

*Economic Conditions*

These are very big problems. We are talking about the stability of the planet and the security of the world. We are talking about systems by which there can be equitable sharing of resources and capitalization in the world. This is a role for Canada to play, not alone but in concert with our allies and industrial partners. We may not be able to do that. The report which came in was a lot of work for members of Parliament who participated in it, but that report will hit the library shelves. Why? The Canadian government today is unable to resolve satisfactorily its domestic problems because we are so hung up on the problems of our economy, the lack of an energy strategy and the constitution. We are so inward, torn and divided that we will not be able to make the international response the world is waiting for.

You have been very indulgent with me, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you. I thank the members who have listened to me in this debate, and I sincerely hope that they will do everything in their power to communicate the urgency of the message I am giving tonight to the Canadian government.

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

**Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I take part in this debate tonight and support the motion put forward by my leader. The debate this evening has been very interesting.

I had a great deal of optimism when this motion was allowed to come forward and the debate was allowed to occur. As a matter of fact, I was under the impression that in order for it to come forward there must be some support on the government side of the House for such a debate. I hoped that out of that support there might come an announcement that members of the cabinet or whoever it is over there who makes decisions recognize that there is a crisis in this country and would in fact be prepared to announce some program to alleviate the difficulties which are facing the people of this country.

I was absolutely astounded by the speeches given by hon. members opposite tonight. The Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) said nothing. He said we are doing just fine and that there is no problem. The Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Bussi eres) talked about whipping up hysteria and extremism. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Evans) I suppose took some liberty and distilled everything in his own riding into just great shape.

However, when I heard a speaker prior to the previous speaker I finally got a sense of where the organization opposite is. In my area of the country we usually define a Liberal as somebody who can jump up and sit on a picket fence without a grimace of pain. That is exactly where hon. members opposite are. They talk about extremism and about how they are sitting nicely in the middle with that picket jammed you know where, but they are doing absolutely nothing. The same speaker started on a high note. I really identified with many of the things he said at the beginning. It is difficult to find solutions to problems. Hon. members opposite say they recognize the dilemmas, but we are supposed to be ogres for implying that

they do not care. However, it almost makes it worse if they do recognize them and do not do anything. That is worse. At any rate, it was a very enlightening evening.

There is one other thing I just cannot pass up. The hon. member drew a conclusion by extrapolating from the fact that the Liberal party has been in power for a good part of the century that the people of Canada must like the picket solution. I listened to many members on my right tonight, and I understand why hon. members opposite are in power.

Let us look back to the last Parliament and at some of the things that government did. I heard one hon. member speak vehemently in support of small business, but during the last Parliament small business people in my riding were asking if there was nothing I could do as their elected representative to get those fellows to tone down their policies, and especially their interest rate policy, before they ruined small business.

**Mr. McDermid:** They were a lot better off then than they are now.

**Mr. Skelly:** A little bit, they know. I must admit that, but what is the difference? If hon. members to my right were in power, that is exactly where we would be now.

In spite of some colossal blunders like moving our embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, despite dismantling Petro-Canada and the interest rate stunt, the previous prime minister was one of the most improved players in a few areas in this House. Now he is walking the country boosting his leadership by apologizing for all the mistakes he has made. He is further ahead than hon. members opposite, as demonstrated by their performance in the House tonight.

Members of the Conservative party often criticize us for throwing them out of power, but in reality the people of Canada threw them out of power. They did that because of the policy of dismantling Petro-Canada, the policy of moving the embassy to Jerusalem and the interest rate policy. I suppose that government frightened the people of Canada so badly that they just went after the lesser of two evils. One of the reasons the party opposite has been in power so long is the actions of several Conservative governments. I think we should look back to the First World War when the Conservative party committed suicide in the province of Quebec. It has never recovered. That firmly placed that group over there in power.

● (0540)

When the frustration finally arose and there were enough Canadians who said that Liberals are no good, they put in R. B. Bennett and the Conservatives and immediately ensured these guys another two decades of power. I think back to the statement, "We have been in power, therefore we must be good". If you look at the number of minority governments that they have been endowed with over the years in the decade from 1921 to 1930 and again in the 1960s, I look forward in a short period of time, if this group ever recovers, to a great many more minority governments because the people of Canada do not trust them.