

### Taxation

Again they needed the government to do something for them. They needed a *quid pro quo*, so to speak, they needed an opportunity to import from their plant in another part of the world, on an equivalent basis for what they were exporting out of the country, so that they could get rationalization in both areas. And they wanted the government to assist them in achieving that end. They have waited nine months, nearly a year by now, and nothing has happened.

I want to make a point about this. The people I was speaking to were, in this case, the chief executive officer of the company, and in the case of the footwear company, the vice president. I also met with the unions who represented the workers in the plant in both cases, and in each case they were in full support of the effort put forward to get the government to recognize the economic problem of that particular industry and of that particular industry sector.

I then went and sat down with the employee representatives of National Steel Car, the manufacturers of hopper cars. They have been closed down virtually for the last year, as the member for Burlington (Mr. Kempling) knows. They are awaiting for what the government has clearly indicated for some time, its intention to purchase approximately 1,200 hopper cars to cover the movement of grain in every year for the next five years. They were saying to me: "If it really is the government's intention to do that, if the government really intends to purchase those cars, would it not make sense, since we are in such economic chaos at the moment, and since we are in such a downturn, for the government to move up its program of purchase and begin the purchase this year and provide some employment in this plant?" Such a decision by the government would also mean employment in the plant in Trenton, Nova Scotia. Then there would be an opportunity for people to go to work.

In every single one of the instances that I came into contact with, Mr. Speaker, during the course of those four days, those people were talking to me about their desire to find a job, their desire to have a job they could go to every day, a job that would be productive, a job that would be good for Canada, a job that would enable them to pay their own way, to plan their own future. When I proposed to the government that perhaps the government could consider these measures, and other measures that I intend to talk about as this debate goes on, the government said: "Well, we will think about it, we will think about it."

The government then went on its merry way, following its high interest rate policy, following its high unemployment policy, following its high unemployment policy, following its high bankruptcy policy, following it right down the path to ruination. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is very frustrating. What we in the NDP are proposing, at least on this side of the House and, I imagine, supported by a number of members on other sides of the House, in the Conservative Party and in the Liberal Party, too are proposals that I think are reasonable, sensible and workable. They are suggestions as to how we can

improve Canada's economy, how we can get that turn-around, how we can provide those job opportunities.

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

**Mr. Deans:** I notice, Mr. Speaker, that it is ten o'clock. I wonder if I might adjourn the debate.

• (2200)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[Translation]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

### ENERGY—INQUIRY WHETHER QUEBEC PERCENTAGE OF GASOLINE TAX IS GREATER THAN PERCENTAGE COLLECTED BY ALBERTA

**Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, on April 7 last, I had the opportunity to direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) in the House. The gasoline war was then raging in Quebec and many Quebecers were asking themselves many questions about the distribution of taxes collected by various governments in connection with gas prices. It was then obvious that many gas retailers in Quebec who had gone on the so-called gas strike were specifically demanding to oil companies that are not necessarily Canadian to reduce their profits and give them more money, and were also asking the Quebec government to cancel the notorious tax it has been levying on Quebecers since November 17, 1981.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, under those circumstances, and more specifically in connection with the price paid by Quebecers for gas, except in a few towns bordering on other Canadian provinces, such as Ontario and New Brunswick, where Quebecers were allowed to pay less for their gas after that notorious tax of 30 cents a gallon or 6 cents a litre, if you like, was cancelled, it was perhaps advisable at that time to determine what price was actually being paid by Quebecers, a price set by the separatist Quebec government which claims to be acting in the best interests of Quebecers.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to remind Quebecers that the budget of November 12, 1981, granted certain tax exemptions to Quebecers with a family by exempting from tax those in certain income groups, by increasing basic deductions and also by increasing the child tax credit for subsequent years. What happened to Quebecers a few days later, on November 17, 1981? Their own government asked them to pay an additional tax of 30 cents a gallon on gasoline, and within the next few days, tabled a bill to increase the rates of Hydro-Quebec by about 16 per cent.

On the one hand, Quebec men and women got tax cuts in the federal budget, and on the other hand, their own government, which is supposed to protect their interests and help