

**Mr. Skelly:** Hear, hear! Another philosophically fixed individual, excellent. I think it is time the Government stood up, came clean with Canadians, and told them exactly what its game plans are. There is no doubt the Government wants to privatize a company upon which Canadians have spent billions and billions just to get a foothold on the energy industry in Canada.

In the past, energy has been controlled by multinational corporations. Decisions have been made outside Canada and Canadians have suffered enormously for the failure to have any kind of a window on the industry or any kind of control over it. The present Government would turn the industry back to the multinationals and allow the future of Canadians to be mortgaged to them.

We had PetroCan put together, but it would have been a very different operation had it been struck under an NDP Government. In about October, 1973 the concept was first laid out in this House in a speech by Tommy Douglas who outlined the basic principles under which a national energy corporation should operate. Had those principles been followed, we would not be looking at a major oil company in Canada that was as much as anything a price leader and a participator in price fixing, but at a price leader in terms of giving benefits to Canadians and leading in price reduction.

Ultimately it struck me that the purpose of Petro-Canada was to allow Canadians to have an influence in the way that energy was developed and that would involve benefits to Canadians, not to the multinationals. Where possible, Petro-Canada would form joint ventures with other multinationals in the development of resources to give guidance and establish directions of benefit to Canadians and so make sure that Canadians stayed ahead with exploration and technology. But the Conservatives would have privatized that. They want to put their faith in the multinationals who have shafted us in the past and, given a chance, will shaft us in the future.

What about security of supply, Mr. Speaker? I believe the President of Imperial Oil prior to the energy crisis in the early 1970s said that we have 900 years worth of oil, and after that, he said, we will be out of oil.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** They lied.

**Mr. Skelly:** They lied. What do we have though in terms of any adequate information on direction and development of the energy industry in Canada without at least something on the scale of Petro-Canada?

I for one am pleased that the Conservative Party has finally come clean and told us what it wants to do with Petro-Canada. It wants to get rid of it and take away the investment that has taken years to build up which put the corporation in the position of having some influence on the direction in which energy development goes in Canada. To dump it borders on absolute negligence. I am certain people on the benches opposite will be held accountable for the decisions Cabinet has taken.

#### *Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act*

It will be interesting to watch gas pricing come the next election. In British Columbia gas pricing has had a terrible effect on communities, especially rural communities and those farther away from the main centres where the price of gasoline runs between 60 cents and 70 cents a litre. What about the cost of doing business in those communities? British Columbia is probably one of the provinces in Canada that has had the least recovery after the devastating recession. The communities I represent on the coast of British Columbia are having an extremely difficult time getting involved in the recovery that appears to be going on in central Canada and in other areas of the country one of the main problems being the cost of energy. When you are paying 60 cents or 70 cents a litre, it is an extremely large share—

**Mrs. Sparrow:** In B.C. they don't pay.

**Mr. Skelly:** Nobody pays 60 cents to 70 cents a litre?

**Mrs. Sparrow:** In B.C. they don't.

**Mr. Skelly:** It is time to provide a little proof for the Member. Communities in B.C. cannot get involved in an effective recovery because of the cost of ferry travel, the cost of air travel and the cost of doing business, of which freight is an extremely large percentage. Consumers are being shafted.

Gas pricing will have an effect on the Hon. Member for Cariboo-Chilcotin (Mr. Greenaway). It would be nice to hear him talking about the effects of gas prices in his riding. It would be nice to hear him say that we should get rid of Petro-Canada. I suspect people will put two and two together and suggest that a properly run Canadian owned oil company would change that direction.

But the problem goes back to the nature of the Government. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources indicated that she is going to privatize and get rid of an important asset which the Canadian people have built up. I think the ideological fixation that the Government has that everything must go back to the private sector and that there is no place for a mixed economy is fairly interesting. That is the kind of thinking and action that has brought the Conservatives from about 52 per cent support, according to the Gallup poll, to 38 per cent. I would suspect that this fall is not finished. It is not just the Government's failure to do anything effective with gas pricing and the failure to do anything constructive with Petro-Canada to set some price decrease in place that have caused the drop; a lot of other things have influenced people, such as, as one example, patronage activities that would even have embarrassed the previous Government, which was a patronage leader.

People believe that the Conservative Government is the government of big business, a government for banks, oil companies and for everybody but the ordinary Canadians. That is the bottom line. Thirty-eight per cent support in the Gallup poll is not the stopping point for this outfit either, Mr. Speaker.