

It is not a question of being negative. It is a question of not being given anything to be positive about. I come to this House the most positive person you have ever met. I want to be enthusiastic about this Government. I want to be able to applaud their every measure. I want to be able to stand up and be happy in endorsing the things that the Government does. How can I endorse what the Government does when the Government has not lived up to its promises, when it has done the very opposite to the things it said it would do when it was seeking office? Am I to support the Government when it does what it said it would not do and does not do what it said it would do? I could not do that. It would not be honest of me.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. Dingwall) on a short question and a short answer.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, I have just a brief comment. I hear Members opposite talk about direct job creation programs as not being the answer to solving the unemployment problems in this country. I would not agree. I do not believe that my Party or the NDP have ever advocated that that is the sole measure to cure all of the unemployment in this country. However, I take strong objection to Members opposite who are not in favour of direct job creation programs for the unemployed.

I would ask the Hon. Member if he and his Party are committed to direct job creation programs in substantial dollars for student summer employment as well as for Canada Works. As we know, the Conservative Party both in philosophy and in terms of the fiscal measure are totally against any financial assistance for direct job creation.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, my answer to the question is quite simply yes, we are. It is obvious to anyone who has to deal with the unemployed that it is better to have a short-term job than to have no job at all.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Another question by the Hon. Member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso (Mr. O'Neil); a short question with a short reply.

Mr. O'Neil: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a comment directed towards the New Democratic Party in general and the Hon. Member's speech.

● (1730)

I represent a riding in which the largest employer is a foreign-owned corporation. It is owned by Stora Kopparberg and is the largest industry and major employer in the riding. It continues to irritate me to hear representatives of the New Democratic Party rise and chastise foreign investors. I cannot help but conclude that members of that Party would rather see Canadians out of work. I can assure the Hon. Member that the unemployed in my riding would much prefer to work for a foreign-owned corporation than not to work at all.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the Hon. Member that we also would rather that people worked for a

foreign corporation than not work at all. However, we would also extract from the foreign corporation commitments that would be in the best interests of the country. Foreign corporations are far too often dominated by the decisions made in their home offices and do little if any research and development in Canada. There is no long-term value for this country if we do not derive long-term benefits. We do not get those benefits from many foreign corporations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated.

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, today, on the occasion of my first speech in the House, my thoughts are of course with the people of the riding of Rimouski-Témiscouata. I want to thank them for their support, and I would urge them, as I did throughout the election campaign, to take an active part in the Canadian democratic process. I would ask them and all Canadians to engage in a constant dialogue with me and other Members of the House on the issues that concern us all and the policies they would like to see adopted by this Government. Dialogue is the very essence of our system of government.

Mr. Speaker, as was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne and confirmed by my colleagues the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret), we shall be facing some formidable challenges during this thirty-third Parliament. The decisions we shall be making in the years to come, or the lack of decisions, will have a significant impact on the economic future of this country and the employment opportunities available to our children.

Our economy is in a precarious state, and the Government's economic message has provided a keen and in-depth analysis of the situation. The problems are many and largely due to twenty years of Liberal rule. During those two decades, the standard of living of Canadians dropped from second to thirteenth place in the world. Our net federal debt was multiplied by ten, rising to nearly \$200 billion. Our economy suffered because our predecessors saw prosperous industries as a source of revenue, and not as the key to future economic development. They drained the resources of these industries to support weaker sectors of the economy instead of dealing directly with the weaknesses themselves. This had the unfortunate result of undermining all sectors of the economy.

Twenty years of Liberal economic policy have left us with a dollar that is worth only a meager 75 cents in terms of the American dollar.

We have also inherited an unemployment rate of over 10 per cent. This disastrous legacy has been reflected in the large number of farm and business bankruptcies that have occurred during the past few years.