

*Supply*

**Mr. Clark:** I hear some across the way questioning that. I would ask those members to go back to Sarnia, to go back to Scarborough or to go back even to Ottawa Centre, to go out and hold public hearings of their own, and to ask their own voters what their citizens or their electors think about the budget. Let them do that, let them do that.

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

**Mr. Clark:** We are dealing with not simply a budget that is bad and is causing Canadians, many of them for the first time in their lives, actually to consider cheating. The testimony has come before our committee. They say that the government has ignored the rules by which they have all worked. "If my government ignores the rules, why should I obey them?" is the kind of question which is being asked by Canadians across the country. It is not simply an attack upon the economy of Canada; it is an attack upon the ethic of Canada and it is an attack which flows directly from the budget brought in by the Minister of Finance.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Again there is the question of representation. There is the question of for whom does Parliament speak or with what mandate does the government act? I remember a great deal about the February 1980 election campaign. I do not remember very many Liberal Members of Parliament going out and proposing to tax Blue Cross benefits. I do not remember very many Liberal Members of Parliament or Liberal spokesmen going out and proposing to bring in changes which affect 13 million policyholders of Canadian insurance policies across the country. I do not remember any of the measures of the budget being proposed by any of the Liberal spokesmen as they sought the vote of the Canadian people. The reason for that is clear. If they had been honest then about what they intended to introduce now, they never would have been elected to office. If they asked their constituents today for their view in a general election, both they and their budget would be thrown abjectly out.

**Some hon. Members:** Out, out!

**Mr. Clark:** I would invite the Minister of Finance to hold a public hearing in his own constituency—and if he will not do it, I will do it for him—

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

**Mr. Clark:** —so that the people of his constituency could express themselves directly about how they feel about a budget which denies them their future, which throws them out of work, which denies their plans for security, which denies their ability to plan for themselves and to stand on their own.

What we have here is not simply a budget which is bad economically, not simply a budget which is bad morally, we also have a budget which raises fundamental questions about democracy in the country. This is a budget for which the government has no mandate at all. It is a budget which tries to change fundamentally the rules of the game as they have

existed in the country. It is a budget which changes understandings upon which Canadians have planned and built. It is an illegitimate way for a government to act. If they do not have the courage to withdraw it, they should have the courage to seek a mandate directly from the people of Canada for the budget which they are trying to impose upon the people of Canada.

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

**Mr. Clark:** We would welcome that option, but there is an easier one available, and that is for members of the House simply to accept this motion, which is quite straightforward. It allows the minister to rise and say, "Yes, we made several more mistakes than we admitted last December;" "yes, the budget is bad;" "yes, we have heard from the people of Canada;" and "yes, we withdraw it." That is what the government should do if it has the interests of the people of Canada at heart. That is what I devoutly hope the government and the House of Commons will do today.

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

● (1530)

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hope the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) will forgive me for interrupting, but I believe in my wildest gesticulations when Madam Speaker was in the chair and she was searching for a seconder that she has on the record the motion of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition seconded by the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson). With the consent of the House, I would like the record to reflect my name as the seconder of the motion.

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, before we adjourned for the Christmas recess and during the early stages of the budget debate it was clear to everyone in Canada, certainly outside of the House of Commons, that we were in a state of economic crisis. It became clearer during the Christmas break that the crisis was not only real and serious but was deepening. During the last 48 hours, as we have listened to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) reply to questions in the House of Commons, as Canadians have witnessed the speech delivered by the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) in Toronto and as we have heard him answering questions in the House today, it is also clear that the Government of Canada is either unaware of the crisis or does not care about it. Indeed, I would go further and say that I suspect both things are true.

In terms of the current crisis, if I may speak personally, I think the aspect of it that concerns me most is the effect it has on men and women in their search for the human dignity that can only come from work. If there is one constant truth about human nature throughout the history of mankind, it is that men and women at any period in history have found it a psychological necessity, no matter what other theorists may have said, to gain a sense of dignity and self-worth from making some contribution not only to their own economic well-being, but to that of their families and their community.