

borrow a phrase from the Prime Minister, these are the Canadians who have already had the hell scared out of them. They cannot afford any more economic policies designed to scare the hell out of the people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: This House deals very often in cold statistics and hard facts, but we are also a community. We in this Parliament are the only ones to whom the people of Canada can turn looking for some help, hoping that we might, through the force of our arguments and to the extent of our determination, be able to force this government to change policies that are bringing agony into the lives of individual Canadians.

I want the House to dwell for a moment not just on hard economic facts, but on some of the human implications of what is going on. I ask members of this House, all of us comfortable, all of us well paid and all of us with positions that are reasonably secure—at least until the government calls an election, which it must, and then the positions of Liberal members will suddenly become insecure—to think of the plight of others. We in this House are among the privileged in the land. We have the obligation at least to ensure that when we talk about what is happening to our country we try to place it in some kind of human perspective. I ask members of this House to think of the tensions that are created by the deliberate economic policy of the Liberal government. Think of the fighting now in individual families over money. Think of the family breakups. Think of the people pushed beyond the edge of despair. Look at the statistics that came out this weekend on suicides among young people. Ask yourself, Mr. Speaker, about the relationship between those suicides, economic conditions and the pressures that exist in homes across the nation.

We do not like to think about human costs. Statistics are cold. They are hard. They are manageable. You get used to them. But you do not get used to alcoholism; you do not get used to suicides; you do not get used to wife beating; you do not get used to family breakups. All of these increase when the economy fails. My friends in this House, those are the realities of our Canada today.

When we talk about an economic policy that is driving Canadians out of work, we have to calculate the human cost. When we talk about an energy program that is driving away the investment that can create jobs, we have to realize that the jobs which could have been created if that investment had stayed here would have meant people would have kept their hope and some people may have kept their lives instead of risking them. That is what we are dealing with here. We are dealing with policies that are forcing people into alcoholism. We are dealing with policies that are forcing people into family breakup. We are dealing with economic policies that are forcing Canadians to commit suicide. That is the context in which we have to see what is being done to our country. That is the context in which we have to judge our duty to our fellow citizens as the one institution in the land which has the power to force this government to act.

Supply

Some of you know that in the city of Windsor two years ago the mayor of that community established a special committee on services for the unemployed. That committee reported in 1980 that Windsor's high level of unemployment led to uncontrollable stress, in the words of the report, and increased use of tranquilizers, alcohol and other drugs.

A Toronto study of 100 violent family situations in which the police had been involved found that 80 per cent of wife beaters were people who were unemployed, who were responding in that vicious way to the tensions that unemployment and economic privation have placed upon them.

In Canada, as the unemployment rate rose from 6.9 per cent in 1975 to its present rate today, the suicide rate rose from 12.4 per 100,000 to 14 per 100,000. A disproportionate number of those suicides are among young people. A disproportionate number of those people are young people who are children of single-parent families. Those are facts. Those are the consequences. Those, quite literally, are the victims of the economic policies that the Liberal government is forcing on this country today.

Family violence has doubled in five years. Wife beating claims an estimated 24,000 victims per year in this country. In the United States where research is often more advanced than ours, a study by John Hopkins University has determined that every 1 per cent rise in unemployment foreshadows a 4.1 per cent rise in suicides, a 5 per cent rise in homicides, a 4 per cent rise in prison admissions, and a 4.3 per cent rise in admissions to mental and other hospitals.

We are a different society in some ways in that we have less crime in Canada or the statistics would be somewhat different. But the comparison is there. The relationship is there between those horrible social consequences and the economic policy that this government is imposing on its people. Economic problems create social problems that will take decades to heal. That is what is happening in this country. Those are the hard facts and those are the human results of those hard facts.

We as a Parliament have to ask ourselves why that is happening. Why is that happening to this, the richest nation in the world? Why are we allowing that to happen in this, the most compassionate nation in the world? Of course we are influenced by international conditions. Of course we are part of the world. But allow me to let the government in on a little secret; so is every other nation part of the world. Yet we are unique by our ability to solve our own problems here. We have immense resources which the world needs, whether food, natural resources or human resources. We have a tradition of people wanting to work and wanting to build. Canada has the highest literacy level in the world. We are a country that should not be begging others to bail us out.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: What is different about world economic conditions as they apply to Canada and as they apply to other countries? Other countries have faced world conditions and acted to make their situation better. Canada's government has ignored world conditions and has acted to make the Canadian