

Supply

to see the unemployment rate come down, the interest rates come down and reducing inflation levels. They would like to see families once again able to go out into the marketplace to purchase homes at prices they can afford, with payment schedules which would enable them to pay off their debts in their lifetime. Most, if not all, hon. members would like to see the country in a position where the automobile industry, manufacturing a good product, would be able to make a recovery.

I say to Your Honour in closing, since I have obviously come to the end of my allotted time, that the biggest problem confronting this government is its own inability to understand the needs of the people of the country and to institute the kinds of policies which would bring about what we are all striving for—a place where people come first. The government be damned with its theories! Let us put people first for a change!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thacker: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the last hon. member to speak would permit a brief question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The allotted time of the last hon. member has expired. This can only be done with the unanimous consent of the House. Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Thacker: Mr. Speaker, the last hon. member gave a very fine speech as to—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thacker:—how the government is bereft of any ideas concerning how to cope with this situation and the dramatic effects of high interest rates. I am sure he realizes that during the brief Clark administration, interest rates were 2.5 per cent below American rates, because the one thing that this party understands is—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I did not give the hon. member permission to make a speech at this point. If he wants to ask a question, he should ask his question.

Mr. Thacker: My question is: Which party passed the motion that put those mental midgets in power across the way?

An hon. Member: Don't even answer that!

Mr. Deans: I find that to be a very interesting question. The question, I suppose, is that when one is measuring mental midgets, one must find some new measurement which would measure the mental midgetry of a government which would allow itself to be defeated after only nine months in office.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Charles Lapointe (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening very attentively to the comments made by the member for Rosedale (Mr. Crombie) and the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans).

After listening to these two speeches, I must admit I am somewhat perplexed, especially since we are extremely lucky in our parliamentary system to have what are known as opposition days. We on the government side of the House are still hoping against hope that some day, the members opposite will have the courage of their convictions as well as the intelligence to produce solutions to the questions they are raising. I hoped this would happen this morning, especially considering the personalities of the two members who spoke earlier.

As I said before, I listened attentively to the member for Rosedale who deployed a vast amount of rhetoric in an attempt to prove that the government was doing nothing about the unemployment problem in Canada, that we were obsessed with inflation and that our only solution was unemployment. Mr. Speaker, I feel that it is unworthy of any member who has given the slightest thought to the economic situation to profer such falsehoods. In trying to recall what the member for Rosedale said, all I can remember is an enormous void and comments that were partisan and lacked any consideration for the real problems confronting Canadians in these difficult times.

As for the member for Hamilton Mountain, he made an excellent speech which reflected a real interest in, and awareness of, the personal problems caused by the economic situation. I agree when he says we want all Canadians to be able to have access to employment and we do not want Canadians to worry each month about meeting their payments, and we would like to see all industrial sectors operating at full capacity, so as to provide more and more jobs in the Canadian economy.

However, the member for Hamilton Mountain needed a scapegoat, and so he said that interest rates were at the bottom of all our ills.

Mr. Speaker, it is sad that once again, despite this very important mechanism in Parliament, namely, opposition days, there is a void, because our colleagues opposite have either forgotten or lacked the necessary courage to say what they would do and what they would like the government to do.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, we were not waiting for this to happen, and we have been trying to find ways of solving these very complex economic problems. On this side of the House, we are aware that our economy is not entirely isolated from