

going to study upgrading the heavy oil upgrader again. What is the direct action the Government intends to take? We have lost 6,000 jobs in the oil industry in Alberta already. We in the riding I come from want to know what the Government intends to do with respect to resolving that very serious problem for the people of Alberta. There is no selfishness in this part of the country which says that just because eastern Canada can obtain cheap oil it is all right to destroy the Albertan economy. I do not think there is a Canadian in central Canada who would ever accept such a proposition. I think it is the responsibility of the federal Government to show some leadership. The Government of Alberta is faced with a very serious problem in that the underpinning of its economy is being completely destroyed. Perhaps that is what the Government wants to see happen.

• (1640)

In my hand I have a copy of an article from the *Report on Business* from today's *The Globe and Mail*. It is written by George Linton who points out the danger of what could happen to the small oil producers in Alberta. He says that they will be forced to sell out to the large operators or be forced to fold up. What will really happen is a reassembling and the establishment of new oil monopolies in the Province of Alberta and in the country. Mr. Linton describes Canada's oil industry. He says that it is in a state of shock. The world price for oil is at less than \$15 U.S. per barrel. We must ask the Government what it is going to do about this situation. To judge by its actions to date it will do nothing at all.

The PGRT has to be looked at in terms of its removal. The Government is locked into the view that it has to reduce the deficit. It is taking a blinkered approach to bringing down the deficit. In fact, the Government is forced to do nothing about one of the more serious problems facing western Canada, particularly Alberta, in terms of its oil industry.

Anyone who watches the proceedings of the House of Commons knows that Government Members ask set-up questions of Ministers from time to time. Why do they not ask tough questions of Ministers? Why do they not ask what the Government plans to do in terms of eliminating the PGRT immediately? If the question were to be answered honestly, we know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) would have to forgo \$1 billion in revenue. Of course that is what he would have to do. However, that is the commitment the rest of the country has to make through the Government to the people of Alberta in order to protect the economy of that province.

I know I speak for many people in central Canada when I say the following. I do not want to drive a car on 15-cent-a-gallon gasoline in the tank when brothers and sisters in Alberta are going down the tubes. The situation is ludicrous. If we bring the deficit down, then the whole economy of a province will be wiped out. I think members of the Government once said that they would bring a different view to the federation of Canada. They said that they would bring about a sense of cohesiveness, co-operation and collegiality, not only between

the federal Government and the provincial leaders but between the people of the country and their Government. If ever there was a Government which had the opportunity to do such a thing it is this Government.

We are no longer talking about the bulwarked Trudeau years when all Government support came from one part of the country. In the years when the previous Prime Minister and the Liberals ruled Canada they had very little representation from the West. In fact, it was a Government which was central and eastern-based. Today, the Government has a golden opportunity since it represents people right across the country. Why is it giving up this opportunity? Why is it missing such an opportunity?

We are now faced with another problem. It is to do with the wheat farmers in western Canada. The price for their product is dropping through the floor. I am told that they are now faced with the lowest wheat prices in 25 years. In fact, they are faced with the lowest prices since the "dirty thirties"—since the Bennett buggies. It seems that we have gone from "Tory times are tough times" to "Liberal high unemployment". We are caught in a spitting match in which I said I did not want to become involved. Yet here it is, another problem facing the Government. The farmers have to have some assurances in order to make their plans. Yet what has the Government responded in answer to our questions? "Wait and see". I think that the Government has again locked itself into the view that it has to reduce the deficit. Again, it is reacting to all these problems with its blinkers on.

However, when it came to the situation involving the CCB and the Northland Bank, somehow or other that blinkered philosophy was shelved. "Squander Woman" came up with a billion bucks for the banks. There was no problem at all in doing that. No one said that paying out that sum of money would raise the deficit. We were told that it was essential to secure a western bank. We were told that we have to develop western banking interests. Do Hon. Members remember that argument? An Hon. Member opposite gets out his violin. He will have to play it low and soft. Is it important that our wheat farmers continue to exist? Is it important to our economy? The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn) nods his head and says, in effect, of course it is important. The Minister is dressed in red today. What he says is right. Is it important to the country that the oil industry continue to exist and prosper? Everyone would say that of course it is. It should not exist in the hands of just a few large oil companies. According to the philosophy of the Government it is important that the small producers also have an opportunity to exist since, after all, what has happened is beyond their control.

What is happening to the farmers is as a result of a spitting match between the European Common Market and the United States. The western farmers are caught in the middle. Thus we cannot hold to the principle that we have to reduce the deficit come hell or high water. It seems to me that when members of the Government lock themselves into that type of philosophy they cause great harm to the people of the country. In effect,