

The fact is that this government is gung-ho on expanding the nuclear industry at the risk of accidents and harm to future generations. This is a serious matter. We are not going to go into all the difficulties involved in the industry. What we are saying is that we should at least have this out in the open. We may hold different views from our friends to the right about expansion of the nuclear industry, but at least they were prepared when they were in government to have an inquiry, hear argument, and get the matter out in the open. This present government is not prepared at all to do that. The hon. member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill will speak on that and, if hon. members to my right will listen, I will speak a little bit about our concern over the present lack of energy policy today. I should like to put forward, if I might, what perhaps a typical Canadian consumer would say if he or she were here in the House today.

The first thing a consumer would ask is: who is the minister of energy for this country? I see a gentleman over there who purports to be, but he does not seem to be very effective as the minister. Who fixes the price that we now pay for our gas? It is not fixed by that minister. He was unable to get a deal with the province of Alberta. Indeed, his leader, the Prime Minister of this country (Mr. Trudeau), met for two days here in Ottawa with his namesake, Peter, and he spent the rest of the summer worrying about the constitution. I recognize the situation in Quebec and what we have been through in that regard, and I know the constitution is important. However, the people in my riding out west are asking about where our priorities are. Surely the priority should be to have a decent energy policy. As the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mrs. Mitchell) has pointed out numerous times in this House, other priorities should be to have a decent housing policy and a policy with respect to inflation. Those are the priorities the man or woman in the street feels.

● (1600)

On August 1, 1980, the price of gasoline went up two dollars. That was a unilateral increase. The minister had nothing to do with it. When asked about it by the press he said, "Well, we will just let it ride and maybe we will get an agreement later on". The question is, who pays for that? I say that the Canadian people pay for that lack of policy because every time Canadians fill up with gas, under the present distribution of gasoline dollars, they fill up the pockets of oil companies. The oil companies are making vast profits.

Mr. Lalonde: What about the government?

Mr. Waddell: An hon. member says the government too. As hon. members know, on every increase and with the existing formula, a one-dollar-a-barrel increase is split such that 45 cents goes to the provincial government of Alberta, 45 cents goes to the oil companies, and ten cents goes to the federal government. If the minister wishes to challenge that, he will have a chance in his speech. I see him nodding. What I say must be true, or else he is tired, either one.

Mr. Lalonde: Maybe both.

Energy

Mr. Waddell: The point is that the 45 cents which goes to these companies and which comes out of the pockets of Canadian taxpayers goes to the oil companies because there is no proper energy policy or agreement between Peter and Pierre. If Peter and Pierre are unable to make an energy policy or sit down and agree, perhaps it is time they both moved on. That is what Canadian consumers say.

Mr. Paproski: Maybe you, Waddell, will be moving on.

Mr. Waddell: The money is going to companies which are controlled largely by foreigners, and Canadian consumers will eventually get tired of that split.

I listened to the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson), the spokesman for the Conservatives, and it seems to me that just as in the debate on July 8 the Conservatives are really still fighting the last election. I am surprised that they raised this matter. I might say that they are fighting the last two elections. They still suggest the policy that Canada should go to world prices. The problem with that is that the consumers of Canada do not really accept that. They see that as an artificial price, and they do not accept that the price of gasoline should go to world levels. The other thing they do not accept, and this is why they defeated the budget of the former minister of finance, is going too quickly to world prices. Consumers do not want the price of gasoline to increase too quickly.

I think Canadians are prepared to accept an increase in the price of gas. They are prepared to take more money out of their pockets to pay the price of gasoline, but with the rider that that money must come back to the government. It has to come back to the people in different ways. It has to come back through tax credits for low income people, and it must come back—I will talk more about this later in my speech—as a way of buying back control and taking public ownership of the Canadian energy industry with that money. If we told the Canadian people that when they pay that extra money for gasoline it is going to take control of their own industry, which has been sold out by previous Liberal and Conservative governments, they would go for that.

While I am on my feet, I want to deal with two matters of government policy which also come to light. Today in the House the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) asked the Prime Minister about a report that the governor of Massachusetts was talking about getting Canadian natural gas exports. Once again we are into a situation in which we are talking about selling out Canadian gas resources rather than using them here in Canada. Other than making a few speeches since he has been minister, the only thing I see that the minister has done has been to make one decision, and that was the decision on the pre-build of the Alaska pipeline. The minister opted for selling out Canadian gas resources in vast quantities to the United States, in this case Alberta gas resources. I say to Mr. "Ironclad Guarantee" that it now appears that there is even some thought of selling out more gas from the maritimes. Where were hon. members to my right