

Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act

gasoline. This is the amount they had to pay last year. I will repeat the figure for the Hon. Member for Gatineau (Mrs. Maily)—58 per cent.

Mrs. Maily: Yours was 80 per cent.

Mr. Gauthier: Right now this is costing Canadians about \$1 billion. In 1990 it will cost Canadians about \$2.5 billion in lost revenue, which the oil companies will receive. How can the Hon. Member stand up in her riding and tell the tourists that come to Gatineau, whom she wants to draw there—

Mrs. Maily: Gas costs less in Gatineau now than when you were in power.

Mr. Gauthier: How can the Hon. Member justify that to people in her riding?

Mrs. Maily: By creating jobs. People once working in Alberta have now come home to work.

Mr. Gauthier: I want to talk about creating jobs. In Nova Scotia, for example, oil and gas searches were carried out by the private sector under PIP grants. Do Hon. Members remember the Petroleum Incentives Program?

An Hon. Member: We remember it!

Mr. Gauthier: It created jobs.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gauthier: It created jobs in the Beaufort Sea and in the Atlantic.

Mrs. Maily: It created jobs in Belgium!

Mr. Gauthier: All the urban Tories who are in the House are laughing. All the urban Tories who are laughing should talk to some of those people in the eastern provinces just to find out how many rigs are working right now in Nova Scotia. There was but one rig working last year. When PIP was in effect there were many rigs working, sometimes up to a dozen, and at other times even more than that.

Mrs. Maily: They were in the States.

Mr. Dick: They could buy them. You gave the money away to the rich people.

Mr. Gauthier: You will get your chance to speak on this later.

Mr. Dick: You gave them \$2 billion.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I take it that I do have unlimited time—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No, you do not.

Mr. Gauthier: If I do not have unlimited time, then I would like to get on and deal with what the Government is doing in terms of oil conservation. I take it that the Tory Members in

the House believe in energy conservation. I take it they believe in insulation as well. What has the Government done in this respect? It took away the insulation program. The Government even imposed a tax on wood stoves, which is a way to heat homes. I hope that over the weekend I will be doing some wood stove heating because it is agreeable and it saves energy. We did not tax wood stoves before.

Mr. Boudria: The Tories did that?

Mr. Gauthier: The Tories did that.

Mr. Boudria: Unbelievable!

Mr. Gauthier: They should tell that to the farmers in their constituencies. That was a great progressive move.

Mrs. Maily: They don't have to pay capital gains on the sale of their farms.

Mr. Gauthier: What does the Conservative Government do with the taxes? It gives them away to the oil companies.

I see, Mr. Speaker, you are indicating to me that I have but two minutes left.

Some Hon. Members: Too bad!

Mr. Dick: You are usually more rational.

Mr. Gauthier: I would just like to put some statistics on the record, which is something I am sure the Hon. Member for Gatineau would love me to do. Let us consider how much taxes have risen in the 12-month period from October 1984 to October 1985. As I have said before, the Government raised taxes by 58.1 per cent. That is incredible. In the United States motorists have been benefiting from the falling oil prices. The Americans have kept up with the times, they have not had any tax increases. In fact, their level of taxes has remained steady.

In Halifax, in October of 1984, the price of a litre of regular gasoline was 52.6 cents. In October 1985, the price of a litre of gasoline in Halifax had risen to 57.7 cents. This is as a result of a policy put into place by a Government which states that when gas and oil prices decline it will impose more taxes just in case the consumers should have an advantage over the big friends of Government. I am speaking of the big oil companies. The Government makes it difficult for the consumer, and especially hard for farmers. I am looking at my friend, the Hon. Member for Mississauga North (Mr. Horner).

Mr. Horner: There is not one farmer in my riding.

Mr. Gauthier: He does not have one farmer in his riding. He should have. It would make him more sensitive to their needs. Farmers have to buy gas and oil. If greater taxes are imposed on farmers, their profits are reduced and they have a difficult time with the administration of their farms. As an urban man the Hon. Member should understand that.

The Minister says that it will take a few months before lower priced oil works itself into the system. That is a very interesting point. When oil prices were going up, the oil