

Mr. Waddell:—and they managed to find me and get me into this debate, and I do not object at all.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Waddell: It is an important debate and I do not mind being here to speak on the Bill, if my friends will listen.

An Hon. Member: You are on thin ice.

An Hon. Member: You had better start skating.

Mr. Waddell: I hear the heckles that it's thin ice and I had better get skating. I hear all the comments and I opened myself up to them. However, let me say a few things—

Mr. Boudria: That's all you need, an executive manner.

Mr. Waddell:—about this particular Bill because it is an important moment to again bring the Bill before the House since all week we have been debating in Question Period the rising energy prices. I do not accept for a minute that it is going to take three months or so for oil prices to come down at the pumps. It should not. That is what I was trying to point out in Question Period today. If we had a competitive system instead of this system, which is really not very competitive where four large companies basically run the whole show, we would in fact get prices coming down for Canadian consumers. I believe the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney), who has been the rising star of this Government, and who has received all that good publicity, has finally had the chickens come home to roost because there is a motorists' revolt going on. They are tired of paying these high prices for gasoline at the pumps when they see world oil prices dramatically declining. Even without world oil prices dramatically declining, in the last six months they have come down from \$29 a barrel to \$26 a barrel U.S. but they did not come down at the pump. Forget about the \$20 a barrel which is what it came down to today, the price did not come down at the pumps. We should be asking ourselves why the Canadian motorist did not get a break. I will not go into the Donato cartoon which says it takes some time to get through the system.

Mr. Boudria: I saw the oil can in your hand.

Mr. Waddell: I want to talk about this Bill and I want to tie it in with the gasoline prices. Before I speak of the PGRT, I would like to remind Hon. Members that the Minister said in this House today, in response to a question put by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis)—I don't have the *Hansard* so I will paraphrase what she said—if we look at British Columbia, we see the prices there have gone up only because of the tax increases which they had to impose because of the deficit.

● (1550)

I have two things to say about that. One, the Tories did not have to increase taxes because of the deficit. It was because the Government is giving \$5.5 billion to the oil companies in

Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act

this Bill we are debating. That is the reason for the tax increases which motorists have to pay. Second, the Minister is wrong. She is not really telling the facts as they are. I looked into this. In British Columbia the price of regular unleaded in September, 1984, was 50 cents a litre. In January, 1986, the price was 56.2 cents a litre. Where did that increase come from? This is what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) is missing. He said it came from tax increases. That is not accurate either. Tax increases were only 2.8 cents a litre. Where did the other 3.4 cents come from? It was the oil companies increasing prices.

We had oil prices declining from U.S. \$29 a barrel to U.S. \$26 and prices at the pump went up. The reason for that is that the Government is increasing its taxes and the oil companies are piggybacking increases at the same time. All this in a declining market. Why? Because we do not have a competitive system. We had 1,000 letters about this over the last few days delivered to the eight NDP Members of Parliament from British Columbia. These letters are from motorists who are mad. They have had enough and the Government had better watch it.

This Bill repeals the PGRT. What is the PGRT, asks the very knowledgeable Member for Calgary North (Mr. Gagnon). The PGRT is what James Laxer once called Ottawa's most effective tax instrument for taxing petroleum companies which have been masters of tax loopholes. It was directed to revenue from well-head production of gas and oil. The Conservative lament is that the tax is not profit sensitive. That is, it is difficult to wriggle out of paying it. This tax really hit the oil companies. For once they actually had to pay the tax. My friend says it is a unique tax. Well, it is sort of a unique industry.

The price of oil went from \$3 a barrel in 1973 up to something like \$38 a barrel. That was a tremendous windfall and the companies were making tremendous profits. It was just revealed today that last year Imperial Oil made \$650 million, this in spite of the National Energy Program and so on. The figures have been constantly going up except for one brief period during the recession. Imperial Oil made \$250 million in the last quarter of 1985 while motorists were paying more and more at the pump, yet this Government proposes to give the companies more money. Then the Minister wonders why I say she sounds like a broken record from the Canadian Petroleum Association.

As a result of this Bill, the federal treasury, over the next four years, will hand over to the oil companies the proceeds it would normally have collected from the PGRT. That is \$2.4 billion a year. You do not have to believe me. I am just a little socialist, five foot six, not five foot three, from British Columbia. Let me quote Peters and Company in Calgary, a respected energy analyst. They have projected that in 1986 the loss to the federal treasury will be \$430 million. That is a result of this Bill we are debating right now. In 1987 it will be \$680 million. In 1988 it will be \$1.36 billion. The following year it is \$2.79 billion. By 1990 it will total \$5.26 billion. This Bill means we are giving up in taxes some \$5.26 billion. What