

Trudeau outlines Energy Plan in Halifax

by Martin Cohn

Liberal Leader Pierre Trudeau says a Liberal government would support the construction of a reversible natural gas pipeline from Montreal to the Maritimes.

Trudeau made the announcement in Halifax Friday in a luncheon speech to about 250 members of the Halifax Board of Trade. The pipeline proposal is part of a Liberal party policy to encourage the replacement of oil by more abundant and less expensive natural gas.

Trudeau said his party would take immediate action to "ensure the full cooperation of all parties" in the construction of a natural gas pipeline to Quebec City and the Maritimes. The pipeline would have reversible capacity so that Maritimers can use Western natural gas now and can send offshore gas to Central Canada later.

Reading from a prepared text, Trudeau also announced a policy to advance Canadian ownership of the oil industry, through land regulations and tax allowances. A Liberal government would aim for ownership, by Canadian citizens, of at least 50% of oil industry assets by 1990.

Trudeau outlined a seven-point energy program covering pricing policies and energy security, but didn't specify an exact price for oil under a Liberal government.

Instead, a "Made in Canada" pricing formula would achieve a "blended price" for oil. The formula would be based on a weighted combination of low-cost conventional oil reserves, higher-priced new sources like the tarsands or offshore supplies, and expensive imported oil.

While acknowledging that many people want to know what the exact price for oil would be under a Liberal government, Trudeau said this "can only be determined after we negotiate with the provinces".

Trudeau said "there will be a lower return for oil already in reserve and higher prices for oil from new developments.

So there will be an incentive for companies to actively explore, rather than simply wait for the price of their oil in the ground to go up on their existing holdings." Conventional reserves now account for about 70% of oil supplies, he said.

Based on the replacement costs for oil, a "fair" price would be negotiated with the provinces once the Liberals formed a government. An agency to investigate and report on oil industry costs and profits—the Petroleum Pricing and Auditing Agency—would be established and would also estimate replacement costs for oil. Trudeau said these plans would be implemented by July 1, 1980.

The Liberal Leader promised his "Made in Canada" price would be lower than Conservative government proposals, since there would be no 18 cent excise tax on gas, because conventional reserves would not receive a "windfall" price, and because costs for unconventional sources like the tarsands are below world price levels.

In Halifax earlier this month, Prime Minister Joe Clark told the same audience that his government would aim for oil prices at 85% of OPEC or U.S. price levels.

Trudeau also attacked Conservative government handling

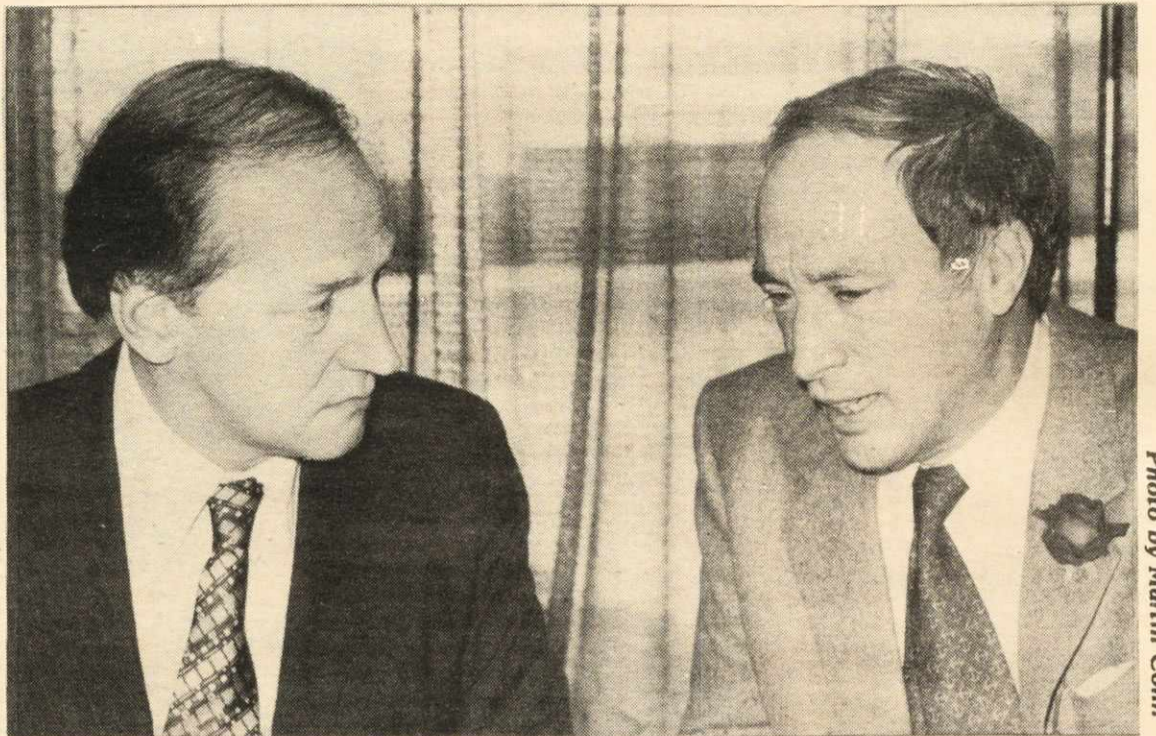


Photo by Martin Cohn

Trudeau with Halifax Liberal candidate

A Liberal government would instruct Petro Canada to resume negotiations for oil purchasing contracts with Mexico and Venezuela, he said.

