

The Budget—Mr. Trudeau

Mr. Trudeau: The order paper contains many more things, and I should like to talk about two additional bills in the area of energy.

An hon. Member: Talk about football.

Mr. Trudeau: The hon. member asks me to talk about football. I think for the first time since I have been in the House of Commons I am using the privilege of speaking without any limit on time, which is a privilege accorded the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

An hon. Member: It is your maiden speech.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Let us look at Bill C-32, an act to establish a national petroleum company. If this bill to establish Petro-Can is not passed, it means the government's program will be delayed several months and this will create needless uncertainty in the industry and leave the government without an instrument to deal with the constantly changing international situation. There is Bill C-18, the Petroleum Administration Act. The results of non-passage of this legislation are that the oil export charge would cease and no authority would exist to pay subsidies to eastern refiners. The federal-provincial agreement of March could be destroyed, and critical policy decisions to cover the interim period from dissolution to the recall of parliament would be required.

I see the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) shaking his head.

An hon. Member: He's trying to find his marbles.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Perhaps he will be good enough to indicate what will happen to oil export charges. He recalls the story of this charge which was brought in by the government at the end of last year in order to make sure that the great windfall would not accrue to the petroleum companies but would accrue to the benefit of Canadians. In the month of January we tried to bring in legislation which would have permitted the government to collect this export charge.

The House will remember that the opposition consented to permitting the government to collect this export charge only for two months, the months of February and March. For every month following March, this will be lost, that is, for April, May, June and July. And if there is an election, I suppose it is fair to presume it will be held early in July, and by the time the writs are returned, even at great haste parliament could not meet before the middle of August. So it means that for April, May, June, July and much of August this oil export charge will not be authorized for collection by parliament.

Mr. Hellyer: Nonsense. You can collect it under the Export and Import Permits Act.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Go back to Action Canada.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, the hon. member had better go back to Action Canada. Let me just put the figures in respect of this matter before the House. The tax is now \$4 a barrel, and it probably should and probably will go up to cover appreciation and oil prices. Never mind what that increase will be, as we do not know what it will be—the tax is now \$4 per barrel. Just calculating the amount on that basis, the volume of oil involved is about one million barrels a day, which would work out to between 27 million and 30 million per month. At \$4 a barrel, the tax which would be forgone to the federal government if the Petroleum Administration Act is not passed would amount to about \$115 million per month, for five months. That would amount to something more than half a billion dollars.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

An hon. Member: Let it rip off for the oil companies, David.

Mr. Bell: Be careful what you say about David.

Mr. Trudeau: It is true that we have heard a lot about robber barons from the NDP, but the consequence of this more than half a billion dollars which it would not be in the power of the government to collect under the law, if it is not passed, would go to the oil companies. Some 47 per cent of the oil in Canada is produced by five major companies, and we assume that the exports would be in that same area. This production is divided up in the following manner: Imperial Oil, 18 per cent; Texaco, 11 per cent; Mobil, 8 per cent; Gulf, 7 per cent; Shell, 6 per cent. That is just a rough calculation, but these are the percentages and these are the figures in respect of which the NDP and the Tories would see the government put in a situation in which it was impossible to collect as a result of the non-passage of this bill.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: You fellows ought to be in the funny papers.

Mr. Trudeau: Those are only matters which are on the order paper, but there are many other measures mentioned in the Speech from the Throne which are ready for imminent introduction. I will mention just three which have to deal with the increase in food supply and stabilization of food production. One would be the amendments to the Farm Credit Act, to provide greater assistance to young farmers; another would be amendments to the Agricultural Stabilization Act, to broaden its scope; and the third would be grain marketing stabilization legislation based on cash advance payments on crops.

Mr. Hales: Tell us about the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, Mr. Speaker, amendments to that act would be brought in very soon, as the hon. member suggests.

Some hon. Members: Promises, promises.

Mr. Trudeau: That was an attempt, perhaps a lengthy one, to put on the record one very simple fact. That is, that