

Energy Conservation

should deal instead with the whole question of the possible energy resources which may be available to us in the future; any thing short of that would be an exercise in futility. To return to the question of the conservation of Canadian oil, nobody can deny that the government has already done something in the area of oil exports.

The fact is that, the eastern provinces and Quebec being beset by problems caused by the increase in prices by their former suppliers, the Canadian government had to call on western provinces to divert a certain percentage of their exports towards those Canadian provinces and at the same time reduce exports to the United States.

It will be remembered that in 1974 the National Energy Board proposed to limit exports to 800,000 barrels a day. Furthermore, on November 23, 1974, the then Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources announced that Canada was cutting its oil exports to the United States down to 650,000 barrels a day.

Very recently, *La Presse* of November 20, 1975 published an article I want to read which was entitled as follows:

Oil reserves will be depleted in five years.

The Federal government could well be forced to further lower Canadian crude oil exports to the United States in coming years as the National Energy Board just found out that western oil reserves will be depleted in five not eight years.

Those conclusions should be formally submitted today to the cabinet which will decide on the amount of oil available for the U.S. market until 1980.

Instead of curtailing daily exports from 750,000 to 560,000 barrels next year the federal agency proposes to set the maximum at 500,000 barrels a day and end exports in 1980-81—not in 1983 anymore as suggested a few months ago.

To spare U.S. feelings and especially protect U.S. refineries which have been going to western Canada for some twenty years already it is likely that Ottawa will raise to 525,000 barrels a day the maximum recommended by the national board.

That change of mind would be that much more justifiable that the Sarnia-Montreal pipeline will not be in full operation before next summer or fall. Furthermore, the National Energy Board feels that a reversible-flow pipeline should be envisaged to allow, sometime within the next few years, the transport of foreign oil to the very heart of the Golden Triangle in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, that means therefore that the government has done something with regard to oil exports. I also feel that something has been done to maintain the level of energy productivity in Canada. We need but consider what has been done with regard to the Athabasca oil sands, to the development of which the government has already committed several million dollars.

The government strongly encourages the big companies through income tax exemptions, thus favouring research and exploration, although I doubt that those same companies produce the results the government expects of them. But with regard to domestic consumption, does the government do enough to promote interesting discoveries with a view to reducing the consumption of fuels and thus help conserve those resources which, to our mind, are disappearing much too quickly?

I would like to draw the attention of the government on all the most promising inventions because if we had used them we would have reduced our gas consumption by up to 50 per cent; the inventors have not yet been able to submit their findings to the government or make it accept them, or

else these inventions were literally swallowed up by the oil kings against whom the government always seems powerless.

Mr. Speaker, today our cars would be as efficient and consume at least 50 per cent less gas if certain inventions had not been bought by oil sales and production companies. Of course, gas consumption would have been reduced by 50 per cent and the profits of the oil conglomerates would also have gone down by 50 per cent.

But if our government were free and independent of all these international companies, not only would we not now be talking about conservation and reduction of oil consumption, but energy would be only a minor consideration for our industries, our means of transport and all consumer needs. Moreover, if the government had gone beyond conservation and done more to promote research, even though multinational oil companies might have lost a few billion dollars, we could travel today in electric cars and say goodbye to pollution in our cities, which is causing our administrators so many headaches and costing the taxpayers so much money.

It is sad that this did not happen because of the influence of financial trusts on our governments. Even though the governments continue to grovel before national and world finance, the people are waking up so that it will soon become impossible to make them believe in fairy tales. There must be some evolution in the field of energy to enable people to live with future economic principles. And I am convinced that this essential evolution will come from the people themselves because the authorities—and I mean all levels of government—are too lazy to move out of the castles that have been built for them by those who control money, the economic blood of the world. I hope that tomorrow's society will be more human and less financial, and that it will be a society where financial power is submitted to man instead of man being submitted to money as today.

● (1600)

[English]

Mr. Maurice Foster (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today, put by the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies), affords us a good opportunity to discuss the government's energy conservation program, the need for it and the need for its expansion. I must explain to hon. members present that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) is not here this afternoon; he is visiting my constituency of Algoma, the uranium energy capital of Canada, Elliot Lake. Unfortunately, he is travelling without my assistance on this trip, one which has been in preparation for a month or so. I do not know whether this motion today was by the design of the hon. member for Don Valley; however, I am sure it was not. But the minister will be here this evening and he will be taking part in the debate.

No one will deny the importance of the subject which the hon. member for Don Valley has raised. Although we do not agree with the precise wording of the motion, we do agree that all governments, industry, and the Canadian public generally should come to grips with the need for better conservation of our energy resources. There should be no mistake; Canada must, and will, move forward into