

● (1420)

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, would the minister permit a question?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order, please. The hon. member can only ask a question with unanimous consent, since the minister's time has just expired. Will the House allow the hon. member for Victoria to ask the minister a question?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. McKinnon:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I noticed that the minister almost completely ignored his other role in respect of the environment. Will the minister assure the House that when oil spills occur from ships and when the federal government, whose responsibility it is, is unable to identify the source, the federal government will at least pay for the cleanup rather than expecting the municipal governments to assume what could be enormous costs?

**Mr. Davis:** Mr. Speaker, I think I can assure the hon. member of that. Several years ago amendments were made to the Canada Shipping Act which provided for the collection of large sums of money. That money is available for compensation to those who are affected by oil spills.

**Mr. McKinnon:** Would the minister then explain to the House why the Department of Transport turned down the request of the municipality of Oak Bay for compensation for cleaning up an oil spill there some two months ago on the grounds that they could not identify the ship which spilled the oil?

**Mr. Davis:** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the hon. member have a chat with me. Perhaps our departmental can do people something about it.

**Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to participate in the throne speech debate, and I wish to associate myself with my leader and other colleagues in extending congratulations to the mover and seconder of the address, the hon. members for Spadina (Mr. Stollery) and Sherbrooke (Mr. Pelletier). Working under very difficult conditions they gave good accounts of themselves, which is a tribute to the constituencies which elected them to parliament.

In the "Tale of Two Cities", by Charles Dickens, we read:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness . . . it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness . . . We have everything before us, we have nothing before us.

I suppose that reasoning could be well applied to the throne speech, depending upon where you sit in this Chamber. One thing is certain, the year 1974 has sent its signals well ahead and it shapes up as one of the most critical years in decades. Even in the best of times, Canadians would find it difficult to get their ship of state back on an even keel after the storm-tossed buffetings of inflation and unemployment in 1973. But, as 1974 unfolds, it becomes apparent that stiff new challenges are facing Canadians in every part of this country.

*The Address—Mr. Crouse*

Not only is a recession threatening us, but the throne speech, the estimates and the 1974-75 booklet entitled "How Your Tax Dollar is Spent" gives a clear indication to anyone reading them that Canada is in need of a national leader and a national party that has the desire and the willingness to give sound government to this country.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Crouse:** Rarely in the memory of most Canadians has this country entered a peacetime year under so many stresses and uncertainties. The restrictions placed on the export of oil by some oil exporting countries have eroded the economic stability and economic progress of the United States, while at the same time hamstringing Canada and most of Europe. International alliances are weakening and balance of payments deficits for many nations are reaching awesome levels. A grain shortage in far away Russia has, along with the mismanagement of this government with its bungling administration helped to push up the price of food, especially bread, in our supermarkets to new heights.

Nationally and internationally, 1974 is to be a time of trial. In times like these, it seems to me the commonsense approach to our problems would be for the federal government to provide some leadership to our people, while practising some restraint in its spending programs. However, unfortunately the opposite is true for we see at page 18 of the government's spending program a proposed expenditure for this year of \$22,023 million, which is \$2,388 million higher than last year's figure, and \$12,151 million higher than the figure listed for 1967-68, the year the present Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) took office. Those are not my figures, Mr. Speaker, those are the figures put forth in the booklet "How Your Tax Dollar is Spent".

During this period of time our population increased by a little more than 2 million people, which indicates the inefficiency of this Liberal administration, and should be viewed with concern by anyone, including Liberals who truly have this country's interest at heart. Nothing that I can say and no figure that I can quote would indicate more clearly the failure of the Trudeau administration in its efforts to govern Canada.

When speaking during the debate on the Speech from the Throne, the Prime Minister stated some very evident truths. He said, as will be found at page 32, that Canadians live in the richest country in the world; that we can grow more on our land than we can eat; we can take from the sea more than enough for our needs; we possess adequate supplies of energy and below the ground we have an abundance of minerals. In fact, he said that we have human and natural resources sufficient to make us the envy of every nation.

I agree with those words of our Prime Minister, but this statement raises some very disturbing questions. Why, in view of our abundance, do the latest figures released by Statistics Canada indicate a progressively deteriorating situation for the Canadian worker? Average weekly earnings for the month of December were down approximately \$5 from the month before and were only 6 per cent higher than in December 1972. When compared to a cost of living increase over the same period of more than 9 per cent, it is indeed obvious that whatever the workingman has