

line derivatives. The adverse effect of this on the Canadian economy in terms of jobs, taxes and balance of payments is obvious.

The chemical industry provides high-quality employment for Canadians in its 1,200 plants. Scientists, engineers and managers with university-level education comprise some 15 per cent of our total work force of 76,000 people. The level of wages within the industry is 20 per cent above the national average. One study recently completed indicates that had the \$766 million of chemical imports into Canada in 1971 been replaced by domestic production, this would have meant a permanent increase in employment in Canada of between 40,000 and 50,000 jobs. If we just balanced the trade, then 27,000 to 35,000 additional jobs would have been created.

Small plant size, small markets, low tariff walls, the upward-valued Canadian dollar, lack of integration, high transportation costs, global overcapacity and dropping prices gave the industry real problems. In effect, they were fighting products from world-scale plants which were built to serve markets ten times larger than their own, coming across some of the lowest chemical tariff walls in the world, and they were fighting with small plants sized to the Canadian domestic market.

It will take the petrochemical and the oil industries working together three years to establish a sound chemical feedstock position. During this three-year period a continuing co-operative attitude must be maintained between the two industries for the good of secondary industry. Where is the chemical industry going today, Mr. Speaker? For the following I am indebted to Mr. Elliott, vice-president of marketing at Dow Chemical. He has this to say. On the plus side of the industry are the expectation of good, over-all economic growth in Canada; the expectation that government will continue to encourage the development of secondary industry and the processing and upgrading of more primary products at home; rising world level of demand in chemicals, plastics and man-made fibres; currency alignments which have resulted in a devaluation of the Canadian dollar versus other world currencies, excluding the U.S. dollar; tax reductions for manufacturers which will help overcome the severe problem of low profitability in the industry, and the rising prices of chemicals. So the future is bright.

The Canadian government's policy of "Canada first," guaranteeing security of supply to a plant such as the proposed SOAP plant, is the correct policy. I heard the hon. member for Assiniboia talk of multinationals. When the members of his party talk of multinationals they never talk about their good side, only their bad side. I realize there are some groups that do have to be watched and regarding whom we must be cautious; but I should like to suggest to the House that hon. members also think a little about the plus side of the multinational corporations. After all, where else in the world could we get world-scale technology, capital and a global marketing organization hungry for products upgraded in Canada?

If we can marry this expertise with Canada's abundant raw materials, I suggest that we in Canada will have it made. It is a time to be bullish. I think the markets are there, both export and domestic. Canada has the raw materials and the skilled labour required. We have a

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sound base and a global scale technology. Capital is no problem. It is time to "go," Mr. Speaker. We have before us a bill to meet an emergency situation. I suggest that to kill or to filibuster this bill would be to create a phony issue.

● (2050)

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** The hon. member for La Salle . . . for Joliette rather.

**Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In any event, in Joliette it's as if it were the riding of La Salle!

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take advantage of the few minutes at my disposal to comment this important legislation, Bill C-236.

All hon. members recognize, as such, the importance of this bill in our present situation, and I doubt that I am exaggerating when I say that the Canadian people are very much concerned about the problems with regard to our oil policy.

We also recognize, Mr. Speaker, and this is of great concern to the people, the price increases in recent months. Of course, it is surprising that we should face price increases and feel concerned. But the problem does not seem to be one of production. Production seems adequate but, because there is no planning policy, transportation and supplies would seem to be the real problem. For lack of a policy, transportation and supplies are responsible for higher prices.

In view of the situation, it is clear that Canadians are very much worried about the next few months. We are all hoping as members that the government and Parliament will find ways to ensure that consumers are provided with the essentials. We hope that we will not be subject to rationing.

Of course I must admit quite objectively that no one could foresee the Middle East crisis which is surely of no help in solving the present problem.

I would like first of all to acknowledge the efforts made by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) in the last few months. One hon. member has put the price of \$1 a year on the value of his services and his competence. Well I would like to be a bit more objective. We must admit that the present minister has made some efforts and has shown concern in the current crisis.

Bill C-236 seems to be aimed at giving this government some rather extraordinary powers and it is proper to ask ourselves if we are not infringing some provincial jurisdictions. The federal government has perhaps an opportunity to seize some powers, considering the present crisis. It would be embarrassing for the provinces to justify themselves with regard to those problems by keeping those powers.

Last week I heard the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) who assured the House that he was in favour of the establishment of a National Energy Board. We do not know exactly what will be the powers of that board. In my view, it is extremely important to know all of them and to be able to measure their consequences.