

*Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act*

including the products of the oil industry. That is why this particular study in the *Western Economic Review* properly points out that:

● (1220)

Furthermore, an examination of the impact of the increase in the motive fuels excise tax suggests that attempts to recoup the revenue losses from other sectors of the economy may undo much of the positive impact of the accord—

There is, I think, fairly clear and irrefutable evidence that we are debating a Bill which simply does not make much economic sense. It should be sent back and be redrafted. It should be looked at not only in relation to the larger budgetary objectives of the Government, but it surely must be reviewed and re-examined in light of the new conditions of the oil and energy sector of our economy. Surely we can expect that from a Government who has representatives from the oil producing sector in good numbers, people who claim they know the oil industry well, and we take them at their word. When those Hon. Members went back to their constituencies this weekend, they must have heard what the concerns were. There is a major dislocation and disruption taking place. If those Hon. Members have not heard that, then I suggest they get out of the isolation ward in which they exist, because I certainly have heard it. Oil industry people have talked to me in the last 48 hours and they have told me what is going on. Equally so, if those Hon. Members are not, at least, talking to people in the industry, I suggest they talk to the people who put their ballots in the box on September 4, because they are the ones who are going to the gas pumps every day. They are now starting petitions right across Canada demanding to know why it is that at least the promise made by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources when she spoke at a conference was not kept. She said: "Falling oil prices will immediately result in better deals for the consumer". They are asking why that has not occurred.

It strikes me that if there is to be from this Government any sense of responsiveness to the interests of the people of this country, then surely it must open its eyes and ears, listen, watch carefully what is taking place in our energy sector and try to come to grips with it.

Before I conclude I would like to comment on the point which was raised by my colleague, our energy critic, when he said that what was even more disturbing were the comments made by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources last weekend concerning Petro-Canada. We know that this Government is hell-bent on privatization, but there should be one fundamental test of whether one privatizes a Crown corporation or keeps it in the public sector. Does it serve the public's interest? Petro-Canada was established for a number of reasons well known to this House. It was primarily to make sure that there was some ability for Canadian interest to help shape energy policies and, more important, to provide some leadership on behalf of the public. There was a very wide suspicion that not always did the oil industry, the multinationals, work totally in the interests of the consumer and that it would be helpful to have a countervail. I believe that Petro-Canada, over the initial years of its functioning, served that purpose. What

we have had revealed to us this weekend is really a secret conspiracy, that even before the Government privatizes and puts the shares on the market, it has basically given the mandate to Petro-Canada to be a gouger like everyone else. Rather than trying to lead the industry, at a time when oil prices are falling to bring prices down, to be responsive, in fact the Government was responsible for two substantial wholesale price increases. The Crown corporation which was established to serve the public interest is being encouraged in fact to pump up its own revenue base so that the share offering can be at a higher level when the Government wants to privatize.

If anything is more nefarious than that kind of shenanigan, that kind of financial inflation by the Government of the Petro-Canada revenue base, I do not know what it could be. The Government has distorted and destroyed the public interest in that Crown corporation, and that, I think, is one of the most serious indictments that can be raised. The Government is not coming clean with the Canadian public and it is using an agency of Government, not to serve the public interest, but to work against it.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Are there questions or comments on the speech of the Hon. Member? Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The question is the following one. Mrs. McDougall, seconded by Mr. Oberle, moves that Bill C-82, an Act to amend the Petroleum Gas and Revenue Tax Act and the Income Tax Act, be now read the third time and passed. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour please say yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed please say nay.

**Some Hon. Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five Members having risen:*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Call in the Members.

The House divided on the motion (Mrs. McDougall), which was agreed to on the following division:

*(Division No. 187)*

YEAS

Members

Andre  
Belsher  
Bertrand  
Bissonnette  
Blenkarn

Bradley  
Brightwell  
Brisco  
Champagne  
(Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot)

Charest  
Clark  
(Yellowhead)  
Clark  
(Brandon-Souris)