

Energy Policy

Scotia. In Nova Scotia it is \$33.41 million for the home insulation grant program and another \$17 million for a home insulation loan program, and almost \$7 million in Prince Edward Island.

What is the reason for this discrimination? It has nothing to do with the reason given in the statement. It has been stated publicly that Nova Scotia is the author of its own misfortunes with respect to high energy costs. The government of Nova Scotia turned down the opportunity to go into nuclear energy with New Brunswick. Because the government of Nova Scotia prevented increases in prices charged for electricity over the last three or four years—Premier Regan prevented them from going ahead when they should have commenced earlier—now there is going to be an abrupt jump. For political reasons they were kept down over three or four years when costs were climbing. The Nova Scotia Power Commission incurred heavy losses because of that political policy. That is the reason they are taking an abrupt jump in Nova Scotia now. It is because they had the benefit of an Imperial Oil contract to supply oil for electrical generation purposes at a very low figure. Now there has to be an abrupt jump. There have been abrupt jumps in Newfoundland and all the other provinces, Mr. Speaker.

The person who put forward these reasons for not giving Nova Scotia special help was the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources last year. He has been made to swallow his words by some forces beyond his control. What were those forces? They were political forces. The Liberal party of Nova Scotia got the government House leader down to Nova Scotia and pulverized him at a meeting about six months ago. They assured the minister that he had no chance of being elected and would have to go to the other place if he did not get a special program from the government of Canada. For six months Nova Scotia was rife with Alastair Gillespie jokes. It was not the Newfie joke in Nova Scotia; it was the Alastair Gillespie joke. The hon. gentleman has made a 100 per cent about-face in the face of this abuse.

Mr. Epp: He is still facing in the wrong direction.

Mr. Crosbie: After the abuse he took from the government of Nova Scotia, he brought in this new policy. There are two Liberal provinces left in Canada, Mr. Speaker, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, and the federal government is struggling mightily to see that they remain Liberal. Nova Scotia faces an election this year. This about-face reminds me of the following ditty.

When Regan delved and MacEachen spanned
Who was then in command?
Certainly not the energy man.

I am sure the minister fought against this policy in the confines of the government, but he has been forced to toe the line by the government House leader and Premier Regan. This is a sad thing because the people of the other eight provinces are being discriminated against by the government. It is using tax moneys collected all across Canada to support a policy that discriminates against the other eight provinces, for no logical

reason—nothing but a political reason. That is why this resolution decries the unfairness and injustice of these policies.

I have not the time to go into more detail about how silly it is to argue that only these two provinces deserve this policy because of their high content of oil-fired energy, 100 per cent in Prince Edward Island and 60 per cent in Nova Scotia. I support this kind of program in an attempt to induce energy conservation. It would be a step in the right direction were it applied all across Canada. But I say that what is good for Nova Scotia and what is good for Prince Edward Island is good for the rest of us Canadians.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Leggatt: You sound like General Motors.

Mr. Crosbie: The province of Newfoundland has been attempting to get equal treatment with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick since March, 1976, including letters from the premier of the province outlining reasons why we should receive at least the same treatment. I will briefly give some of these reasons; they would apply to other provinces as well. The people of Newfoundland are depending increasingly on imported oil to meet their energy needs—21 per cent this year. If hon. members opposite do not adopt a proper policy in developing hydro energy or to assist provinces with low capability to develop hydro resources, it will be ever-increasing: it will be 40 per cent in 1980.

● (1530)

We need assistance for that reason. We need assistance because the per capita personal income in Newfoundland is lower than in Nova Scotia, and about the same as in Prince Edward Island. If you look at need, you cannot just take one item such as the high electricity cost and isolate that. You have to look at all of the factors. The cost of living in Newfoundland is the highest in the country. You have to look at other factors like that to get that need. When you look at those factors you see that the need of Newfoundlanders is even greater than those in Nova Scotia and is equal to those in Prince Edward Island. It is also true for other parts of the country. Our climate has higher average temperatures than Prince Edward Island or Nova Scotia. We have higher wind velocities than P.E.I. or Nova Scotia.

An hon. Member: That is true.

Mr. Crosbie: I am not trying to illustrate that fact today. The cost of heating oil in Newfoundland is substantially higher than in Nova Scotia. It costs 3½ cents more for a gallon of heating oil in St. John's than it does in Halifax. The same is true of stove oil. The cost of heating oil is greater in Newfoundland than in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Seventy per cent of our households are heated by stove oil furnaces. Therefore, the need is greater there. Our electricity prices are the third highest in Canada despite the fact that we have a lot of hydro. It is high-cost hydro because it was only developed in the last 15 years at a high capital cost. It is delivered to scattered outposts. In addition, we have a rural