

Canada Oil and Gas Act

Mr. Blaikie: Not by listening to you.

Mr. Parent: Now we have the man who, it was said the other day, has trouble with his sphincter muscle. He looks like that.

Mr. Blaikie: I am responding to the anal quality of your remarks.

Mr. Parent: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that I have been drawn down to the hon. member's level. I had every good intention when I started my speech. The eventual resolution of the domestic conflict on oil, plus the establishment of new and expanding industries in western Canada, will serve to create a continuum that will cycle and recycle benefits to all Canadians, be they easterners, westerners, northerners, southerners, or centralists.

● (1630)

The heritage of Canadian oil and gas in the west will aid competitiveness in the total industrial and manufacturing base by providing energy at less than world prices, a position and advantage which no doubt are strongly envied by other industrialized nations. Not only will our citizens in the west gain prosperity—and I really believe they will—from their own resources, but their growing manufacturing base will enjoy the same competitive edge.

The heritage of Canadian oil and gas in western Canada will also provide all Canadians with help and assistance to make the transition to a more secure energy future. This is the responsibility of those who possess the tools with which to accomplish the transition nationally, thereby creating our secure energy future. I have no doubt that when history is written we will find that Canadians responded to that responsibility with understanding, logic, and common sense.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Kilgour: I rise on a point of order. Will the hon. member for Welland (Mr. Parent) allow me a question?

Mr. Parent: Certainly.

[*English*]

Mr. Kilgour: The hon. member for Welland indicated, if I heard him correctly, that we need a hydrocarbon policy which is both open, "fair, and acceptable". Would the hon. member tell us if he has a scintilla of evidence to indicate that the policy proposed in the budget is acceptable to any of the four western provinces?

Mr. Parent: In response to that question, when the hon. member says "a scintilla of evidence", on what would he rely for evidence? Would he say, if we spoke to enough people and they seemed to be in favour of those policies, that this would be evidence? Would he say, if the leaders of the provinces come to an agreement and say "yes, what you are doing is reasonable", that this would be evidence?

Mr. Siddon: The majority of the people.

Mr. Parent: The problems in what the member referred to as the west, the four provinces, are different. There are many people in the four western provinces who are more than receptive to our policies.

Having said that, also I know there are many people there who believe that the policies should be more generous. In trying to please everyone, we do the best we can with what we have, always keeping in mind that what we are trying to do is the best thing for the country as a whole.

In direct response to the member's question, my evidence is my own empirical evidence from the people with whom I have spoken, the things I have read, and my own convictions. If I may share with the hon. member, Canadians generally in the western provinces and in all the provinces are willing to share what they have so that we can build a better nation.

Mr. Peter Ittinuar (Nunatsiak): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for Welland (Mr. Parent) for his wise, fine, and eloquent criticism of Bill C-48. Also I congratulate for once the hon. member for the Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) for his astute observations on this bill and what it does not mean for the people of the north. Some day—perhaps during this term—I should like to address the House on what would be a comprehensive energy policy for the north. Certainly I do not think Bill C-48 is such a policy.

Briefly I should like to address what is only vaguely referred to in the bill, the environment and the people. The government's budget, the National Energy Program, and the recent report of the Economic Council of Canada indicate the extent to which economists are relying on energy investment to stimulate growth in the Canadian economy. It is commonly agreed that the slowdown in economic growth in the United States and OECD countries makes the search for solutions to Canada's economic problems even more urgent. However, the government's commitment to huge energy projects as the salvation of our economy is more than a little disturbing to northerners.

The government appears to think that in an atmosphere of economic crisis it can push through legislation to accelerate exploration and development on "Canada lands" and abdicate its responsibility to northerners. I say that the government has not practised its responsibility as well as it should have.

The federal government is supposed to act as the trustee of territorial lands. It now appears that it regards that role lightly, in the face of possible short-term economic benefits. The bill does not address several very important issues related to pushing ahead with exploration and development in the north.

As the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) said on Friday, Canadians should benefit from a bigger share of resource profits as compared to the exorbitant profits taken by multinationals operating in the country. However, steps must be taken to ensure that obvious problems of conflict of interest are avoided. It seems potentially dangerous that the