

Petroleum Incentives Program Act

him dated December 21, 1981. In that letter I specifically stated that the PIP program and the COR program were the only parts of the National Energy Program which had any time urgency and that if he would separate them, I would recommend to my caucus that the bill containing those programs be given expeditious treatment in the House of Commons. I made that offer in writing on December 21, 1981. His reply was a flat no.

The reason I made that offer to the minister was not that there was any political advantage to me or my party in assisting the government with its legislative program—far from it. However, I was aware that various officials in the government had promised the PIP and COR programs as long ago as April, 1981, a year ago. I was aware of some junior Canadian-owned companies which, on the basis of the assurances from officials in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, had gone out and expended considerable sums of money through loans from the banks to undertake exploration programs. They did this because they were promised by the Government of Canada that the PIP program would be in place and that they would be reimbursed for their expenditures. When they were not reimbursed, and when interest rates went up to 18 per cent, 20 per cent and 22 per cent, they started hurting. Their bankers started knocking on their doors and they started to consider bankruptcy as an alternative. They were concerned. They got precious little sympathy from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde). They got some sympathy from me. That is why I made that offer to the minister. But his reply was a big, fat no. He was not interested. He would take it in his fashion; we would have one big bill, and that was it.

Mr. Lalonde: Be honest. Be honest, Harvie.

Mr. Andre: The minister says, "Be honest". That is exactly what happened. I wrote and made this offer, and he said, "No".

Mr. Lalonde: Read your own quote in *Hansard*.

Mr. Andre: You should read my quote in *Hansard*.

Mr. Lalonde: You will see that what you are telling me is not correct.

Mr. Andre: The fact is that I had a discussion with Mr. MacLaren. He thought it was a good idea and said he would recommend it to you, but you told Mr. MacLaren, "No".

Mr. Lalonde: No, you read what you said in *Hansard*. You said that I had agreed to having the whole bill treated with dispatch.

Mr. Andre: I am sorry, but you misread *Hansard*. I never said that. I said that I talked to MacLaren.

Mr. Lalonde: Well, read *Hansard*.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. Remarks should be addressed to the Chair, not to other hon. members.

Mr. Andre: The minister would not recognize the truth if he saw it. His letter of January, 1982 states, quite specifically, "No". If he had, in fact, thought differently, why did he not put it in the letter?

The National Energy Program, when announced, made three great promises. It promised self-sufficiency, fair revenue sharing and Canadianization. Who could disagree with that? Who could disagree with those three noble goals? It would certainly not be this party.

● (1850)

Since the OPEC crisis, the Middle East war of 1973 and the resulting shortage, we have been solidly in favour of Canada becoming self-sufficient so that we are not held hostage to political events in other parts of the world over which we have no control.

Certainly we agree with fair revenue-sharing. How could anyone oppose that? Governments need funds to operate and to do so-called good works. Industry needs enough money to justify carrying on, to reinvest, provide jobs and so on. Obviously fair treatment is required. I must add that the consumer should expect to receive fair treatment when purchasing the products of the energy industry. No one is opposed to that.

I really wonder whether fair revenue-sharing is what we have. The great election promise said, "Vote Liberal and we will keep gasoline prices down". Prices in Canada are supposed to be less than the world price. That is what the minister says. Anyone who crosses the United States border and fills up his tank will find that it is cheaper to buy gasoline in the United States than in Canada, and the United States is at world prices.

How can that be? It is very simple. In Canada, in addition to the crude oil tax at the wellhead, when the consumer fills up he must pay the petroleum compensation charge, the Canadian-ownership charge, the petroleum and gas revenue charge, the natural gas and gas liquid tax, federal sales tax and federal excise tax. I believe I have forgotten one.

By the time the federal government has laid on all of its taxes, when a consumer buys a dollar's worth of gasoline, two-thirds, and more in the case of Quebec, is in the form of tax. This is from a political party which said that an 18-cent tax would be an outrage, that it would not do such a thing. We were told that if we vote for them, we will pay \$1.35.

Mr. Ferguson: You are way off. In Ontario it is not two thirds.

Mr. Andre: It is 66.2 per cent. The hon. member has been reading the minister's press releases again. He should look at the truth. In Ontario, 66.2 per cent of the petroleum dollar goes to governments.

Mr. Ferguson: You are thinking of Saskatchewan and the insurance tax.

Mr. Andre: I am thinking of Ontario. That is not fair taxation. It is not fair revenue-sharing. It is a rip-off, a broken