

Mr. MacLellan: No. And that is not what was ruled here earlier today in this House. The Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) rose on a point of order and asked if he could continue. He acknowledged the fact that he had forfeited his time by moving the motion to adjourn yesterday: that is, his 20 minutes had elapsed. He asked at that point if the period for questions and comments could continue. The Speaker reflected and then said, yes, it could. If questions and comments are considered part of the debate, then the Hon. Member should not have been able to continue with questions and comments. One can't have it both ways.

I have no objection to my friend, the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway, having the ten minutes and continuing with questions and comments. He deserved that. He moved an adjournment which I thought was very worthwhile. If he had not done so, someone from this Party would have done so. He paid the price of forfeiting his 20 minutes, and he deserved to be able to continue with questions and comments. However, we have a very definite inconsistency. Regardless of what the procedure has been and what has been determined that the rules say, we have a very definite deviation from what has been followed by the rulings of the Speaker.

Mr. Gauthier: We've been short-changed on that one.

Mr. MacLellan: That's right. We have suffered and have been short-changed an hour at least. Now everything is concluded and counted as debate. That was not the ruling of His Honour, the Speaker, today. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that eight hours is fine. A time limit on 20-minute speeches is good. Eight hours is good. But those eight hours should consist only of the actual debate; not of points of order or questions of privilege or questions and comments, but debate.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Having heard the representations made by the three Hon. Members, I think that the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) who has raised this point will certainly agree with me that the occupant of the Chair is bound by the interpretation of Standing Order 35(2) which includes the 10 minutes. I will be pleased, however, to convey his representations to our Committee on Procedure and Organization in order to see whether changes could be made to satisfy all hon. members, if the House so wishes.

[English]

The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) on debate, and I would remind him that we are now in the ten-minute period for debate without questions or comments following.

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in questioning the Government's decision to do away with the most successful part of the national energy policy, a part which has had demonstrated results in terms of not only provoking activity, but also in very substantial saving of our oil supply which Canada will need some time in the future. It is acknowledged, I think, on all sides of the House

Oil Substitution Act

that our oil and gas supplies are not inexhaustible and that our petroleum in particular is far from inexhaustible. We will be needing it for certain purposes such as air travel, for plastics and petrochemicals and in certain areas where it cannot be replaced by other products. Therefore, it does not make any sense to use oil for home heating and other uses where substitutes are in fact easily available.

The Government's decision is not only wrong and imprudent in the long term, but it is also wrong and imprudent in terms of the priority which the Government announced when it came to office. We were told that "jobs, jobs, jobs" would be its priority. I have had insulation contractors talk to me in my riding with respect to what will happen to their businesses after the phasing out of the CHIP program. The Government's own review of CHIP indicated that two-thirds of the CHIP work would not have been done if the program had not existed. About 40 per cent or 50 per cent of all retrofitting taking place in homes for insulation purposes is motivated by CHIP, but that will go in the course of another year's time.

I have had people in the furnace business tell me similarly that their businesses are just going to slump and they will in fact be forced to lay off their staff and in some cases be unemployed themselves because of the ending of the COSP program in just a few days.

I happen to have benefited from the COSP program last year. I did not anticipate that the Government would take this step but in September I took the initiative and arranged to have a gas burner installed in my house in place of my oil burner. The consequence is that from now on we will be saving about 50 barrels of oil a year, and that is a lot. That is a benefit which is going to go on for a very long time, and the cost to the Government after recouping tax on the grant would be of the order of about \$500 or \$550, whatever my tax rate may happen to be. That is a very small investment and it illustrates that it is far cheaper to get new oil supplies through conservation and alternate energy than it is through finding new supplies.

● (1440)

However, the Government is going to remove the petroleum gas revenue tax which will cost the taxpayers some \$2.5 billion at the same time it is eliminating these two programs which are far less costly and far more productive, given their ability to literally mine oil from the walls of people's homes and furnaces because of the switch-over to other forms of energy.

It seems to me that the reason for the Government's decision is a bias in favour of western oil interests and a bias against the very prudent method of saving petroleum energy. The biggest budget cuts last year were to the CHIP and COSP programs, and cuts to the National Research Council, to the tune of \$60 million for conservation and alternative energy research.

What binds all of these together is that they were measures which threaten the continued growth of the industry until the oil runs out. We are threatening short-term profits for the oil industry. But in my opinion and that of my Party these