

Oil and Petroleum

the Ottawa Valley will go through two or three winters of uncertain oil supplies because the Interprovincial Pipe Line Company has been dragging its feet and refusing to move boldly on this project.

The fourth proposal I wish to make is that we should speed up production plans for the development of the Athabasca oil sands and the heavy oil in the Cold Lake area of the province of Saskatchewan. I do not agree with the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) who last year wanted us to build one plant a year. I think that is unrealistic. However, a plant could be built every two or three years in the Athabasca oil sands area.

It is possible to bring the heavy oil in northern Saskatchewan into production when adequate technology has been provided. I submit this is an area for public ownership in which the federal and provincial governments, either jointly or separately, should develop those sources of oil owned and controlled by the people of Canada with the people of Alberta or the people of Saskatchewan.

Today, almost all countries of the world except Canada and the United States have seen governments step in to take control of the oil industry and to set up national petroleum corporations to develop their resources. Most of these countries now recognize that the pressure of events is forcing them to look upon oil and natural gas as public utilities. Energy is too important to be left to the international buccaneers. In a speech made to the Sierra Club, Robert Macaulay made a comment which I should like to quote. He said:

The open marketplace should not determine energy prices. The marketplace stresses short-term benefits, particularly profit, rather than long-term social needs. Those who won't abandon the market concept are going to bring something cataclysmic down around their heads.

I should like to say that when a Conservative really becomes convinced that public ownership is for the benefit of the people, he has the courage to say so. That worthy position was taken by a former Ontario cabinet minister who comes from a province which gave us Adam Beck and Ontario Hydro. I should like to see my Liberal friends become equally courageous about the idea of public ownership in respect of the production of oil and natural gas.

We will have an opportunity, when the minister brings in the bill on the Canada Petroleum Corporation, to see to what extent it is merely a peripheral move or a genuine attempt to ensure that we develop oil in this country under some measure of public ownership. I urge the government to consider the possibility of becoming involved in the Athabasca oil sands and the heavy oil area of northern Saskatchewan.

The fifth point I wish to make is this. If the government is not prepared itself to establish plants in the Athabasca oil fields at least, as I suggested to the minister today during the question period, we ought to be prepared to take up the share of the project for building a \$1 billion plant in the Athabasca oil sands which is to be dropped by the partner of Shell Oil of Canada. The American partner, Shell Explorer Company, of Houston, Texas, has decided to withdraw because the government—I congratulate it for this—refused to agree that whatever oil that company produced from this plant could go out of the country,

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

which would mean we would have no control over keeping our oil in Canada. The company also wanted very large tax write-offs. I commend the government for refusing this.

So the Shell Explorer Company is getting out and will dispose of its shares to someone else. This is a golden opportunity for the minister and the government of Canada to step in and take over the shares of Shell Explorer Company. This would give the government a 50 per cent equity in the plant to develop the Athabasca oil sands, and it would give the Canadian people some input into the development of those oil sands. One of the good features of this is that the government would not have the problem of having to go to the Alberta government for a licence or permit. The licence and permit have been granted, the plans are laid, the technology is completed, and the operation is ready to begin in 1976.

The government, either through the new Canada Petroleum Corporation or the Canada Development Corporation, should become a 50 per cent partner in this project. I hope the government will seize this opportunity so that this very important development of the last great resource of which we are sure in this country will not slip out of its hands into the hands of the multinational corporations. Mr. Speaker, I see you are about to rise. It is five o'clock, and I understand we are to proceed to private members' hour. Since we will not be dealing with this subject tonight, I move the adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): I thank the hon. member. It being five o'clock, the House will proceed to the consideration of private members' business listed on today's order paper, namely, private bills, notices of motions (papers), public bills.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, there have been some discussions. I believe there is a general understanding that perhaps we could move from Bill S-11, which would normally be dealt with today, to Bill C-206 in the name of the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The House has heard the suggestion of the parliamentary secretary. Is it agreed that that private member's bill be stood?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

● (1700)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Since there is no motion for papers today we will proceed to public bills.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

INQUIRIES ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING COMMISSION REPORTS

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West) moved that Bill C-206, to amend the Inquiries Act (publication of