

*Adjournment Debate*

a gallon. It is known that the price for natural gas available in places like Toronto is approximately 67 per cent of the price of petroleum products, particularly home heating oil. Consequently, if that kind of price regime applied to consumers of home heating oil in Nova Scotia, the effective price would be 99 cents a gallon; that is to say, equating natural gas to home heating oil in relation to price, we would find that Nova Scotians would be paying a price of 99 cents instead of the current price of \$1.46 a gallon for oil.

This means, in general terms, and I hope Your Honour follows my point, that instead of paying \$1,168 a year over the winter months to heat the average home in Nova Scotia, a Nova Scotian family would be paying something like \$792 if they had available a price equivalent to the natural gas price. That would mean a savings per family of \$376 per year. If one multiplies that by the number of homes in Nova Scotia, over 200,000, one is talking about \$80 million.

The point is that because the Government did not fulfil its promise to extend the natural gas pipeline to the Maritimes, particularly Nova Scotia, this very winter Nova Scotians will be paying \$80 million more to heat their homes, and that is a conservative estimate because it includes only those people using home heating oil.

Therefore, what I want the Government to do is to consider this situation, consider the promise it made to Nova Scotians, consider the fact that that promise has been broken, and remedy the situation by providing equivalent financial aid.

In these days of cutbacks in Government expenditures, one might ask, where will the Government get the funds to provide this assistance? The fact is that, through the Petroleum Compensation Program, which the Government introduced, allegedly to help Nova Scotians and people on the East Coast to cushion the effects of increases in the cost of oil and home heating oil, as Your Honour knows, the Government provides a compensation program. That compensation paid in respect of oil imported to the East Coast of Canada cost over \$3 billion in the last two fiscal years. Of course the price of foreign oil and the price of Canadian oil have come closer together. The price difference has now narrowed. The Government will spend substantially less this year and in the following years than it has in the past two years. This expenditure of approximately \$3 billion will be reduced to something in the order of \$1.5 billion.

• (2215)

So, Mr. Speaker, the \$1.5 billion that the Government is saving in the payments it has been making through the Petroleum Compensation Board in respect of imports of oil should now be available to assist consumers with this increase in cost they are incurring, to heat their homes and for other energy purposes.

That is my request to the Minister, and I hope his Parliamentary Secretary will convey the message to him. Since the Government is saving \$1.5 billion and since it has broken its

promise to deliver natural gas to Nova Scotia, causing consumers there an expenditure of over \$80 million a year, some of this money should be used to offset that expenditure.

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby) has raised the particular question, what assistance is the federal Government giving or going to give to the consumers in the Province of Nova Scotia?

I suggest at the outset that the Hon. Member for Halifax West must be running scared to be raising issues of this nature. He knows very well the reasons the pipeline is not proceeding as quickly as we would like. He knows that the Premier of the Province of Nova Scotia has indicated, in agreement with the Government of Canada, that if there is a delay in construction of that pipeline, so be it, because they are now finding natural gas in commercial quantities off the coast of Nova Scotia. Hopefully it will be possible to bring this on-stream in the construction of the pipeline, and I am surprised that a Conservative Member of Parliament from Nova Scotia would be in disagreement with the Conservative Government of that Province.

The Hon. Member referred very briefly to the Oil Import Compensation Program. I suggest to the Hon. Member that he ought to take note of the facts. It should be noted that from January 1, 1974 to December 1, 1982, the Oil Import Compensation Program made payments to Nova Scotia totalling over \$2.6 billion, yet he has the audacity to ask us what the Government of Canada is doing for Nova Scotia!

I suggest to the Hon. Member that, in addition to the Oil Import Compensation Program, we should look at the Cape Breton Development Corporation which is being subsidized by the Government of Canada. That Crown corporation and the coal miners who work for it are getting substantially less for the product, which they sell primarily to the Nova Scotia Government, thereby keeping heating costs down. So it is the coal miners in Cape Breton who are subsidizing, to a large extent with the assistance of the Government of Canada, the Nova Scotia Power Corporation.

I suggest, with all due respect, that the Hon. Member for Halifax West, who is running scared obviously because of the political boundary changes which may occur in that Province, ought to embrace his Tory Premier and look at the facts. What he ought to do is to say to the Premier of Nova Scotia that the coal miners of Cape Breton ought to receive a better price for their coal. That is what he ought to be saying. But The Hon. Member refuses to acknowledge those facts. I can only say that I will take his representations under advisement.

NATIONAL PARKS—BANFF LAND EXCHANGE—ROLE OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. (B) REASON FOR REQUESTING DELAY IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. (C) REQUEST THAT BULLDOZERS BE REMOVED

**Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River):** Mr. Speaker, this part of the Late Show tonight depicts a tragedy. A beautiful park, developed with taxpayers' money over a period of ten years by