

*Canadian Economy*

will swell the wave of unemployment. Already we can see the accurate aims of the non-confidence motion we introduced against this government. And, contrary to what the hon. member who spoke before me suggested, we are all the better placed to put our finger on those shortcomings that we were detecting in the government administration, that we had foreseen for a number of years and where the economic and financial policies of the government were systematically leading us. Let them come and tell us that we forget to talk about what has been done. Of course, measures and steps were taken, decisions were made, but all those measures, all those steps and all those decisions did not reach the goal that they should have. And as my hon. colleague for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) suggested earlier, that reminds me of someone who has a number of miles to go to reach a goal; he is going somewhere, and he has 300 miles to cover to get there. And there is the government telling us, we have gone 50 miles, we have reached that point and we are stopping there. It is all very nice to do 50 miles but what matters are those remaining 300 miles. Indeed, I think that in the present economic situation there is a distance ahead and if after 50 miles we decide to stop we have not gone very far.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are all the better placed to blame this government as for many years we pointed out the shortcomings that existed, we warned of what could happen, foreseeable catastrophies. Now is the day of reckoning. Mr. Speaker, the remedies will always fail to cope effectively with the conditions, since we never deal with the basic issue from which stem all the problems which we face.

Mr. Speaker, the settlement of the energy crisis seems to be quite an important matter, since oil prices in Canada are lower than at the world level. It would be ridiculous if it were otherwise. Indeed how could a government find normal that a country which a few weeks ago was exporting a million barrels of oil daily can tolerate dependence on foreign oil while it keeps on exporting some. It is so stupid and ridiculous that it was quite proper to establish a single price throughout Canada. Why did the government failed for years to direct its efforts toward the distribution of Canadian oil from west to east? Why has it not implemented such a policy? Why is there not today that famous pipeline which would bring oil to Montreal? Why? Is it not lack of foresight or consistence on the part of the government to hear the hon. member say: The government has done extraordinary things in setting up prices below the world price? Mr. Speaker, in Canada we have all we need when it comes to oil.

In the energy field, we have all we need to meet our requirements. We do not even have to rely on foreign crude but on one condition, that the government defines beforehand a policy to make up for it. Are we not right in saying that the government lacked foresight? Was it not the government's role to have foreseen that oil producing countries would one day close the tap? Is not a government there to anticipate those developments? Is it not there consequently to prevent and forestall them? I think it is unacceptable that we were subjected to that crisis. The hon. member was certainly ill inspired to use this as an example, because it was the height of ridicule and stupidity for a country as rich as Canada in energy in every shape and form, including oil, and the hon. member would have

[Mr. Matte.]

been right; in this case, however, as I said, he would have to disregard the millions of gallons of oil we are selling every day to the United States. We established a quota last week: 700,000 barrels a day instead of a million. Since we are selling oil, Mr. Speaker, the government should not come and talk to us about shortage or difficulties—

**Mr. Blais:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. parliamentary secretary rises on a point of order.

**Mr. Blais:** Mr. Speaker, the information the hon. member is giving the House is entirely wrong. We have not exported one million barrels of oil for the past two years. We export approximately 550,000 barrels.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Hopefully hon. members will wait for their turn to make their speeches; otherwise, if there are interventions and voiced disagreement, all hon. members will have difficulties putting forward their ideas. Hon. members should not rise on points of order to make contradictory statements, but should wait for the proper occasion to make their own speeches.

**Mr. Matte:** I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, it is only a digression I was making before moving along with my remarks. But indeed, as recently as a week ago, or perhaps 15 days ago, the government decided to limit the exports at 700,000 instead of one million. So we should know what is going on here before interjecting. Now, Mr. Speaker, about the measures which have been taken and which one would like to praise, the actual measures taken by the government, there is none which could have been anticipated, although this could have been possible. On the other hand, we are sure all that could have been avoided, particularly if we had started from one essential fact.

● (1750)

The hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) dealt with this and I do not want to comment on it at any length myself, but still I think he raised some really essential points. True enough, it was said three, four or five years ago, that the increasingly disastrous economic situation which was forthcoming could be ascribed to world conditions. We were told again and again that we had to accept it because it was a worldwide problem. Inflation was a worldwide problem! That is the answer that was given to all those who asked questions about the economic progress in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the government was thus trying systematically if not misleadingly to cover up the lack of leadership which prevented it from assuming its own responsibilities. You cannot speak of inflation as a world phenomenon in a country like ours, brimming over with natural resources of all sorts, capable of being self-sufficient, a country thus gifted with an almost totally independent economy. As I have already said in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I repeat it again, outside of bananas, grapefruits, and lemons, we lack very little in Canada. Furthermore, as my hon. colleague for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau) has pointed out, as far as lemons, are concerned, we have a good supply in the benches opposite.