

Four times as much!

IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE Harvey and the resultant shutdown of several Houston-area refineries, retail gasoline prices in both the United States and Canada rose between 20 and 25 cents.

The only difference was that in the U.S., the jump was for a U.S. gallon, or about 3.8 litres.

Locally, we watched the price soar from 97.9¢ a litre a few weeks ago to \$1.239.

Thus far, the prediction that prices would go even higher over the Labour Day weekend, to about \$1.32 a litre, didn't materialize, and by Tuesday the word from Texas was that some of the refineries were back in operation.

In the circumstances, what possible explanation can be given for Canadian gasoline prices going up nearly four times as much as those in the U.S.? The closest one we've heard was to the effect that the hurricane struck when some Canadian refineries were down for routine maintenance.

We submit that a more logical explanation is that there is far less competition in the retail marketplace here than in the U.S., and that as a result Big Oil (mainly U.S.-owned) can call the shots more easily.

Wouldn't it be nice if somehow we had a Canadian-owned refinery for Canadian crude?