

*Economic Conditions*

Tonight was one of the prime examples of the haughtiness, arrogance, cockiness of this government when the energy minister tried to sell his energy policy, a policy so weak that he had to yell for his full 20 minutes. The minister said only 15 or perhaps 20 rigs had left Canada in October. Each one of those rigs generates \$1.4 million in spin-offs in an area. To my way of figuring, that is a \$28 million loss in the month of November in the province of Alberta. It takes 60 trucks to move one rig out of the country, that is, 1,200 trucks tripping out of the country with oil rigs on their backs. The only people employed are the truckers who drive the trucks to get the oil rigs out of the country.

The minister stands there and says only 20 rigs left, only \$28 million lost in the month of November. That was a shameful show this evening. It was just disgusting. The minister talks about 100 rigs sitting idle. Certainly they are idle. They cannot afford to look for energy in this country. I am sure before long they will be going to the United States because there they are trying to achieve energy self-sufficiency.

I mentioned concerned, worried looks except for one man. That man is the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). I sit here day after day. He laughs and smirks when legitimate questions are asked on behalf of senior citizens, the working poor, the unemployed, citizens of western Canada who are not represented on that side of the House. He laughs and smirks when he brings in closure and members genuinely concerned with the well-being of this country do not have an opportunity to be heard. He sits there and laughs and smirks when anyone asks serious economic or social questions. It is a big joke to him.

It is not funny to Canadians who are not quite as well off as the Prime Minister or myself. The Prime Minister gave what he thought was some fatherly advice to senior citizens, the unemployed and the working poor the other day when he said: readjust your budgets so you can put food on the table. This was advice from a man whose biggest domestic decision in adjusting his budget is what kind of champagne to buy. He should apologize to those people. What he is doing is having them change from beans to Gainesburgers. That is his idea of changing priorities.

The Prime Minister cares about one thing: the Prime Minister. He does not care for the little man or woman, a unified Canada, or economics. He cares for Pierre Trudeau. He does not care for his caucus, the Liberal party, Canadians in all walks of life; just his own vision of Canada, and his vision is probably the most divisive force. He is the most divisive force the people of this country have ever had thrust upon them.

**Mr. Lang:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is not sticking to the rules of relevance in taking pot shots at the Prime Minister which are really a misrepresentation of what is going on. The Prime Minister is not here to answer them.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** That is a point of debate, not a point of order.

**Mr. McDermid:** I am sure the Prime Minister can speak for himself. It is rather interesting that the hon. member for Kitchener would stand up and make those comments after what the minister of energy had to say about my leader tonight, which was disgraceful and disgusting. Let us get back to some important matters. As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted, as a member from Ontario, I have a great concern about the west.

● (0120)

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. McDermid:** That is exactly what happens every time somebody discusses the west; somebody over there laughs. They think it is a big joke, but it is not. The sooner you people get up off your duffs and get out west and see what is going on the better it will be for Canada. I spent some time out west recently and I am genuinely concerned, "frightened" is probably more appropriate, about the mood of the people. I do not want the west to separate any more than I want Ontario or Quebec or Newfoundland to separate. However, this government is causing this. This government is deliberately driving a wedge between the centre and the west so as to claim power. It is doing it in respect of energy policy, it is doing it in respect of economic policies and it is doing it in respect of constitutional policies.

I for one; as a member of Parliament representing a part of Canada I am very proud of, will not put up with that. I think it is fair to say that the citizens of Ontario, of Quebec, of the Maritimes and of Newfoundland will not put up with it either. You fooled them over there; you misled them; you snuggled up to them during the last election, but the bloom is off the rose, believe you me. I noticed that the Prime Minister did not have his rose on today. He should have been wearing a black armband after the announcement of those increases in interest rates and the cost of living today. He is dividing this country. His Liberal cabinet, all of whom hope to receive the laying on of hands by the Prime Minister when he finally retires, if that ever comes, go along with it. His backbenchers will not stand up and be counted.

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

**Mr. McDermid:** Everything was fine when they were in opposition. Listen to these words from page 245 of *Hansard* for October 16, 1979. An hon. member, a fellow I am pleased to call a friend, the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Deniger), said after meeting with westerners:

I witnessed and sympathize with their feelings of alienation. I pledged to fight to overcome their despair. I pledged to fight all regional alienation—

I ask this House, and I ask him as a backbencher with the Liberal government, where is he now? Why is he not fighting that alienation his government is causing in this country?

Let us talk about interest rates for a moment. Let us talk about mortgage rates and young people trying to buy homes.