

*Economic Conditions*

are seeing a decade of overspending come home to haunt the government of the people of Canada. We are seeing a decade of bad Liberal policies coming home to roost, coming home to hurt the people of Canada, particularly low-income Canadians.

I look across the House and I see ministers of the Crown smiling as we describe the plight of low-income people who put them here, the low-income people to whom they are responsible. While those people face the prospect of being out of work or face the prospect of freezing this winter, their ministers, their government, sit in the House of Commons and smile and laugh at them. That is totally unacceptable in any kind of democratic system.

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

**Mr. Clark:** We have in this country these outrageously high interest rates now because a decade of Liberal financial mismanagement and economic neglect mean that we must attract hot money to prop up the Canadian dollar. The solid, long-term investment which used to balance our international accounts has simply lost faith in Canada as a place to invest.

We are paying out almost \$4 billion in oil import subsidies because seven years after OPEC the government still refuses to take seriously the need to make Canada self-sufficient in energy. Only yesterday, Sheik Yamani, the dancing partner of the Prime Minister, suggested that imported oil could cost \$80 a barrel by the end of next year, yet still the government clings blindly to an energy policy which drives Canadian investment out of the country. It drives out of this country the people who find Canadian energy in Canada. It drives away from here any climate which would attract the kind of people who would make it possible for us to realize energy self-sufficiency here in our own country.

● (2040)

**An hon. Member:** It follows policies.

**Mr. Clark:** It follows policies, as my colleague from Nova Scotia points out, which have the result of dividing this country, setting Canadians against Canadians and creating in western Canada the same kind of alienation as a former Liberal government created in the province of Quebec, giving birth to the separatist movement there.

**Mr. Breau:** Nonsense!

**Mr. Clark:** It would be bad enough if the Liberal government were simply doing nothing today to solve the real problems of the real people of the country. It would be bad enough if the government were doing nothing to plan for future growth and future strength for our economy, but what is worse, their priorities are so backward and so screwed up that they are pursuing policies today which will bring more damage to Canada tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we are now experiencing an economic crisis whether the Minister of Finance admits it or offhandedly

denies it. It is the most basic responsibility and duty of this government as the national Government of Canada to give a steady economic direction to this country. This government which is demanding more powers entirely refuses to assume its responsibility and ensure the economic welfare of Canadians. This government has no political economic policy and worse still it has no economic priority.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, Canadians today, worried as they are about their immediate prospects, have a right as they look ahead to ask what will their prospects be tomorrow. Everybody with a family in this country which depends upon the income that man or woman brings home, has a right and a cause to say now: What about my job? Is my job going to be secure? Is my job going to be menaced by the economic policies which have already driven so many of my fellow Canadians out of work? What about the jobs of my children? Are they to look forward to growing up in a secure country? Are they to look forward to growing up in a country where there is more and more insecurity, a diminishing prospect of being able to find the kinds of jobs, the kind of future that this country holds as its potential? Many more Canadians know that while their neighbours may be out of work today, while unemployment might be rising in the rubber industry in Kitchener because of the policies of this government, it could affect them tomorrow. That direct threat to the job security of Canadians, to the ability of people to secure the incomes their families need, flows from the failure of this government, not only to plan for the future but to call a stop to the economic and energy policies which are creating more problems for Canada. These policies, instead of solving our economic problems, are aggravating them.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, what this government is doing through the actions it is taking, and what it chooses as its priorities, is to give us a constitutional package which divides the country and an energy package which drives investment out of the country. It is an energy package which drives jobs out of Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec. What it is doing is introducing a series of policies which threaten the very industrial fabric of our country. In so doing they have already placed in jeopardy the jobs of thousands of Canadians. They have dashed the hope of possible employment to the million Canadians who are already out of work. They have done this in the energy sector, which has been the single healthy sector in the Canadian economy. It is the one potential locomotive which could pull our economy out of recession. This energy sector has, as a direct result of this government's action, seen an unprecedented decline in production, in jobs, together with an unprecedented flight of investment—not foreign investment, the foreign investment stays; with this Liberal policy they get subsidized to stay. The people who are leaving because of this Liberal policy are the Canadians, the creative ones who want to go out and find things to make the economy grow.