

Adjournment Motion

States dealt the community and the industry a devastating blow.

I was in Grande Prairie to officially open a new gas plant last October, which meant 100 man-years of employment in Alberta during the construction stage and 20 full time jobs in the community. The sad part is that when I cracked the valve after saying a few words of congratulations, not a single cubic foot of gas was released. A few metres downstream from the automatically controlled valve that I cracked open an enormous gate valve was closed. Why? Because under this Government's natural gas policy. There is no place to sell the gas. What I saw was a \$35 million facility up to its stack in moth balls before it was even officially opened, because of this Government's national energy policy, which promised fairness, self-sufficiency and Canadianization. That may be what it promised and what the Energy Minister said he delivered, but to Grande Prairie what it really means is house prices that crashed an awesome 25 per cent, and a three-year supply of office and warehouse space idling on the market.

I have attempted today to outline some of my Party's objections to the national energy policy, and we will be doing so throughout this debate. I thought it was time to put on record some of the misinterpretations of the Energy Minister in his snide attack on the Leader of the Opposition's Calgary speech. All statistics aside, the Government and the people of Canada cannot ignore this policy that has caused ugly damage to the country. In the words of the Leader of our Party, it is time that an energy policy be established around a table of consensus, instead of across a gulf of confrontation.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 45, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn)—Finance—Employment initiatives program—Allocation of funds. (b) Consultation with Members; the Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby)—Labour Relations—Eastern Provincial Airways dispute—Implementation of Labour Relations Board decision. (b) Request that Minister intervene; and the Hon. Member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Howie)—Finance—Financial deficits of Atlantic Provinces. (b) Request that Minister initiate new grants program.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PETROLEUM AND GAS REVENUE TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-14, an Act to amend an Act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act and to provide for a revenue tax in respect of petroleum and gas.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): The Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Mr. Speaker, in spite of the congratulations and heartfelt applause from the Members opposite, I would like to begin by making some initial comments on the legislation before us this afternoon. I think this particular piece of legislation is one of many admissions that the national energy policy put forward by the Liberal Government in 1980 has collapsed. We are faced with an amazing situation in which the Government will now bring forward and has been bringing forward a number of policy changes and a number of pieces of legislation to effect those policy changes of which this Bill is one of a number.

Unfortunately, in the legislation before us today and the policy initiatives the Government, instead of admitting that the National Energy Program overall is a failure, prefers now to tamper with its various aspects and tries to change things without giving some kind of thought to developing a coherent policy which is relevant to the present situation and down the road for some time to come. It would appear that the assumptions upon which the National Energy Program was based have collapsed, and those assumptions are proving to be incorrect and the policies developed out of them are certainly inappropriate.

The advice we would like to give the Government is this. It is time we sat down together. The speaker from the Official Opposition, in a spirit of consensus, began to look at some of these serious problems which do affect us all. We should begin to look at new and more appropriate policies to face the situation ahead. The PGRT is, of course, one aspect of this policy. Certainly the expectations of high prices and improved market opportunities for Canadian energy did not materialize in a way that would yield revenue. I would be prepared to admit that many smaller Canadian companies have been seriously harmed by the initiatives of the Canadian Government in this area. It is unfortunate we were unable to develop effective mechanisms by which those smaller companies could survive government policies which were so harmful. It was not only the National Energy Program or high energy costs or the taxation burden placed upon many outfits. Beyond those matters and many others was the high interest rate policy, which killed not only companies in the energy industry but in the whole economy in general.