

*Oil Substitution Act*

same latitude. We are unable to convert to natural gas because of limited infrastructure. We are unable to convert to electricity because much of our electrical generation is from oil-fired generators. For that reason, we in Atlantic Canada are somewhat more limited. However, a large number of people would like to convert from oil, if not completely, at least partially. People in Nova Scotia are only able to convert to wood and coal, yet there have been many requests by people who want to do so.

Telephone calls through the toll-free line are being received in the Halifax office from all over Nova Scotia. It is receiving approximately 150 calls per day from people who want to convert from oil or who are making inquiries as to the possibility of doing so. The need is still there.

It would be a very nice token on the part of the Government if it extended this deadline. The Parliamentary Secretary indicated in his speech that it would cost \$35 million to extend the program for another three months. I realize there is a cost involved, but we on this side of the House feel that the best dollars spent in energy are for conservation purposes. We ask the Government to consider this extension. It would be very popular with Canadians throughout the country. It would allow the people doing the work to do it at a time when the weather is more conducive and the equipment is more readily available. Otherwise, a great number of people will be unable to convert from oil.

I realize the Government does not want to do this. We in my Party feel that we have to keep making this point. We are receiving so many telephone calls and inquiries on this particular point that we feel we have to mention it again and again. We ask the Government to extend the limit for COSP for another six months.

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join in this debate. As a new Member of Parliament, I am surprised that the Government moved so quickly to try to cut off the right of expression not only of Members of Parliament but of their constituents. This is a very important Bill in terms of what it will do to energy conservation.

**Mr. McDermid:** You are the ninetieth speaker.

**Mr. Angus:** I may be the ninetieth speaker, but my constituents deserve to be heard on this issue. I come from northwestern Ontario where the frost will not be out of the ground for many months yet. The decision of the Government to end the program as of March 31 makes a mockery of such legislation. In fact, it makes a mockery of the Government itself. People in my area are asking what the Government is doing. They are saying: "They know we have snow up here; they know the ground is frozen". Why is the Government giving them a phoney deadline of March 31 when everyone in northern Canada was cut off last fall? Clearly these kinds of steps do not do any good for the reputation of the Conservative Government.

A number of Members who spoke before me encouraged an extension to the end of the summer or to next fall to allow people to convert from oil to natural gas. That makes a lot of sense. My constituency office has received a number of calls. People are now telling us that they cannot even convert to propane on a temporary basis because the appropriate materials or tanks are no longer available in the short term. These people are excluded from the opportunity to cash in on this program. It is a program that has been well used. I give compliment to the previous Government for putting it in place and continuing it.

● (1200)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Bourassa (Mr. Rossi) rises on a point of order.

**Mr. Rossi:** Mr. Speaker, could you ascertain whether there is quorum or not?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Including myself, there are 20 of us.

[*English*]

**Mr. Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I was not sure what was happening there, whether you had changed the time limit for me or what.

The Hon. Member made reference to the ninetieth speaker. I am quite happy to be here, legitimately trying to delay the decision as long as we can on this side of the House. The longer we delay it, the better chance there is to allow those Canadians who have not had the opportunity to convert a chance to do so. It is extremely important that we as Opposition Members express those concerns and take whatever delaying tactics we can in order to work on behalf of our constituents. I realize I have a few more minutes, but I am going to wrap up my comments. I just want to reiterate that the Government is tarnishing its reputation with Canadians by such a short-sighted and illogical move, particularly in the north.

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, I believe I can speak on this motion. As I understand it, it is a motion to restrict the debate. Correct me if I am wrong, but I believe I am permitted to speak.

I have just returned from Vancouver where the oil negotiations are going on between the producing provinces, the Energy Ministers of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan and the federal Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney). The consumers are not represented in that negotiation. In those negotiations, they are splitting up a \$22 billion pie. The Government has had input from the oil industry. It is now setting down how to give revenues to the provincial and federal Governments and to the oil industry. At the same time, the one little grant, the one little bone, the one little piece thrown away to the ordinary Canadian consumer is being cut off by this Government—a \$500 grant to help toward cost of insulation and up to \$800 toward converting a