

Experts debate

by Tom Baker

Over the weekend top experts from the academic and industrial world debated Canada's future energy problems at the 1975 Western Engineering Student Conference. The wide range of topics presented and discussed included, "Athabasca and the Canadian energy shortage," "Status of Natural Gas", "The potential of nuclear fission as an energy source", "Coal vs other alternatives" and argumentation on the supply and demand of energy now and in the future.

The list of speakers read like the "Who's who of Energy" in Western Canada.

In a short presentation on the "Mechanisms of Energy Demand", Don Quon from the U of A Chemical Engineering Dept. raised the problem of the massive increase in energy consumption on this continent since 1945. He predicted a severe energy crisis unless the

rate of economic growth is checked.

"The cost of energy will increase massively due to the use of imported fossil fuels and expensive synthetic fuels. With

"speakers list... who's who of energy"

the negative balance of payments Canada shares with many countries, such an energy situation could cause political problems that would destroy the whole economic, political and social institutions of this society. Although the US has been able to offset this economic problem with inflated arm sales, how would Canada deal with this?"

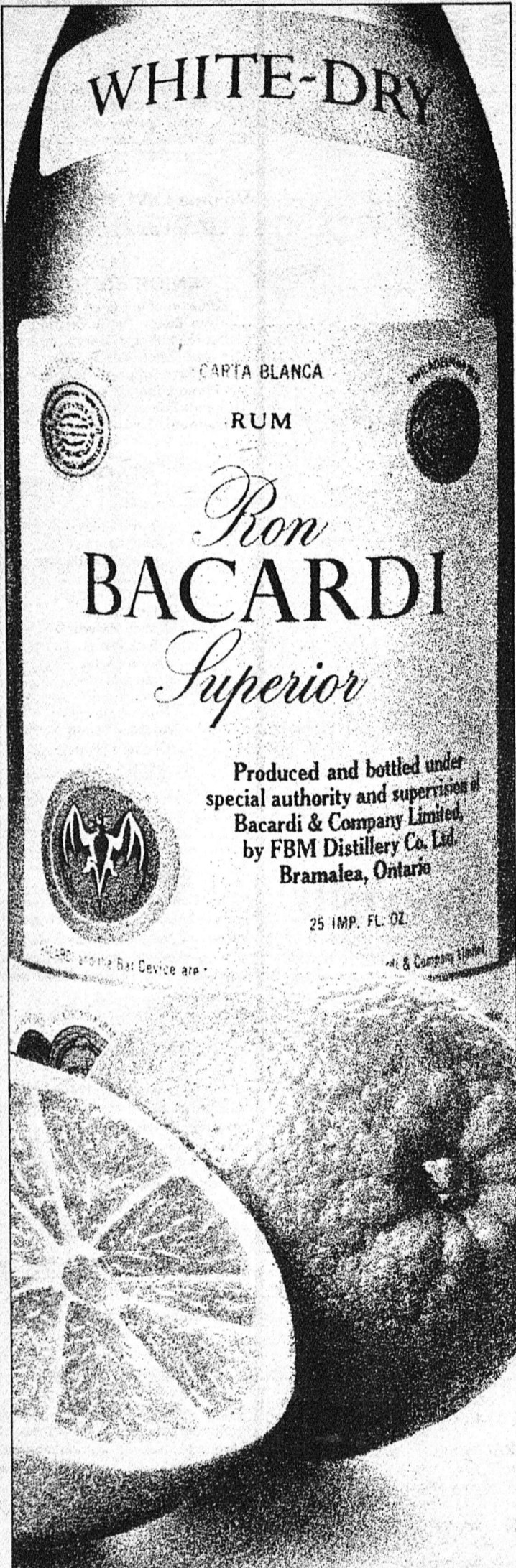
Frank Spragins, Chairman of Syncrude, presented an impassioned defense of the Tar Sands Development. He listed the new 6600 jobs, the economic boost to the province and the contribution to

Canada's dwindling crude oil reserves as some of the key virtues of Syncrude.

Spragins enthusiastically called for "not one, but many Syncrudes", saying that only this massive expenditure of public money could avert a severe energy crisis in 10 years. He indicated that only full cooperation between the private industry and government could solve the energy problem. He concluded by projecting that the most recent \$2.04 billion estimate on Syncrude's cost will be quite accurate.

D.C. Jones, President of the Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas Ltd., admitting to being more of a business manager than a geologist, called for a more equitable distribution of the

crude oil dollar. He felt that due to the increased cost of locating, mining and extracting the diminishing reserves of crude oil, and as a result of the high royalties assessed by the government; that private industry is not receiving a fair return for its investment.



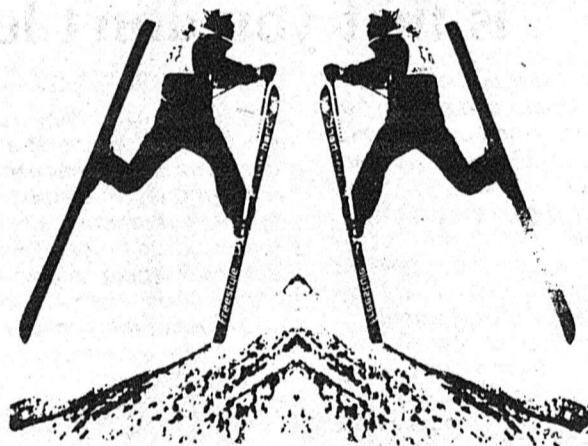
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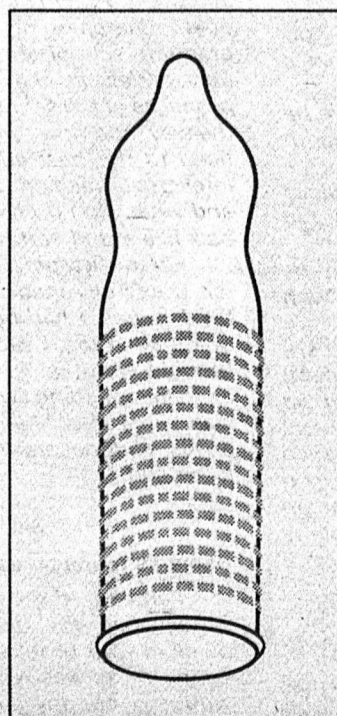
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