

the industry and taxes the consumer to help pay the price, and then through the back door the government returns money to the industry in the form of grants.

That type of approach, that focus on redistribution, has tremendous inefficiencies associated with it in addition to interfering with the natural forces of supply and demand. Instead of encouraging the production of additional supply, what we are doing is merely redistributing the investment needed to maintain the existing supply of energy sources that we need in this country and at the same time skimming a big chunk off the top. There is no Liberal member opposite who would not agree that the government's ultimate goal is to balance the budget, to try to offset the multi-billion-dollar budgetary deficits which the government has incurred because of squandering and spending on its own foolishness. For example, consider the stupid kit we received in our offices last week which no one in this House authorized. It was a fancy kit to proclaim the new Constitution for which our friend the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) wants to take all the credit even though he had to be bludgeoned by the ten premiers and dragged screaming and kicking to the table of compromise.

I for one was quite offended not to have seen the premiers get adequate recognition last week from the government opposite in spite of the fact that, had it not been for those premiers who compromised and agreed and forced the Prime Minister to change, this country would not have had a new Constitution.

**Mr. Taylor:** We would not have had a country.

**Mr. Siddon:** This government opposite likes to talk about the evil doers in the private sector, the so-called profiteers. But in fact it is this federal government, the Liberal Party opposite that has been profiteering more than any other single group in the oil and gas sector and profiteering at the expense of the Canadian economy. We need only look at the breakdown in the price of a litre of gasoline. I will use the measurement of litres out of consideration for my metric friends across the way. We find that out of the Canadian average price of 42 cents a litre of gas, 14 cents goes to the Canadian federal government, or 33 per cent. This goes to the federal government by way of clear profit. It does very little to justify it. By comparison, the producing provinces receive only 16 per cent, less than half of what the federal government receives.

What is this great illusion about the private sector ripping off the people? The ones responsible for the greatest rip-off of all are those in the Liberal cabinet and their so-called friends to my left who condone this type of excess intervention in the private sector economy which is so important to all of us. It allows us to continue to enjoy the prosperity and benefits of this great country. On the one hand, the government wants to take—that is the philosophy of Bill C-104 and the earlier legislation that we have seen pass through the House—bigger and bigger chunks of the revenues without realizing what a mucky job it is to roughneck, what a risk it is to work on one of the offshore drilling rigs, or to put on your boots, set out across the mountains and tramp through the forests with a geophysical crew. The government opposite does not want to do that.

#### *Petroleum Incentives Program Act*

The government just wants its 33 per cent profit. Then the government will give it back, but it will be redistributed to its friends and to people who happen to suit the government's definition. Bureaucrats will skim off anywhere from 10 per cent to 50 per cent of the revenue by way of an unnecessarily costly, unproductive rigmarole of the sort this bill represents. That is what this government is doing. The ordinary taxpayer is being asked to foot the bill for all of this. How ludicrous it is. We all know that an excessively regulated economy, as this bill reflects, will only lead to higher consumer costs. That is what we will have to contend with.

Right now I can drive from my constituency 20 miles to Bellingham, Washington and buy gasoline at less than \$1.20 a gallon, which is about \$1.50 in Canadian funds. But I buy my gasoline in Vancouver at \$1.85, \$1.90 or \$1.95 a gallon. That is what we have achieved because of this National Energy Program, and this spendthrift government believes that only the great gods in Ottawa can do anything right in this country.

I want to say something about a couple of the sectors that are indirectly affected by this policy. One is the Canadian mining sector. I know you will permit me a moment or two to comment on that, Mr. Speaker. In the Canadian mining sector, the junior mining companies at the exploration level have experienced a tremendous lowering of investor confidence and uncertainty because they do not know what the next move of the government will be. The Minister of State for Mines (Mrs. Erola) can proclaim all she likes the fact that it is different in the mineral sector because Canadian ownership is somewhat higher. But what about companies such as Inco which is not Canadian owned? What about the Iron Ore Company? When is the next shoe going to fall, and is it going to hit them on the head? While we are at it, if we really want to get into intervention, what about the grocery industry in which some of the major grocery chains are dominated from outside of Canada? What about the department store industry? Some of the department stores on Sparks street here in Ottawa are owned by Canadian investors and controlled by Canadian investors. What about the automotive industry? What about General Motors? Will they be next? Why just the oil and gas industry, Mr. Speaker? I do not understand this, unless it has nothing to do with common sense but is purely an exercise in politics.

The mineral sector, in addition to the concern and uncertainty about where this interventionist Canadian-controlled philosophy is going to lead, is being adversely impacted by the tax policies, as was most notably reflected in the November 12 budget of last year, and by FIRA and the attitude that FIRA is taking in the form of unwritten policy guidelines in denying foreigners and others the right to invest in our minerals exploration sector. If they want to invest more than \$200,000 we are told they are not allowed to come to Canada. Or if one American-owned company wants to assign its assets to another American-owned company, we are told that in the mineral exploration sector it is contrary to FIRA policy and cannot be allowed.