

from the Lower Churchill development. It is power which is now going to waste. But, as a result of the joint effort of the two governments and the creation of the Lower Churchill Development Corporation, there is a chance that that power will be developed for the use of Labrador and Newfoundland, perhaps also for the use of the province of Quebec and the maritimes. This will be a very important project in the order of some billions of dollars which will provide several thousand megawatts of power.

Today I tabled in the House a memorandum of understanding which was reached through negotiations with three provincial premiers. This is also a very forward looking concept. This establishment of a maritime energy corporation will draw together the three maritime provinces in electrical energy planning with respect to transmission and generation for the first time. This system will operate with a centralized computer so that a least cost power system will be available for the maritimes. This corporation will be big enough to finance new projects in the maritimes, projects which will be too big for any one province to finance, construct, or manage by itself.

We have not neglected the important demand side of the energy equation. The government has taken a host of measures directed at increased conservation and a greater use of renewable energy to reduce requirements of conventional fuels. Hon. members opposite may wish to forget it, but members on this side remember only too well the announcement last July 4 of measures involving \$380 million over five years aimed at developing renewable energy, using our forest energy and using solar technology. Those are all important measures from the point of view of reducing our dependence on foreign oil. All these measures have helped reduce our current and prospective dependence on imported energy, specifically foreign oil. But some oil import dependence will remain for the foreseeable future.

As the House knows, I am working hard to ensure that a major part of our oil imports is derived from secure sources and secure commercial arrangements, another area in which Petro-Canada has already started to play an active role. A degree of insecurity is, nevertheless, inevitably associated with our remaining dependence upon imported oil. This is primarily the problem this legislation addresses.

I referred earlier to the political developments in Iran and the cessation of oil exports from that country. This incident has brought home once again the fact that an interruption in the supply of offshore oil can occur with very little warning. If the current disruption continues for several more months, the total shortage of supply could cause the activation of the emergency oil sharing plan by the International Energy Agency. By participating in this agreement we are committed to being ready at all times with a program of contingent oil demand restraint measures enabling us to reduce our rate of consumption. Some international agency member countries have already publicly announced measures to deal with the oil supply disruptions to their countries. As far as we are concerned, we have the necessary plans in place. What is urgently

### *Energy Supplies*

required now is legislative authority to move quickly, if we have to, to implement our allocation and rationing plans.

If it became necessary to declare an emergency, crude oil allocation could be implemented in seven days. The petroleum product allocation program would take 60 days to implement, and the motor gasoline rationing program would require a lead time of up to six months.

What is needed now is legislation in place to enable the government to implement these programs without delay should we face a serious shortage of supply. It is on this basis that I commend to the House Bill C-42, the Energy Supplies Emergency Act, 1979.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** Mr. Speaker, we have just heard from the minister how all is serene, calm, and light on the horizon. He has informed us that as a result of his own particular genius and never ending overtime efforts, all is well. The minister, I must say, reminds me of that old depression days cartoon where one bum says to the other bum, "If you're so smart, why ain't we rich?" If the minister is so smart and so much has been done by this government, why are we in this energy mess and why do we have this bill before us?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lawrence:** It is as simple as that. The minister has gone through a long recital of facts, as he calls them. They may have been mainly argumentative. I would like to give my version of the chronology of what has been going on. It may be as distorted as the minister's, but I will try to wipe out the type of political argument for which the minister is getting such a reputation. I would like to make what I hope will be a fair, impartial, and completely non-political presentation of the facts.

As a result of the first OPEC crisis in 1973 this government introduced a bill which was almost identical to the one before us tonight. The 1974 bill, however, lacked, in our view, some needed guarantees that parliament be consulted. That bill in its original form was quite open-ended in that it gave the government authority to move unilaterally into certain fields which we and others considered to be clearly provincial jurisdictions. The Progressive Conservative demand in those days for a sunset provision in the bill or a self-destruct mechanism for its operation was eventually and reluctantly agreed to by the government, but not our request that parliament have the opportunity to express itself either before, during or after the decision was taken by the government to implement the procedures in that old bill. Our reason for asking that the sunset provision be inserted was to make sure that the bill would eventually die and that the government would then be forced, on the death of that bill, to re-examine the whole situation completely.

As a result of the 1974 crisis as well, Canada, along with what subsequently turned out to be 18 other nations, under the