

Energy Supplies Emergency Act

I hope to be able to speak further on this bill, but I did feel at this time that I wanted to make clear why I, personally, am so opposed to the proposed amendment of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I believe this amendment would delete a possible safeguard in respect of the declaring of the national emergency in this country. I am sufficiently aroused by the impact, or the possible impact of this legislation, that I feel we need every safeguard we can possibly have in order to protect ourselves against this government and the multinational and international corporations.

Mr. J.-J. Blais (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended joining in the debate on this bill, but unfortunately some allegations have been placed on the record which require rebuttal. The amendment introduced as motion No. 4 on the order paper is a compromise between the parties. I agree that there is a subamendment presently under consideration. However, I shall concentrate on the amendment. The members of the New Democratic Party also were a party to that compromise when the minister presented it to the committee. The bill, in its present form, is a marvel of compromise, good sense and reason. I wish to point out that the compromise had absolutely nothing to do with the hon. member for York Simcoe (Mr. Stevens). There is a story behind that which is of considerable interest.

As hon. members will recall, when the bill was introduced for second reading and was debated, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) indicated that it was the intention of that party to completely filibuster this bill. He said that they would talk, talk and talk. The hon. member for Peace River indicates no. I must place that nod of the head on the record. Now it is a positive nod in agreement with my negative statement.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order under that standing orders, with which Your Honour is familiar, which permits a member, when words are put into his mouth which are not correct, to so state and I do so state at this time. I indicated that this party, because of the great power granted by this bill, intended to examine it at reasonable length and would move suitable amendments. The word "filibuster" is a word that is most repugnant to me. I have never used it and I shall never use it. I would like the hon. member to bear that in mind.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, it is perhaps because of the fact that I have not been in this House any longer than the hon. member for York Simcoe that I have been impressed by some of my experiences with the Conservative Party, as well as some of my reading in that regard, and have been under the impression that the conduct of the Progressive Conservative Party constituted filibustering. I shall not use that term if it is repugnant to the hon. member.

However, there were public declarations that they would speak at length on this bill. They did so until there was pressure coming back from their constituencies to the effect that they should let the bill pass on second reading. The bill did pass second reading and then, in committee, there were indications that it was still the intention of the representatives of the Conservative Party to stymie the intentions of the government by adopting tactics in that

[Mr. Stevens.]

committee which would delay the passage of this piece of legislation. With all due respect, may I say that the hon. member for Peace River, who is intent on interfering with my contribution to this debate, was not there. Eventually, when he did start attending the meetings of the committee his remarks were conciliatory and, indeed, his presence in the committee signalled the departure of the hon. member for York Simcoe who had not been so conciliatory before that particular event. I might indicate that there seemed to be a shift in the particular direction taken by members on the other side.

By coincidence, referring to what the hon. member for York Simcoe said, the whole change, the road of demarcation—

An hon. Member: The road to Nipissing.

Mr. Blais: Yes; it may be the road to Nipissing because my constituents are very interested in the passage of this particular piece of legislation. The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) is attempting to make light of this bill. I suggest to him that he should refer to his constituents. I would point out to him that he and they live east of that line which is being supplied by off-shore oil. I would point out also that his constituents are very vulnerable because they find themselves at the end of the supply line. I would advise him to be very careful with his comments.

● (1730)

Now, returning to Damascus, the Tory conversion on the road to Damascus took place when, lo and behold, at the behest of the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), the President of Imperial Oil was summoned before the standing committee. Contrary to the insinuations of the hon. member for York-Simcoe, I have no connection with the President of Imperial Oil. Although I have an Imperial Oil credit card, I do not have any shares in that company. I do not know whether or not the hon. member for York-Simcoe has.

As a responsible government member of the committee, I took the attitude that what the President of Imperial Oil was going to say would not assist the consideration of the bill. I did so because of the Tory stand. They were delaying the bill, and expected the attitude of the President of Imperial Oil to support them. They were very insistent on having the President of Imperial Oil appear before the committee, and I was prepared for his appearance. But, Mr. Speaker, on that Thursday morning Mr. Armstrong appeared before the committee and provided the government with complete, unquestioned, unconditional support, except for three minor amendments that he suggested to the government's bill. Mr. Speaker, I cannot describe to you the faces of the members of the Tory party. They were a sight to behold. As a result, there was a volley of questions from them. They had not been expecting that sort of bombshell.

For a moment I felt that a rift could develop between the multinationals and the Tory party. I could not believe my eyes. Of course, that was on the spur of the moment, and I am sure the differences have since been patched up. However, almost simultaneously with the evidence given by the President of Imperial Oil the Conservatives began