

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the day.

**Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order in connection with the business set down for consideration today. Because of a longstanding arrangement made with the External Affairs Committee I am to appear before that committee this afternoon to discuss the Law of the Sea, and as a consequence I have asked the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion to move Bill C-236 on my behalf when it comes up for a vote.

**Mr. Bell:** We will keep it going until you get back.

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the day.

● (1530)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### ENERGY SUPPLIES EMERGENCY ACT

MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR ALLOCATION BOARD,  
MANDATORY ALLOCATION OF SUPPLIES AND RATIONING  
OF CONTROLLED PRODUCTS

The House resumed, from Tuesday, December 11, consideration of the motion of Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale) that Bill C-236, to provide a means to conserve the supplies of petroleum products within Canada during periods of national emergency caused by shortages or marked disturbances affecting the national security and welfare and the economic stability of Canada and to amend the National Energy Board Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

**Mr. Charles E. Haliburton (South Western Nova):** Mr. Speaker, last night when I began speaking on this subject I was attempting to review some of the measures taken or proposed by the government in light of the apprehended crisis—or, should I say, apprehended insurrection—in the oil industry. What moves has the government made in face of that situation? There have been some efforts made to convince the people of Canada that the government should initiate some apparently conservative measures. Those measures have met no doubt with some success, although in light of the lack of credibility which the minister and the government have on this issue it is likely that those voluntary measures will not have as much effect as might be desired. In any event, the benefits of such conservation measures will be in the short run.

We have, after all, in Canada an increasing population and we have the tradition of increased disposable income in the hands of every Canadian. With increases in the population and increases in the gross national product, obviously the same amount of energy will supply the people of Canada this year as supplied them last year. Next year the situation will be much more aggravated to the extent that known reserves of oil are only sufficient to last the world for the next 20 years. I suggest that the government needs to go a great deal further than offering to the people of Canada some suggestions on means of

### *Energy Supplies Emergency Act*

conserving energy, if we are to have any long-term solutions.

One of the things that the government initiated is a price freeze—a freeze which is not a freeze. I mentioned earlier that there was no freeze in eastern Canada: there is no freeze for the consumers of the Atlantic provinces, where I come from, either in heating oil or gasoline. In fact, what we are faced with as a result of this freezing policy of the government is a two-price system in Canada. We have two Canadas again—one with adequate and cheap energy, and one without. The one without is that other Canada, the one from which I come, east of the Ottawa Valley line. Apparently that eventually is in keeping with the Prime Minister's attitude which he confirmed just a few moments ago, that not only are prices in eastern Canada going to be frozen, but if we cannot afford to pay the price of oil, we do not have to buy it. That comes very close to paraphrasing the motto which we read on the bumper stickers of cars from some parts of western Canada and is not the type of thing we would expect from a statesman of this country.

Last night I spoke about the alleged price advantages that had applied hitherto in eastern Canada. Since then I have obtained a few statistics from Statistics Canada although I am cautioned that their reliability is not certain. However, I think they are sufficiently in keeping with my recollection of prices that I should put them on the record. The price of grade one gasoline, that would be premium gasoline, in Halifax in October, 1960, was 50.9 cents. In Toronto at the same time it was 44.9 cents. In October, 1965, in Halifax it was 51.4 cents and in Toronto it was 49.4 cents. In October in 1970, in Halifax, it was 56.1 cents and in Toronto it was 56.2 cents. That is the only date I have on which the price of gasoline west of the Ottawa Valley line exceeded the price east of the Ottawa Valley line. In October, 1973, in Halifax it was 66 cents and in Toronto it was 64 cents. Furnace oil follows a little different pattern: for some inexplicable reason it was slightly cheaper in the Halifax area. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of those statistics, that it was not as cheap as has been suggested in this House and not so cheap as to prompt the argument which has been raised so many times that Atlantic Canada has been profiting from cheap offshore oil. At one stage, for a short time, the price of heating fuels in Halifax was almost three cents cheaper than in Toronto. Now the trend has been reversed, just as it was reversed prior to 1965. The one period which was different was 1970.

What else has the government done by way of enunciating policy or taking decisions that would justify this current request for arbitrary and sweeping powers? They have had a reconversion to the view that a Montreal pipeline is needed. That is a step in the right direction, but that conclusion was not reached until this alleged crisis arose. It seems that Canada has lost out on the opportunity to construct a Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Nobody in the industry now believes there is any possibility of salvaging this project because an indecisive, vacillating government with no energy policy except that provided by the NDP did not have the courage to move.

**An hon. Member:** Do you have a policy?