

Point of Order—Mr. Andre

In this bill we have four acts with no long titles. They will be created in a way that if the government attempted to do this by separate bills, they would be ruled out of order on the strength of citations in both Beauchesne and May. They are trying to do through an omnific kind of hodge-podge something that cannot be done if it is attempted in a regular way. I wish to quote Citation 1 of Beauchesne:

The principles that lie at the basis of English parliamentary law, have always been kept steadily in view by the Canadian Parliament; these are: To protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority; to secure the transaction of public business in an orderly manner; to enable every member to express his opinions within limits necessary to preserve decorum and prevent an unnecessary waste of time; to give abundant opportunity for the consideration of every measure, and to prevent any legislative action being taken upon sudden impulse.

This bill violates a number of those fundamental precepts of parliamentary law. It is impossible to have a reasonable transaction of public business in an orderly manner when one has this kind of omnibus bill to consider. It would be a travesty and a precedent of scary proportions to allow this type of bill to go forward with so many disparate and different items collected together for no other reason than to obfuscate and confuse. It will not be possible to have a reasonable and intelligent discussion and debate on the various parts when they are all collected.

The minister of energy will be talking about great things having to do with Canadianization. That will be the sum total of his contribution. The other side will be clouded over trying to identify the ramifications of the amendments to the Canada Business Corporations Act which extends beyond energy companies. What about the Petroleum Corporations Monitoring Act which flies in the face of the commitment of the government to cut red tape and cut the paper work burden? What about the implications of all those things? These will be all obfuscated as a result of trying to discuss that item and at the same time trying to discuss the petroleum incentives program and so on.

I want to make it clear to the House that I am not interested in breaking this bill up for the purpose of carrying on an interminable debate. Before Christmas I notified the minister through his parliamentary secretary that if they wished to separate what amounts to Part I, the petroleum incentives and Canadian ownership and control part, I would recommend to my caucus that this legislation be treated with some dispatch and carried through. The minister countered that if I would agree to treat it all with some dispatch, he would go along with it.

That was not something I was prepared to recommend to my caucus, nor would I guess that my caucus would accept it. I am certainly willing to negotiate with the minister the manner in which we might treat this bill in a more reasonable fashion. Some arrangements can be made. Parts of the bill are not controversial and, if properly formulated as separate pieces of legislation, could be dealt with quite quickly. There are other parts that need and deserve careful committee study in the standing committee with outside experts. People will be affected and influenced by this bill. They should have an

opportunity to bring their concerns to the attention of this House.

There are the taxation parts which by our rules must be considered in Committee of the Whole. We would be prepared to consider them. I have no interest in delaying, but I do have an interest in protecting the integrity of the House. I fear that if this precedent is allowed to stand, we will have reached that day when we will have a single bill covering the entire legislative program. It will be rationalized on the basis that this is what was promised in the throne speech. The bill will be called "the betterment of Canada act", and who could argue against that?

We do not argue against energy security. We are 100 per cent in favour of it. We just do not think that title is an adequate description of everything that is contained in this bill.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I apologize to you for the fact that you are being kept in the chair so long this afternoon to deal with a whole series of points.

Listening to the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre), I was reminded of my time as a practising lawyer. Lawyers used to argue that the weaker the case, the longer the argument. My impression this afternoon is that my friend must be defending a very weak case indeed. On the reverse theory, the better the case the shorter the argument, I will keep my remarks as brief as possible.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

First, Madam Speaker, I should like to point out to my hon. colleague that Bill C-94 has a single theme and objective. The theme and objective are both indicated in the short title of the bill itself, the Energy Security Act, 1982. The bill is the main legislative component of the National Energy Program. As you know, Madam Speaker, the National Energy Program was a wide-ranging set of proposals which attempted to provide a specific and stable planning framework for the energy sector in Canada. The program had three objectives: first of all, it was to establish the basis for Canadians to seize control of their own energy future through security of supply and ultimate independence from the world oil market. Second, we wanted to offer all Canadians a real opportunity to participate in the energy industry in general and the petroleum industry in particular, and to share in the benefits of industry expansion.

Finally, we wanted to establish a petroleum pricing and revenue-sharing regime that recognizes the requirement of fairness to all Canadians. As far as Bill C-94 is concerned, each component of our bill on energy security is based on the objectives and philosophy contained in the National Energy Program. I am now going to deal with supply, demand, Canadian ownership in the industry and a reasonable pricing system. All of these aspects are part and parcel of the bill, and I maintain that we cannot deal intelligently and consistently with the problem of energy security unless we look at all of