

Excise Tax Act

new oil reserves and that any price increase will go into exploration.

Government members have tried to confuse the issue by implying that increased prices are in fact going for new exploration, but let us take a look at what is actually happening. In the case of the 1974 price increase of \$2.70, almost all of the increase went into the hands of government and not into the hands of the producer. By 1976, the federal share of oil revenues will have increased by 800 per cent—and this in the space of two years. The share going to the government of Alberta will have increased 400 per cent. The oil companies' share will have gone up by only 25 per cent. In understanding this legislation we should remember that every single cent of this ten-cent a gallon excise tax will be going into the hands of the federal government. That tax will likely bring \$350 million into federal coffers.

It is apparent from the report of the National Energy Board tabled in the House today by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) that there is not sufficient incentive at the present time in Canada to establish new reserves of energy and to bring them on stream and to market. The reason is not that there have not been significant increases in price to consumers in Canada over the last year or two; the reason is the greed of governments, particularly the federal government, which has prevented significant incentives being offered producers to look for new reserves of energy in this country.

The tax measure we are debating today is unfair and regressive in its entirety and I express my unequivocal opposition to it. Its effects upon our already weakened economy will be extremely harmful and the damage it will do to any anti-inflation policy will be disastrous.

I believe it is wrong for the federal government to be calling for restraint from the working people in Canada at the same time as federal expenditures, on a national accounts basis, are increasing by 16 per cent over last year. I believe that it is wrong for federal policies to drive up the cost of living when it is already too high. And I believe that it is wrong for this Liberal government, through its failure to control inflation, to allow the life savings of Canada's elderly, who cannot protect themselves, to be devoured by inflation.

No government with any understanding of the problems of this country, and no minister of finance with any compassion for the average Canadian, would propose these measures. I ask the Minister of Finance to admit that his budgetary program was wrong, and to try to contain the damage that is being done to our economy by withdrawing this bill. The people of Canada deserve to be treated better than they have been treated by this arrogant and incompetent government.

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering whether it is the wish of the House to call it six o'clock. May I utter tomorrow the words of wisdom that I am going to impart to the House?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Before I put the question the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais) wants to rise on a point of order.

[Mr. Beatty.]

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I was wondering whether I could obtain the consent of the House to have the House revert to the presentation of reports by standing and special committees. I have spoken to the House leaders and there appears to be consent to do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is it agreed that the hon. member be allowed to revert to motions to present a report?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Jones: Explain.

Mr. Blais: There has been an indication on the part of the hon. member for Moncton (Mr. Jones) that he wishes to know which committee it is. It is the mixed committee on labour relations in the public service.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Fourth Report of Special Joint Committee on Employer-Employee Relations in the Public Service—Mr. Blais.

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): It has been suggested that we call it six o'clock. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): It being six o'clock, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is it not agreed?

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys (Mr. Muir).

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

EXCISE TAX ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton) that Bill C-66, to amend the Excise Tax Act, be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole; and the amendment thereto of Mr. Stanfield (p. 7416).