

Don Herring of the Canadian Association of Oil Well Drilling Contractors says that 4,000 jobs will vanish this spring and he believes the worst is yet to come. Dale Tufts, President of the Petroleum Services Association, says that the total job losses this year will reach 6,000 and could go as high as 15,000. One government official in Alberta says: "There is fear in the streets. Every major oil project is threatened". The Government says the average price for crude oil will be \$22.50 on one page of its booklet and \$23.88 on another page. So, obviously, either the Government is right and the world is wrong, or vice-versa.

The Government says there is no need to worry. In spite of its attempts to calm the nerves of the energy sector and the country, we are worried a great deal about the catastrophe to which the Government could be sending the country economically. Can we honestly give the Government another \$22 billion in view of the fact it is completely off base in what it says in the Budget and what it says it is going to do?

What about the East Coast? What about the promise of jobs there? Even Premier Buchanan of Nova Scotia has finally admitted there is some reason for concern. He even went so far as to admit that an \$8 a barrel price would be a very severe blow to the East Coast. He ignores the fact, of course, that Petro-Canada is ready to abandon five wells on the East Coast, and Husky-Bow Valley—thanks to the renegeing of a commitment by the Government—has dropped three wells from its modified drilling program. At the request of the Government, it had already dropped three wells from its original forecast. So it has dropped six wells from its drilling program because the Government is in fact implementing regulations under the Petroleum Incentives Program Act with respect to Bill C-85, and doing it retroactively.

It is not the industry we have to look at because it is leading a downturn in activity and exploration. It is the Government which is panicking and causing the uncertainty about the oil and gas sector in Canada. What does the reality of a lower oil price mean to Government revenues? Every one dollar drop in the price of oil means at least a \$100 million loss in revenues to the Government. Instead of going to Washington, perhaps the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) should go to Ireland and kiss the blarney stone because with figures like this, he certainly is going to need all of the good luck he can possibly get. Only a complete turn-around from what is perceived by the industry and by the economists at the present time can save the Government's Budget from leading this country into a very serious economic crisis. But that is just in the energy sector.

● (1700)

What has the Government done in other sectors? The net taxes will increase by \$1.5 billion while net spending will fall by \$800 million. The extra \$1.5 billion in taxes means an average of \$145 for each household. Canadians earning less than \$15,000 a year will receive a sales tax rebate of \$50 per adult and \$25 per child. Corporations will pay a 3 per cent sales tax in 1987. Basic tax rates for corporations, manufacturers and small businesses will be reduced as of January 1, 1987.

### *Borrowing Authority Act*

What the Government has done on St. Patrick's Day is to emphasize the "sham" in shamrock.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** We've got blarney coming from you!

**Mr. MacLellan:** The sham goes very deeply into the economic forecasts and the economic thinking of the Government.

What is this Government doing for the areas of the country where regional disparity is such a tremendous problem? It is doing very little. It is hiding. It is saying that it will bring forward these programs which have no bearing whatsoever on the real problems of Atlantic Canada and other areas undergoing regional disparity. In fact, what it does is to put the areas undergoing regional disparity in a Catch-22 situation by saying that any economic upward mobility has to be through the private sector. Yet it stacks the deck against the private sector so that it cannot possibly make use of this avenue to increase expectations.

It is a gloomy Budget which presents a gloomy picture to Canadians. I hope it is not the case in reality. It certainly gives little hope because the Government does not seem to know what it is it wants to do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** Resuming debate, the Hon. Member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. McCurdy).

**Mr. Malone:** He has already spoken.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** We want to go out and enjoy ourselves.

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor-Walkerville):** Mr. Speaker, we are listening to parliamentarians who are supposedly more experienced than I. They should know that I can speak to the amendment. I would ask them to search their memories in order to see that they are quite incorrect to suggest that I cannot rise to speak again.

I was really intrigued—in fact, I was taken aback to some degree—when I initially heard the word "blarney" issuing from the mouth of my colleague in reference to the Government. I could not quite understand how that was possible. However, I then realized that this is St. Patrick's Day and blarney does come to mind. In his lighter moments I suppose the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) exhibits some elements of what could be characterized as blarney. As I understand it, blarney is a type of good-natured circumlocution which, of course, characterizes the Prime Minister. Blarney is characterized by some good-natured colouring of what is being said in order to make people feel good, perhaps even better than they ought to feel in the circumstances. The Prime Minister has done that. Indeed, I think that even the most committed Irishman would have to admit that blarney is occasionally characterized by slight untruths but that those untruths are intended to make people feel good about their circumstances and about the person uttering the blarney. That, too, characterizes the Prime Minister. In fact we have heard something more than blarney from the Prime Minister, especially when