

Bretton Woods Agreement

who attempted to do the difficult job, putting them out of office under false pretences. Now they are over there struggling today. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) was downstairs after the twelve o'clock question period trying to announce that he was making a tremendous offer to Alberta, that he was going to offer Alberta a \$2-a-barrel increase from April 1 until the end of September. That was because he hasn't got a policy. He is offering them what he calls "the PC policy" trying to pretend it was the PC government's policy. What kind of a government is that? They do not even announce it in this House, Mr. Speaker. They strut down to the basement and stammer out their feeble excuses for their lack of action. That's the dynamo of a minister who has been here since March 3. He was going to solve the oil pricing question, the energy situation, and here he is on June 13 with no agreement. He has made this panic offer to Alberta and pretends it is the same offer we made back last December. It is not the same, nothing like it. They are using it as an excuse for their lack of accomplishment.

But to return to the international environment. The minister should be here to tell us what he learned at these meetings, but he is not.

We are not going to be pushed around by the Minister of Finance, nor by the government. We are going to continue to point these things out. The people of Canada are not going to be pushed around by them. As I said earlier this afternoon, the "Artful Dodger" is not what we need in Canada. We do not need a minister of finance who is an "Artful Dodger", that is, a manoeuvrer who can get around corners, who can appear to be walking forward when he is really going backward at a gallop. That is not the kind of minister we want. We want a minister of finance who tells the people of this country what he foresees and what he plans to do to avoid the bad things he foresees, and what he plans to carry out to encourage the good things he foresees. We do not need a master of double-talk; not a master of nothingness. I said earlier today, he is the only man in the House who can be Blynken, Wynken and Nod, all three at the same time. He is the old three-in-one. He doesn't answer questions from the NDP, he doesn't answer questions from the Conservative party, I don't know what he does in the Liberal caucus. Perhaps they don't bother to ask him questions, but the time of the "Artful Dodger" might have been all right in the nineteenth century when events were pretty slow and Dickens was writing, but the "Artful Dodger" doesn't suit the people of Canada today in our economic position with unemployment increasing rapidly and inflation rising quickly. With these serious problems facing Canada the people don't appreciate the "Artful Dodger". The IMF doesn't appreciate the "Artful Dodger"; the OECD doesn't appreciate the "Artful Dodger". The "Artful Dodger" has to stop dodging and start working, start announcing and pronouncing what the government's approach is. There is not a person in this country who can figure out what the government intends to do in the economic sense. We cannot afford to wait for weeks after an oil pricing agreement for a budget to come down. If that

minister is so shy and modest he does not want to bring a budget down before there is an oil pricing agreement, let us have a clear statement by the government about what its thrust is to be in the next three or four years. Let it tell us what the framework is within which the working people, the businessmen, the manufacturers and the industrialists of Canada will have to operate. What is its position going to be on the international front? What the minister said at the OECD meetings was clear. I quote him again:

Inflation remains the number one problem facing most countries around this table.

We know that. Then he said:

The experience of the 1970s has brought home the point that we are unlikely to achieve a sustained improvement in employment unless we get inflation under better control.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the financial analysts, the investors and the brokers read this kind of stuff. They try to get from it some idea of what the government is going to do. What are they to make from the minister's statement? Does it mean that the government's policy will be: Look, until we beat inflation, get it under better control, we can do nothing about increasing unemployment and therefore the thrust for the next year or two will be against inflation and we will do what the governor of the Bank of Canada has recommended to the Senate committee—we are going to reduce further aggregate demand, as the governor of the Bank of Canada said we should be doing. Is the fiscal policy of the government going to correlate with the monetary policy of the governor of the bank and the government's monetary policy? Is that what is to happen, or is it something else? Surely to God the people of this country have a right to be told by the government what approach is to be taken.

We can go on examining the minister's short statement to the OECD. He points out on page two what the problem is. He was referring to the oil price increases. It says:

Those surpluses which are now running at a record rate of over \$100 trillion are contributing to the deterioration of the economic situation of virtually all oil importing countries internally as well as externally. They also threaten to create major difficulties in international financial markets.

Why is the minister not here to tell us what he proposes to do about those surpluses and how the world is going to get around this? And as for the IMF, how we are to avoid major difficulties in the international markets; what is Canada going to do to stop contributing to this situation? Here is Canada, a relatively wealthy nation, self-sufficient, overall, in energy—not now self-sufficient in oil—and we have a government that hasn't the gumption or the backbone to seize the nettle, and agree it was an unscrupulous lust for power last fall and last January and February which made them lie and deceive the Canadian people into believing they had some solution other than the one we tried to approach in our budget. They should frankly admit that they coddled the Canadian people, that they fooled the Canadian people, that they were ruthless in their lust for power and that now they have to do a 360-degree circle, that they have to increase oil prices and take other steps to cut down the huge imports. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Evans) admitted the other day