the people of Canada know that more than that is causing the problems which face us today. The Economic Council report which was released about two weeks ago—it is the report which, as the minister knows, was written prior to October 28—stated that last year the two driving forces in the Canadian economy were the world economy, which was still going up at that time, and energy development in this country.

I am sorry the minister is leaving.

Mr. Lalonde: I am going to have a drink, a sober drink, but I will be back.

Mr. Wilson: I want the minister's mind very clear for this. This year they are saying that the only thing that is left is energy development in this country. As I have said before, and you have heard me, Mr. Speaker, the budget of the Minister of Finance torpedoed that hope. That is why there must be changes in the national energy program if we are going to see economic recovery under way in this country which will ease the crisis we are debating today.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources betrayed a sad misunderstanding of what is going on in this country and in the world today. He prefers to distort or to ignore the facts. He spoke about 15 per cent imports. Right now the oil imports are 25 per cent and they are going to grow to 40 per cent of our requirements. It is fine, it is a beautiful theory, to say, "Let us ignore the rest of the world, let us have a made-in-Canada energy policy, let us forget that things are happening in other parts of the world which have the effect of increasing oil prices." If we increase our oil imports from 25 per cent to 40 per cent, we know, and the National Energy Board has set out, that we will find ourselves in the same situation as the United States where, about ten or 15 years ago, imports amounted to about 25 per cent. Now they are 50 per cent and they have been forced to go to the world price as a result. Here we are talking about our import position of 25 per cent in the knowledge that imports will go up to 40 per cent, and we ignore the very sad and painful experience of the U.S. government. I am sorry the Minister of Finance is also leaving because I would like him to hear some of the points I am making.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Wilson: We are not arguing the case for the big oil companies, the multinationals, as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources says we are. We are arguing the case for Canada and Canadians because it is the Canadian people who will suffer under the national energy policy set by this government on October 28.

The minister says he will do two things for all of Canada. The national energy program will save Canadians from the vast increases in oil prices which are occurring in other parts of the world. I say this is not going to work. The minister knows it. It will not work because he has allowed for very large increases further down the road. Politically it is nice to say, "Today we are going to have a low price increase to $4.50." He knows that down the road it will be $7, $8, or $10. Why not now? Because the minister will be out of this House in five years time when those larger price increases will come into effect. In the interval we will lose a valuable period of time in which to develop our own production in Canada so that we could reach self-sufficiency and put in place an energy policy divorced from other countries in the world based on a supply firm enough to allow us to do that. This will not happen under the present energy policy. It will only happen if the minister sees some sense in making the changes which I think he knows will have to be made because so many people are telling him so.

The minister talks about drilling rigs leaving this country. He said that 15 or 20 drilling rigs have left the country. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that it requires 60 trucks to move a drilling rig. About six weeks have passed since this policy has been announced and the effects have not been felt directly by the people in the drilling programs. But we do know that the companies have announced their intention to send 60 rigs out of the country. We also know that very little business has been announced by the oil industry for the drilling rig companies next summer. At this time of the year you would expect that 75 per cent of the drilling rigs would have been spoken for. They have not, and there is a good reason. The reason is the chaos and the lack of confidence in that industry today which is calling on people to pull their horns in. They say, "Sorry, boys, there is no business." That is why these drilling rigs are going south. They are not going south because they want to go south but because the companies have to pay high interest rates and the rigs cannot sit idle with the expenses that have to be carried by the companies in this country when there is business to be done in the United States. About three or four weeks ago I spoke about an article called "Thank you, Canada" in which the author concluded that Canada had done more to develop the production of oil in the United States than all the bureaucrats and all the regulations of the U.S. department of energy. That is one of the things which is causing these drilling rigs to go south. Another reason is the much more favourable environment in the United States. The government of the United States knows that it must produce oil because its oil imports amount to 50 per cent, an import level which we will face by 1990 because of this policy. It is causing them to turn around, remove the regulations and restrictions, and build in incentives to allow them to reach the levels of production which are necessary in the United States. Another reason is that the incentives are there to encourage companies to move to the United States.

• (2310)

I should like to refer to just one figure. Prior to October 28, the netback in the United States was about $25. Some states were lower, some states were higher, but it was roughly $25. According to the minister's policy and the national energy program, in Canada it was about $9.70. The discovery rate is somewhat better in Canada than in the United States, but when we take into account the differences, it does not explain the total differences between $9.70 and $25. The returns, the