

The Address—Mr. Clark

desire among native people themselves to assume authority and responsibility for their own development.

The minister and I have recently had very useful conversations with representatives of the National Indian Brotherhood concerning, mainly, other matters, but certainly opening the door for discussion by which we can work together on important work opportunities for the native people of the land.

Finally, sir, I want to emphasize this government's determination to place much greater reliance on the private sector, and private sector broadly defined, whether in terms of business or in terms of volunteer agencies, to achieve our economic and social goals. In recent years, in many ways the federal government became a burden on our economy. Record deficits and virtually uncontrolled spending were sometimes explained as being intended to spur economic growth. They were nothing of the kind. They were a drag on the economy. We are implementing in this government a program of spending restraint, not because we believe it is one easy step from restraint to lower deficits and ultimately to a balanced budget. Our restraint program is intended to free resources to the private sector to encourage investment, to encourage business expansion and to encourage job creation, which we believe is the best way to generate the revenues which in turn will help us balance the budget of Canada. We intend to reduce the burden of government on the economy and offer practical incentives to individual Canadians to build a stake in our country.

I am confident that Canadians will respond to that kind of encouragement and incentive. As I have travelled this country in recent months I have sensed a growing confidence, almost an enthusiasm, among Canadians over the prospects for this country. We should be confident and we should be enthusiastic because there is literally no country in the world with a greater potential, with a greater capacity to build, and with a greater offer of liberty and opportunity to its citizens, than this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Sir, energy is just one example. Certainly we need a new agreement on pricing and more effective programs both to conserve energy and to increase its supply. My ministers and I, as the House knows, are discussing these questions now with the provinces, and I have every confidence we can reach an understanding that acknowledges our needs and acknowledges theirs.

But, the true significance of our energy situation is not what it requires in the short term. The true significance is what the energy situation in Canada offers our citizens in the long run. This country can be self-sufficient in energy within a decade. We can be free of the insecurity that is the price of dependence on supplies beyond our control. For many years we have talked about our energy potential in this country, about the billions of barrels of oil locked away in the tar sands, about our heavy oil deposits, our frontier potential, and our 500-year supply of coal. All we could do in those days was talk; we lacked the

national need and we lacked the economic rationale to develop the resources we talked about.

The time for talk is over. Resources which used to be too expensive to develop are becoming almost cheap at their price for Canadians. To that extent OPEC has done us an economic favour. The economics now make sense to take advantage of our resource potential. Our national need is evident. What we require is a national will to make that happen.

During his remarks the Leader of the Opposition referred to a phrase he had used often during the election campaign, a phrase to which I took the deepest exception. He suggested that Canadians should learn to lower their expectations. We disagree on many things, but we disagree on nothing more fundamentally than that, because I believe this is a time for Canadians to raise their expectations, not to lower them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: We are a nation of immense potential; immense potential in our physical resources and immense potential in our human resources, in the great strength that comes to a country like this by the fact that all of us, coming from every corner that is represented here in this House of Commons, have in our heritage, in our past and as part of our being, a different sense of what this country can become, and a different identity that, woven together, can create a vibrant and strong national identity.

There used to be a time in this country when Canadians feared the regions and feared the different identities that might develop. There is nothing to fear in the regions of Canada. There is nothing to fear in the differences of Canada. Those regions, those differences, and those resources are the strengths of our country.

Our challenge as a Parliament is to try to give the leadership to restore that sense of calm and that sense of co-operation that can bring Canadians together to work toward the realization of the individual dreams of Canadians across this country.

What we have tried to do in the Speech from the Throne is set down a beginning agenda, steps we can take to reform this institution to make it the vital centre of the nation again, steps we can take to start Canadians along the road to feeling a part of their country and to building a stake in their country. That is the work we invite Parliament and the people of Canada to join in accomplishing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1650)

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by joining the Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Trudeau) in congratulating the mover and seconder, who both spoke so well yesterday, and I mean that completely. I agree with the Prime Minister that it is something which all of us who have been around this place for a few years must recall from time to time. It is a tough job to get up in this place for your first time. I, on behalf of my colleagues, want to congratulate those gentlemen most sincerely.

[Mr. Clark.]