

Supply

I can see that the time is going fast, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say this in closing. If there is one thing this Government can be blamed for, it can only be for having given too much and for keeping its promises too well. At a given time, everyone waits anxiously for a Speech from the Throne. Throughout Canada, people are waiting impatiently for a Speech from the Throne as though no one will have to work any longer afterwards. The throne speech will be a miracle and no one in Canada will have to work in the future. Well, Mr. Speaker, if this Government can be blamed for something, it is for having given too much. We now ask all Canadians to do their share and if they do, we shall put our economy back on track.

[English]

Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest to the various Members who spoke in the House this afternoon, particularly to the previous speaker who I know is most interested in seeing that Canada, which we both serve with pleasure, moves on and takes its rightful place within the community of great industrialized nations with which we have previously shared company. As the Hon. Member is aware, that is fast disappearing and slipping through our fingers, primarily due to the inaction and lack of motivation on the part of his Government.

I want to address myself to the comments of two Members in particular. The Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) tried to indicate to the House and to the nation that we in the Conservative Party were the masters of our own doing. As much as Members of the New Democratic Party may try to abdicate their responsibilities, they cannot erase from the history books and annals of Canadian Parliament that indeed they supported the Liberal Party when they brought on the defeat of the Conservative Government. They contributed to and in fact were the cause of the election held on February 18, 1980.

It little matters what has transpired since with reference to NDP support of the Liberal Party. Members of that Party continue to trade their votes for support of Liberal programs with which they can identify, such as the National Energy Program, that is such a disaster. There is talk of nationalization of Canada's economy with higher Government deficits, more regulation and increased inflation. I draw that to the attention of the Hon. Member, this House and the nation. They cannot get away with that.

● (1740)

I listened to the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail), who is from my Province of New Brunswick. I am sorry he has found it necessary to step out for a few minutes to take a well deserved break from his exhausting duties in this House. He made several comments with which I cannot help but take issue. One was that the best the Opposition seems to be able to do is dwell on items that are really not pertinent to our society, to our system and to our nation. He referred to a motion put by the Opposition a few days ago. His words were something to the effect that the best they can do is talk about tourism.

I am sure the Hon. Member is not aware of this or he would not have talked about it in such demeaning terms, but tourism happens to be the second largest industry in Canada. It is the second largest employer in this country. Coming from a part of a Province that is experiencing unduly high unemployment, I would think that the Hon. Member for Restigouche would be vitally concerned with any industry that created as much employment as the tourist industry. I wonder just how interested he is in what the Government does or the lack of what it does in the area of creating employment.

The Hon. Member for Restigouche referred to the need for a budget and the fact that we will have a new budget tomorrow evening. He indicated that the Government has had four budgets as well as two economic statements over the past three years. He referred to the fact that we on this side have had three policy conferences or some other general meetings over the past number of years, which indicates to him that we have had one every six months. I do not know where he gets his arithmetic from, but it is probably indicative of the arithmetic used on that side of the House when preparing budget statements. If we have had three policy conferences, it is interesting that the Government found it necessary to come in with six budget statements during a period of time when this country moved from the state of being bad to absolutely despicable, absolutely terrible.

The Hon. Member for Restigouche talked about inflation being down to 6 per cent. I know he would not have wanted to mislead this nation and that he would thank me for bringing to his attention and that of the country the fact that the inflation rate is not 6 per cent. I am sure that all Hon. Members of this House share with him the wish that it was 6 per cent. However, the rate of inflation is now 7.5 per cent. That is much more respectable than the 12 or 13 per cent of a few short months ago, but it is still not 6 per cent. Interestingly enough, the fact that inflation is now down to 7.5 per cent has not increased the confidence of investors in this nation. In fact, it seems to have had a non-effect. Investors in this country are not at all encouraged.

The Hon. Member for Restigouche referred to assistance acts. What have these assistance acts done to small businesses? Last year 80,000 businesses in this country closed their doors and laid off their employees. Small businesses are the greatest employers in Canada in terms of job creation. Not only have 80,000 businesses closed their doors, the rate of small businesses that went bankrupt last year exceeds or is of the order of 1,000 per month. That is a deplorable condition. The Hon. Member for Restigouche should be aware of these facts before standing up in this House and indicating to his constituents and others what his Government is doing. He said he was elected to do a job and that he is accepting his role.

The Hon. Member for Restigouche put forth an interesting position. He comes from a region of New Brunswick where unemployment is rampant, running away, due primarily to the mismanagement of the economy by this Government. During the time that he spoke, not once did he refer to the closure of