

Oil and Petroleum

having regard to the important constitution issues at stake—from his present posture of “my way or no way,” reopen the doors of negotiation with the provincial governments concerned and seek a solution by consensus and consultation rather than confrontation, is a policy that I urge most sincerely upon the minister.

The bill before us in its present form should be withdrawn. Our party stands ready to co-operate in the fullest sense to provide the minister with whatever legislative authority he requires to maintain the petroleum price and shelter system he has developed, and to levy the export tax necessary to implement it.

Mr. Firth: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Douglas (Bruce): On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie, in speaking about STOL aircraft, would not like to mislead the House. I think he mentioned that STOL aircraft required six to eight times as much fuel as trains or buses. I should like to put a couple of things straight on the record.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The hon. member for Bruce is not rising on a point of order but entering into the debate. He will be recognized in due course if he wishes to participate in the discussion.

Mr. Firth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there are very few members of the committee who know what it is like to have to pay \$2.25 a gallon for fuel to run their motorized toboggans. Likewise, very few members of the committee know what it is like to have to pay \$1 a gallon for fuel in the Arctic, especially when you have to use 25 to 30 gallons a day at times when the temperature reaches 50 below. A lot of fuel is flown in to many parts because it is a necessity of life, especially in the high Arctic. Neither do I think there are many members here who know what it is like to have to pump their own fuel and have gasoline burn their hands while pumping gas into an aircraft that is going on a very important mission, and pay \$2.25 a gallon for 80-87 or 110-30. I do not think those terms register with many members here, but they are common in my constituency.

The average price of fuel in the high Arctic is in the area of \$1 a gallon and up, and that is a very sad situation. I am happy to see that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is in the chamber tonight because I am sure he is aware of a certain program in operation in Old Crow in the Yukon. This is a program that makes use of alternative fuel supply, since it is impossible to fly fuel into Old Crow to run the nursing station and school at all times of the year.

This program, which has worked very well, utilizes wood as fuel to run the school, and this in itself creates an industry in a little village like Old Crow. The people there go out and fell trees, and use their own labour and resources in providing fuel to run the school. This is a very good program that I think should be considered for some of the smaller villages in the Arctic, especially along the tree line.

I think this point should also receive serious consideration. We have airlines like Pacific Western that charge a

[Mr. Balfour.]

higher rate per passenger mile and a higher charge for freight in and out of the Arctic compared with elsewhere. Their aircraft refuel at the wellhead at Norman Wells. The company uses 737's and other kinds of sophisticated aircraft, but charges a much higher rate than Air Canada or other common carriers in the Northwest Territories compared with other rates across Canada.

Why do we allow companies like Imperial Oil to rip off the public by refueling Pacific Western Air Lines' aircraft and charging a higher rate than is charged similar equipment elsewhere in Canada? This does not make sense to me, and I do not think it would make sense to anybody else. North of Norman Wells bulk barges are used on the river to transport fuel further north. Sometimes we pay higher rates north of Norman Wells than south of Norman Wells, even though it is the same company doing the transporting. I suggest these questions should receive serious consideration.

Aside from that, I should also like to make this point. How many people, in this House or in the southern part of Canada generally, know what it is like to have to pay from \$2.25 to \$3 per gallon for fuel for their motorized vehicles which they require to make their living? These people in the north have to pay that amount and there is no tax rebate, whereas farmers in the southern part of Canada do get a tax rebate on the cost of the fuel they use to produce food.

● (2100)

The Innuit or the Indian has to pay upwards of \$2.25 per gallon to run his motorized equipment in order to go out and fish, or hunt cariboo to feed his family, and he gets no rebate whatsoever. He is not even considered to be a farmer, yet he is working his land by fishing and hunting for cariboo or moose just as the farmer down here works his land, yet the farmer here receives a tax rebate and does not have to pay as much for low-grade fuel.

This is something hon. members of this House should consider. There are only about 40,000 people in the whole Northwest Territories. They are not all hunters and trappers, but these people must pay these high prices for fuel to harvest their crops in that area, and I think they should be considered for some kind of tax rebate.

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to take part in a debate on a bill which has, I think, a great importance. To start my remarks, I would like to read its title once more:

An Act to impose a charge on the export of crude oil and certain petroleum products, to provide compensation for certain petroleum costs and to regulate the price of Canadian crude oil and natural gas in interprovincial and export trade

I imagine that the minister responsible should aim at ensuring the necessary supply of those products at the best possible price for all Canadians. It is not the basic objectives of the government that concern us but the means it intends to use to reach them. As many other members, I believe there are acceptable means that, in the name of federalism of which we talk so often, could give much sounder results than the means proposed in this bill. It is also clear in this bill, Mr. Chairman, that there is no agreement with the provinces. If there is no agreement between the provinces, the federal government will have