Trudeau reiterated a campaign pledge to restore Petro Canada's exploration budget of \$80 million, which was cut by the Clark government. He also promised to create a

Liberal energy policy, though this was not mentioned in the Trudeau speech.

Asked why Premier Peter Lougheed of Alberta would agree to sell domestic oil at prices lower than those agreed to by the Clark government, Lalonde said the Liberals and Lougheed had managed to reach agreement in the past and could do so again.

The Liberal team approach was in evidence at the old fashioned political rally in the sequence of introductions. A local Liberal official introduced candidate Dick Boyce, who introduced Allan MacEachen—calling him "a living legend in his own time"—and MacEachen in turn introduced Trudeau. Amid chants of "Go, Pierre, go", Trudeau often adopted his gunslinger stance, spoke without notes and without a lectern. Boyce and Trudeau both took shots at the Crosbie budget's proposed 18 cents excise tax on gasoline. They said residents of outlying Sackville would be particularly hard hit, since they depend on cars for transportation.

Halifax was the locale for a party campaign strategy meeting Friday afternoon. About a dozen top Liberal party officials, including former Senator Jean Marchand, former Finance Minister Jean Chretien, Energy Critic Marc Lalonde, Jim Coutts, Senator Keith Davey, Senator Al Graham, and five regional representatives met to map out election strategy for the remaining weeks of the campaign.

CAMPAIGN CLOSE-UP

of Petro Canada, especially the decision to remove the company from nation-to-nation oil purchasing deals. Noting that last month Venezuela cut the supply of oil allotted to Exxon for Eastern Canada, Trudeau said "we now rely on the charity of Exxon to ensure that oil shortages do not occur." The Tories "left Atlantic Canada to the mercy of the Exxons."

subsidary of Petro Canada, the Alternate Energy Corporation of Canada, to develop alternate energy sources such as wind, tidal and solar power.

Trudeau was not available to answer questions after his speech, leaving this task to Liberal Energy Critic Marc Lalonde. Lalonde confirmed to reporters that Nuclear Energy would remain part of

Trudeau was accompanied by local candidates Gerald Regan (Halifax riding), Ray Austin (Dartmouth) and Dick Boyce (Halifax-West), as well as Liberal House Leader Allan MacEachen.

Later, the group made an appearance at a chowder supper in a Sackville High School, where about 350 enthusiastic supporters gave them a rousing welcome.

Elections Official misleads Students

TORONTO (CUP)—University of Toronto residence students have been incorrectly told by an Elections Canada official that voting in the U of Toronto riding could land them in jail for up to 14 years.

A guide to student voting put out by the chief electoral officer states that residence students who consider themselves to be "on their own" may vote in the riding the university residence is located in.

But Spadina riding returning officer Leslie Singer said Jan. 23 that only residence students who have "no parents, no guardians or who have severed all ties and never intend to go home" will be

able to vote in the riding. Singer claimed other residence students must vote in the riding of their "ordinary residence", meaning the riding their parents or guardians live in.

Singer said students have two options: "To tell the truth and vote where they're supposed to or lie and vote where they feel like. Students caught lying are liable to 14 years in jail."

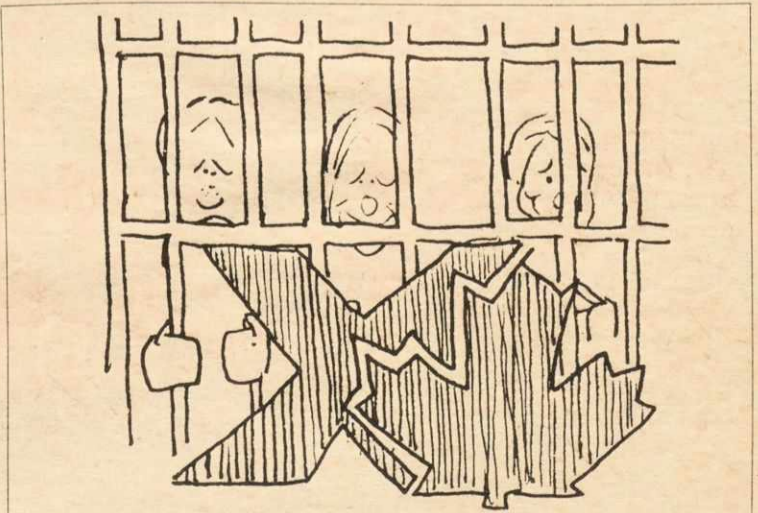
But, fortunately for residence students worried about doing time for giving Joe, Ed or Pierre the nod, the electoral office does not agree with Singer's interpretation of the regulations.

Elections Canada communication director Maurice Olivier says students living in residence can vote in their university or college riding.

"If the student feels he should vote in the riding of his (university) residence it's the student's decision, not the returning officer's decision," Olivier said, adding that information explaining the regulations had gone out to returning officers.

The situation was further worsened because student voter guides which explained regulations did not arrive at the U of T until early this week.

According to the National Union of Students (NUS),



chief electoral officer Jean-Marc Hamel's office contacted Singer after he learned of the controversy in order to straighten the matter out.

However, NUS executive officer Morna Ballantyne says

the student organization will be meeting with Hamel to discuss the problem and ensure that residence students are informed that they can vote in their campus ridings.