

*Energy Supplies*

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and Minister of State for Science and Technology)** moved:

That Bill C-42 to provide a means to conserve the supplies of energy within Canada during periods of national emergency caused by shortages or market disturbances affecting the national security and welfare and the economic stability of Canada, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Speaker:** When shall the bill be read the third time?

**Some hon. Members:** Now, by order.

**Mr. Speaker:** By order, now?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Gillespie** moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in the third reading debate on this important bill I want to deal with a number of points that were raised by members of the opposition at report stage.

A number of major issues are involved. The first is whether Canada may be faced with an emergency and whether Canada should take action now to deal with that emergency. It was quite clear when listening to hon. members opposite that they have a very relaxed attitude to this question of a possible emergency, and I think we have seen evidence of that relaxed attitude throughout this debate. Yesterday we had a chance to bring this debate to a conclusion through agreement.

**Mr. Lawrence:** A week ago today.

**Mr. Gillespie:** The hon. member says it was a week ago today but he and his party filibustered this bill for five days. The Tory party took five days of precious House time at report stage. They took five days to go over a lot of ground that we went over in committee. I think that is scandalous and I think it is irresponsible.

When the House leaders met yesterday it would have been possible to come to the agreement which we were subsequently able to do in the House this afternoon. It would have been possible to do that yesterday and there would have been no necessity to move closure. I have no regrets that we moved closure and time allocation. I think this is what brought them to their senses.

Throughout this debate we have witnessed a party that says there is no emergency now. They say: "We do not really have to worry about any emergency for weeks or months to come. Forget Iran. Do not worry about multinational corporations and how they are going to reallocate crude oil supplies. We do not need a bill like this. There is not going to be any emergency."

As I have indicated, that relaxed attitude pervaded the behaviour of the official opposition throughout. It was best exemplified by their attitude last week when we spent five days

on report stage, three of which were spent on one of their own amendments. They said that amendment was needed in order to give parliament time to consider the important question of a national emergency—a national emergency which the Government of Canada would declare. They wanted to remove the provision which requires parliament to deal with the declaration of an emergency in three days. In other words, they wanted the energy supplies allocation board and the whole mandatory allocation and rationing system to be left in a position of some uncertainty. That is the only interpretation that can be put on their remarks unless one adopts the interpretation of the House leader of the official opposition when he said: "You do not need approval of parliament after three days' debate because you can move closure". He was saying we could use the power to move closure and require only two days' debate, whereas in the bill the government has provided for three days and a certainty of conclusion of the debate.

It was apparent that the opposition was not interested in bringing this matter to a conclusion until they were forced to by the political backlash when the country became aware that they were spinning the debate out. I think the country was aware that this bill went through the House once before. There was something like eight days' consideration in committee and eight days for second reading once before. This time we had three days for second reading, five days at report stage, and eight to twelve meetings of the committee. It was clear that the attitude of the opposition to this bill, as to the possible emergency—indeed, probable emergency if one listens to many of the experts on energy matters—is very relaxed and they are not anxious to see the bill passed before the House is dissolved. They would leave Canada without the power to deal with an energy emergency during a dissolution of parliament. I believe that is downright irresponsible.

This is not surprising when we think about the attitude of the opposition toward energy questions. It has been their record on energy for the length of this parliament. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) has never interested himself in energy policy questions. He has taken the view: "We will let Alberta decide; maybe Premier Lougheed will have an idea. I will not say anything; I will hang back and let others do it for me." He is incapable of putting Canada first, Mr. Speaker. Why else would he have ducked the important question of pricing? Why else would the Leader of the Opposition continue to repeat banalities with respect to Petro-Canada? He would like to get rid of it. The Leader of the Opposition has not been prepared to talk on the hard energy policy issues. He has abdicated any responsibility for energy policy questions.

One way that he might be able to justify that inactivity is to say that we do not need this bill because there is not going to be any emergency. It is surprising to us but, when we think about it, still consistent with the position of the opposition party when they take this relaxed attitude toward the necessity of providing legislation and powers to deal with an emergency. It is surprising that they would be prepared even at this late date to say: "Let the multinationals do the job. Let Exxon look