

the last budget, and between 23 and 25 per cent approximately under the budgetary proposals.

If my hon. colleague wants to introduce another formula to take into account prices at the pump or retail prices, he will obviously arrive at other figures and other percentages. In such a case, the Canadian government's share would, of course, be other than the 23 to 24 per cent mentioned by the Minister of Finance in his budget. I therefore invite my colleague not to change the formula along the way. He must not change the rules of the game!

[English]

ENERGY TAX REBATE PROGRAM

Mr. Otto Jelinek (Halton): Madam Speaker, the minister may not be looking at the price of gasoline at the gas pump, but every Canadian who is a consumer is looking at that price which has increased by 60 cents a gallon since the beginning of last year. As far as the Prime Minister's statement is concerned, which the minister questioned, I will quote the Prime Minister from page 10397 of *Hansard* for June 19. When talking about energy revenues the Prime Minister said:

We would like the over-all result to be the federal government sharing 23 per cent or 25 per cent of the take—

The minister's own department provides figures which indicate that the take is 33.7 cents. Since the minister is not prepared to cut back energy taxes across the board, would he at least now be prepared to return part of this excessive share of revenue to those Canadians who have been disproportionately affected by the energy price increases? In other words, is the minister now prepared to introduce an energy tax rebate program for low and middle-income families and, if not, why not, considering these facts from his own department?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): I will try in English, Madam Speaker. The hon. member is talking apples and oranges. When the budget was put forward it provided the federal government with a 23 per cent to 24 per cent take at the wellhead. This is the way this calculation has been made consistently. If my hon. friend wants to come back to a calculation at the pump, obviously there will be other percentages, and the figures mentioned by the Prime Minister and the figures mentioned by the Minister of Finance would have to be adjusted accordingly.

There is one way of calculating that has been consistently followed. I remind my hon. friend that that was followed by the Conservative government for the short time it was in office, and we are following exactly the same formula for calculating the share of revenue which was contained in the infamous budget of December, 1979. We have not changed the rules of the game, and I invite my hon. friend not to change the rules of the game.

● (1130)

As far as consumers are concerned, the government has moved—

Oral Questions

Some hon. Members: Order.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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THE ECONOMY

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister, who no doubt has been made aware that cost of living figures came out today. I hope he noted that, excluding food prices, prices went up by 12.2 per cent, which is the largest increase in 31 years. There were record increases in the cost of transportation and housing. I would like to ask the Prime Minister if he will now acknowledge that the government has no general anti-inflation policy at all which is effective. Specifically, would he tell us how his government's interest rate policy will bring down the price of housing and the price of transportation one little bit?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, it is people like the Leader of the New Democratic Party who have caused the science of economics to be called the dismal science.

Mr. Broadbent: That is worthy of Adam Smith.

Mr. Trudeau: The Leader of the New Democratic Party always seeks out the worst sub-item of any item, hones in on that, tears his hair out, and suggests that things are going terribly. The Leader of the New Democratic Party knows perfectly well that the cost of living year over year has fallen this month compared with the equivalent month of last year, so why does he take out one sub-item and draw his economic theories from that?

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, it was not I who took out one sub-item. If the Prime Minister looks at his briefing notes with care, he will see that Statistics Canada has a separate listing for changes in the cost of living with food exempted. It is Statistics Canada which points out that we have had the largest increase across the board in 31 years. We are not making up those figures. The government should pay attention to them.

QUERY RESPECTING ASSISTANCE TO CONSUMERS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, in January prices went up by 12 per cent, in February by more than 12 per cent, in March by more than 12 per cent, and the same in April and May. For five months in a row we have had this increase, which is another record. Never in 31 years have prices gone up by more than 12 per cent five months in a row. When will the government announce a single new initiative which will help Canadians cope with escalating prices?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance announced such an initiative