

*Energy Supplies Emergency Act*

It seems that the establishment of a national energy corporation is required in view of the present influence of oil companies. It is clear and I think that everybody agrees that if the government was forced to accept certain price increases, the oil companies now have a marked influence on government policies, which is unfortunate.

Because of the lack of a long term policy which should have, I think it must be said, been initiated a few years ago, we are led to recognize more and more the marked influence of these companies and the need to establish a national energy corporation.

Once again, what will these powers be? We hope to find out as soon as possible. We hope that they will enable this corporation to restrict the influence that the oil companies have always had.

We have also heard the wish of the right hon. Prime Minister that the Borden line be abolished, that a pipeline to Montreal be built and, in short, that a national energy policy be developed.

Because of this oil policy, Canadians think that a national policy is the same as a national price. The price freeze for all Canada, except of course the eastern provinces, was announced in the right hon. Prime Minister's speech.

I think that we must wonder about the announced policy which provides for two prices, one for the east and one for the west.

We, in the east, have long deplored, Mr. Speaker, a feed grain policy which has been very costly, not only for Quebec, but for all eastern producers. We have denounced this policy for approximately 30 years and because of all our efforts and the support of the responsible agencies we have succeeded in urging the government to adopt its recent national policy, a policy which aims at, and should normally bring, equality between eastern and western producers.

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I think that westerners have shown very great patience towards this policy which has been quite costly for western producers. And today we are considering a two-price national policy for oil products. I would urge the minister and the government to consider equal prices for easterners and westerners. It is unconceivable that we should accept this legislation which is favourable to easterners who have to face competition on the world markets and which, at the same time, provides for westerners a price freeze for the months to come namely the most difficult ones.

I would hope that the Prime Minister who announced a federal-provincial conference would first enable us to take stock of the provincial position about this policy. I wish that this federal-provincial conference will take place before this bill is passed. I do not mean that it should not have been submitted to the House. On the contrary, I find it necessary because of the current serious crisis and of Canadians' concern.

However, should we pass this bill during the next few days, being aware of the January federal-provincial conference, how could the provinces refuse to abide by orders accepted by Parliament? Why were not provincial officials first called and apprised of the principles of this legisla-

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tion and of the powers we are going to grant the federal government and to which extent will the provinces be prepared to admit those powers?

The House is unaware of all the negotiations which have taken place between the federal and provincial governments especially the Quebec government. I have every reason to believe that the government of Quebec intends to make some suggestions and also to maintain some jurisdiction in oil matters. But as the federal-provincial conference will be held in January and chances are this bill will be adopted before Christmas, I wonder how we can count, for example, on the respect of the provinces while asking hon. members to adopt a bill before this federal-provincial conference has been held?

I think that this is an important aspect to point out because I do not quite see how this federal-provincial conference can be held only in January while we are being asked to pass a bill which should provide powers to the federal government. I do not suggest that these powers are unrequired, but I wonder how the provinces will react to these powers that the federal government wants to give itself, if it really wants to respect the wish of the provinces and listen to the suggestions that they could make.

Therefore, should we delay the passage of this bill? Should we ask the federal government for a federal-provincial meeting as soon as possible so that we may know exactly and specifically what the provinces want? As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, this is a most important matter, particularly when there is talk of granting increased powers to the federal government in the field of energy. Again, without doubting the goodwill of the responsible minister and taking into account the current crisis, I have proof that he made very great efforts to correct the situation and give some assurance to the Canadian people.

Of course, as a Quebecker I could not fail to emphasize a particular aspect.

In fact, we have the privilege of being administered by a government in which more than half the members come from the province of Quebec. The people in Quebec expect those members to bring enough pressure to bear so that prices will be equalized between eastern and western Canada. In my opinion, the people in Quebec are absolutely right in hoping that government members from Quebec, who are a majority, will see to it to make the minister aware of this problem and obtain through this bill price equalization between eastern and western Canada.

Last Monday, during the debate on a non-confidence motion, I noticed that the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) even asked whether the Quebec members were selling out their province. The question may have been relevant, Mr. Speaker, but as this bill has not yet passed third reading I take the liberty of calling upon members from the province of Quebec to make more pressures than ever before and urge the minister to give that guarantee that all eastern Canada and not only the province of Quebec will not have to pay more for its products than western Canada. It is extremely important to point out that aspect of the problem because the people of Quebec have a right to insist that representations be made by their members in that respect. Members from Quebec