affect the future of Canada are these: What are we going to do about our northern resources? What are we going to

do about our offshore resources? Whose heritage are these resources: are they the heritage of the Canadian people?

The hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) has just accused the government of making an attack on the provinces. If we develop the resources of the territories and our offshore resources because they are the heritage of all Canadians, is this going to result in Canada being split up into semi-autonomous regions? No, Mr. Speaker. The position which we as the government have taken on a number of issues regarding the resources of the north and offshore leads to but one conclusion, namely, that we are going to develop these resources for the benefit of all Canadians whose heritage they are.

In talking about the Canada Development Corporation quite a few years ago, I indicated that we needed to get away from the idea that government participation in mineral and oil exploration and development necessarily implied government ownership or control. I indicated I would be happy if the Canadian government were to have only a minority participation in such ventures. Certainly it would not have to be a majority participation; we could become partners to the extent of 30, 40 or 50 per cent. There is no reason why the department responsible for the Yukon and Northwest Territories could not set up a prospecting and exploration division whose functions would be similar to those of any prospecting and exploration division of any of the larger mining companies in Canada. We could tender for geological surveys and a geological firm could carry out the exploitation program.

This is what I would envisage as a natural development for a Canadian natural resources corporation. It would be responsible for searching out deposits and, if necessary, providing a reservoir of capital for minority of majority participation in ventures which had already resulted in proven ore bodies or oil pools. The 35 per cent of the Canadian land mass that forms the Northwest Territories and Yukon has a potential that the experts say will yield at least that approximate percentage of the total resource picture in Canada, both in hydrocarbons and minerals. There is no reason for our not having greater participation in the development of these resources. What is the position of the official opposition in regard to the exploration and development of these resources? Are we going to develop these resources simply for the benefit of the people living there, or for Canadians generally? We have never heard them clearly on that question.

Mr. Bawden: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Bawden) rises on a point of order.

Mr. Bawden: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Speaker: That is hardly a point of order.

Mr. Watson: At the conclusion of my remarks at about ten minutes after eight, Mr. Speaker. The position that I think hon. members opposite fail to grasp in their ignoring of the natural heritage aspect of these resources both in the north and offshore is that the very existence of these resources dramatizes a basis for national unity which too few people in this country, and I must admit in my own province as well, appreciate. We have heard from the