

Mr. Gillies: I go back to the budget of last February. Since then we have had a doubling of the rate of inflation in this country. We have had no substantial drop in unemployment, with little growth in the gross national product in the last two quarters, and a major change in the levels of expenditure by the government, in spite of the fact that the budget was designed to lessen government expenditure. With all this, can anybody sitting on the government treasury benches say that the monetary and fiscal policy and the exchange rate policy that were proposed to this parliament last February are the right ones for Canada today, in view of the changes taking place in the world economy? How can anyone make that case?

How long do Canadians have to suffer? Why can't we get some action from the government? At least, why can't we get an explanation from the government of what it is trying to do?

Mr. Stanfield: They don't know.

Mr. Gillies: What has happened is that in this confusion about energy—whether or not there is a 200,000 barrel shortage in the eastern part of Canada nobody really seems to know—we are forgetting what the real energy problem is for every Canadian. The real energy problem for Canadians today is not whether we are going to get a pipeline built, or whether we are going to get the oil and gas out of the north; the real problem for Canadians is whether they are going to have jobs next spring—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gillies:—and whether prices are going to rise even higher. That is the issue that is before us today. And for the government to give a debate on energy—

An hon. Member: You asked for it.

Mr. Gillies:—and for the Prime Minister to make a statement of the nature of the one he delivered, is to avoid what the energy crisis in the world is all about. I must say that anyone in the United States government, in the United Kingdom government or in the Japanese government interested in what Canada thinks about this situation and reading the speech of the Prime Minister, will wonder what world he is living in. He is talking about things that governments do in the normal course of events, when he should be talking about the things that are really important to the Canadian people now.

The government must tell the Canadian people what the impact of the energy crisis in the United States, in the United Kingdom and in Japan will be on Canada. Some 25 per cent of our gross national product comes from trade. Mr. Speaker, 77 per cent of our trade is with the United States. What is going to happen if there is a substantial decline in the United States market? Have we any policies to deal with such a situation? That is what the question of energy is all about in Canada today and the one which the government has been unwilling to discuss.

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We have a situation in the economy, a situation which developed long before the energy question arose, in terms of inflation and growth that is inexcusable. What is going

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to happen? I would hope that some time today someone in the Liberal Party will answer this question: What is the impact on the economy of the energy situation as it develops all over the world at the present time?

To the hon. members to the left I must say that it seems to me very strange that they are willing to support a government that in the course of this year has managed to bring about the highest rate of inflation we have ever had, that has managed to operate the economy in such a way that our unemployment rate is the highest of any industrialized country in the world, they suggest that they are supporting the government because they got something out of this energy situation when the government, let alone the NDP, does not even know what the impact of the energy situation is going to be on the Canadian economy. Anybody who cares about what is going to happen to the Canadian people could not possibly support a government with such a record.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired.

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, as I walked into the House and heard the opening words of the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies), I had the eerie feeling that in some way or other I had got into the wrong movie. The hon. member spent virtually all of his time asking us why we were not talking about matters which were in some way or other related to energy but were not specifically on the energy question. He said the great mistake was that we were not dealing with these kinds of economic outfall, as it were, from the energy crisis. May I remind him that for the last week we have persistently and consistently heard from at least some of the spokesmen of his party that they did not want anything else discussed today, that the name of the game was energy and they were going to phrase the motion precisely so that we could not possibly talk about anything else, or anything related to energy.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jamieson: All one has to do is to look at the wording of this motion. If the hon. member for Don Valley had wished to discuss the economic impact of the so-called energy crisis, it would have been, I presume, a fairly simple matter for him and his colleagues to have drafted a few words that would at least have hung on, like a dory tied to a schooner. But they did not do that. I am not a bit surprised by all this. The hon. member for Edmonton is about to set himself up as the number one flak of the Tory Party, but he is doing it from the second row. If he is not careful, he will be back in row four and this man will be taking over first place. It seems to be occurring, in any event.

Mr. Paproski: Designate "the hon. member for Edmonton." Who are you talking about?

Mr. Jamieson: I apologize for making the wrong comment with regard to the riding. I mean the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert). I bow to the hon.