

*Oral Questions*

There were two commitments made. Those two commitments have been and will be respected by this government.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Lalonde:** I am glad the members of the opposition have finally got to read something. We made two commitments. One is that the price in 1980 would be lower than \$4 a barrel and would not include an 18-cent excise tax to which we objected. And that we have respected. The second commitment was that over the four years of our mandate, the four years covered by the Conservative budget of 1979, our prices would be lower to the consumer than they would have been under the Tory budget.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Nowlan:** We thought you were Pinocchio; you are Dr. Goebbels.

**Madam Speaker:** I wonder if there is any use in my calling the House to order. I can see this is "wonderful Wednesday".

**Mr. Nowlan:** The minister is telling the truth inside out.

**Madam Speaker:** I would point out to hon. members that we have spent five minutes on one question.

## MINISTER'S REASONS

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, the minister can twist as much as he wishes. The people of Canada know that he promised to oppose 18 cents a gallon. He is socking a 60-cent a gallon increase to the people of Canada right now, and the Liberal party applauds.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Clark:** An arrogant and callous government which once again breaks its promise to the Canadian people.

[*English*]

The minister knows very well that in February and March there was a \$265 million profit in energy taxes over what is being paid out by the federal government in energy compensation. The minister did not have the courage to make a statement in the House yesterday. Will the minister of energy now tell this House of Commons and the people of Canada why he believes it necessary and how he can justify hammering the consumers of Canada with a new 9-cent a gallon tax on gasoline when the government is already making a profit on energy?

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, we are a long way from excessively raising prices and I must remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that, thanks to the action taken by this government, Canadian consumers have benefited from \$1.9 billion since December 1979, when the Progressive Conservative budget was defeated. It means that during that period each Canadian family of four was richer by \$335 than would have been the case otherwise as a result of the Progressive Conservative budget tabled under the administration—

[*English*]

I would like also to state to the hon. member that, far from being in a surplus position, the government is still subsidizing the price of oil out of general revenues to the tune of \$350 million a year. That is out of general consolidated revenues. The general taxpayers of Canada are subsidizing the cost of oil. We do not want the general taxpayers to subsidize the oil at more than that level, and that is why some increase has taken place. As far as a good part of that increase, at least half, is concerned, I suggest the hon. Leader of the Opposition should phone his friend, the Premier of Alberta, and if Alberta wants to—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Order! Order, please.

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, I find it amazing that we have a minister of energy who would prefer to phone Mexicans, Venezuelans and OPEC offering them the world price when he will not conclude an agreement with producing provinces in Canada which would save Canadians millions of dollars.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Clark:** And I might add that Canadians can appreciate what 60 cents a gallon means.

[*English*]

## STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF FINANCE

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, I have a question concerning the truth for the Minister of Finance, because not only has this government broken its word of February, 1980, and broken it dramatically, but in this House of Commons on May 15 this year, less than a month ago, the Minister of Finance said quite clearly, and I quote:

—I am not proposing to introduce any new tax increases in energy.

He went on to qualify that by saying the one exception would have to do with compensation for cutbacks by producing provinces—the only exception. That was the promise he made on May 15; that was the promise his government broke yesterday. Will the Minister of Finance tell us why the word