

Energy Supplies

tional enterprise that is out to maximize its profits. It is phony and hypocritical of the minister to get up and pretend that it will have one standard of behaviour in Canada but another standard of behaviour elsewhere. That is not how the economic system works. I find it morally offensive when one makes moral judgments about corporate directors in these companies for acting in a way their shareholders appoint them to act. The fault is not with the Exxon Corporation. The fault is with the Government of Canada which did not have arrangements set up in the first place that would have made the crisis we are now dealing with impossible. That is the subject we should be debating tonight.

What is the correct solution? If the government, back in the minority days, had created not only Petro-Canada, as we insisted, but if it had gone further and made Petro-Canada, as we argued at that time, the exclusive purchasing agent for all offshore oil, we would not have the crisis of the last couple of weeks, about which the minister has been speaking. That is the reality. We should have done what almost every other industrial country has done, and that is to set up within our borders what we call a Crown corporation. Other countries call them state enterprises, or if it is nationally-owned in the private sector, a domestically-owned corporation. This Crown corporation should be severely regulated to ensure that it purchases all the offshore oil to meet energy needs. Other countries have done this and that is what Canada should have done.

An hon. Member: Other countries are more effective that we are.

Mr. Broadbent: I did not hear the hon. member's interjection, but I listened to his speech with a great deal of care. I must say that for anyone to argue that the solution to our problem is to get the multinationals to come in when they are the ones who have created the situation, he will have to go a long way to persuade me of the intelligibility of any other recommendations that he makes.

Petro-Canada should have been created in 1973 as the only purchasing agent for offshore oil. That would have headed off the Venezuelan situation we now have. But what can we recommend under the present circumstances? What is the government's attitude toward Petro-Canada? This crisis is upon us because the minister wants to make a villain out of Exxon. He has his election on his mind which is coming perhaps in the next few months—

Mr. Gillies: He has already lost.

Mr. Broadbent: The minister has that in mind. But what is the real attitude? Right now it is thought to be expedient to praise Petro-Canada and to fight Exxon. What is the government doing with Petro-Canada?

Mr. Gillies: Nothing.

Mr. Broadbent: Instead of making it the central petroleum corporation in this land, as we argue, which would not only have control over all imported oil and then channel it out, but also deal with refining and deal directly with outlets—for

[Mr. Broadbent.]

example, in Montreal today retailers are having trouble getting supplies from multinationals—if we had Petro-Canada importing oil it would ensure independents in Montreal and elsewhere of a ready supply of oil which would help to meet the needs of small businessmen. Instead of encouraging Petro-Canada this way, as the minister knows the Government of Canada is involved in taking away certain preferred rights that Petro-Canada now has for exploration on thousands of acres of land owned by the Government of Canada. Even now it is backing away from creating the kind of corporation that Petro-Canada should be. It is concentrating instead on singling out Exxon as some kind of convenient whipping boy as justification for its own failure.

I want to conclude my remarks by saying what we think should be done. We will be proposing these items at committee stage. This bill should be amended to include Petro-Canada as a member of the allocation board. Second we want the bill amended to make Petro-Canada the sole importer of offshore oil.

We recommend the following step because there is no other way of achieving it. We should pass the bill on third reading as amended—as I hope it will be amended—and then the government, by order in council, should cause the operative sections to go into effect immediately, not to impose rationing, because let us hope we shall not need rationing but to do one simple thing which should be done immediately, that is, to make Petro-Canada the sole importer of oil into Canada. That should be done this week; it should not be put off until another oil crisis or until another pre-election period. We should pass this bill and give Petro-Canada that authority.

● (2200)

Almost every other country in the world has set up a nationally-controlled major oil company. The crisis we are going through will not have been totally unproductive if it forces this incompetent and irresponsible government to do what other countries have done a long time ago, that is, to make Petro-Canada the major oil company in this country serving all Canada's oil interests from the time the oil leaves the ground until it reaches the consumer.

Some hon. Members: Ten o'clock!

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, before we call it ten o'clock might I ask the deputy House leader to tell us the government's intentions with regard to business tomorrow?

Mr. Cafik: It will be our intention to continue consideration of Bill C-42, the energy supplies emergency bill.

An hon. Member: And then?