

And how high are interest rates now? They are as high as they have been in 47 years. If the minister appreciates that a government must be accountable, as he seems to do when out of power, why does he not admit his and his government's accountability now that they are in power? It is like drops of water on a stone. I will try again, and my party will try again to make an impression on the government. Of course, any promise of action is like getting water back from a stone. If a government acknowledges it is an effective authority within its own borders then any action it takes, presumably, will have an effect. Therefore, the external forces are hardly adequate reasons for failure.

It is clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that only the larger businesses in Canada with adequate protection through their equity and working capital will be able to defray the more ravaging elements of the worsening financial crises in Canada. It is those whom we can least afford to lose—the small businesses which, as I have said, make up almost half of our business community. They are the ones which contribute a great deal to the gross national product. They do not have the ability to weather this storm. And how does the government intend to help them? What relief will it provide? What measures does it contemplate to give them a fighting chance for survival?

It is equally clear that small businesses have a host of difficulties to overcome. These difficulties are a lack of skilled labour, underdeveloped foreign markets, mountains of government paperwork, punitive taxation and so on. Under present circumstances—even circumstances which are a good deal better than present ones—the small businessman has difficulty in achieving any degree of solvency. He cannot consolidate his loans even when he can get one. He cannot obtain working capital and carry accelerating interest rates indefinitely. He cannot increase the variety of his stock to attract more customers. In short, he cannot continue to exist. In that case a large part of our GNP will cease to exist along with him.

● (0450)

However, I forget that this government runs its own business, the business of governing this country on the peculiar basis of deficit spending. Why then should it sympathize with a business community that does not share the same luxury, the same dubious fiscal principle? The government continues to spend 25 per cent more than it takes in each year. The government continues to spend our \$66 billion this year alone. It continues to spend immense amounts of money on a commodity which we can get for half the price in Canada. It continues to stick its thumb in the leaking dike of our economy, but as the leaks increase in number and in force, the government will run out of thumbs and then we will all be at sea, just as the government is in matters of the economy.

Together, three things, the budget, the energy policy, and the constitution, are contributing to what has become known as a socialist republic. As this irresponsible government seizes control of the major multinationals in Canada, and as it grabs

hold of 25 per cent or 50 per cent of their wealth, what will stop it from moving into Ontario and taking control of nickel?

Would this party condone a government that would seize control and set the price on nickel for the world? No, it would not. The NDP might, but the Conservatives would not. The New Democratic-Liberal party of Canada is turning this country into a socialist republic. It is taking away from the free enterprise system the most important element, that no government of any country can run the business sector in this country as well as the free enterprise system if allowed to function.

The government continues to meddle in the free enterprise system in Canada and to increase inflation, lower the value of the dollar, scare industry, business and entrepreneurs out of the country to the point where all that is left to run it are those people opposite, the irresponsible socialists who sit on the other side of the House. This country is doomed to disaster because it will not listen, and it does not care. The Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) said, as recently as last month, that the people of Canada do not want unilateral patriation of the constitution. The survey polls such as Gallup support that view. The Prime Minister said that it does not matter what the people of Canada want. They do not know what is good for them, but the Prime Minister does.

As the strings of those puppets, those marionettes opposite are pulled, they jump, and when they are told to stand up, they stand up. When members opposite go home to face the people in their ridings and have to go on the hotline shows and be interviewed by the media people, I challenge them to say that they stood mute, they put the earmuffs on, gagged themselves and stood up when they were told to stand in the House of Commons. They are literally turning this country into a socialist republic run by the ministers opposite and supported by the NDP.

They will drive the business community in Canada into the grave, and as they mount the tombstones over the deaths of 6,000 businesses they laugh. The NDP laughs because they know the strength of this country. They know that the free enterprise system has built the country. They are as bad a bunch of marionettes, of gagged puppets, as the Liberals. They are gagged, they are out of it, they are in a different world, and they are trying to bring it to Canada.

In my remaining thirty seconds I will make the prediction that if this government stays in office for five years more and it completes its term, by the time we get the country back, and hopefully there will be something left with which to work, the two of them together, the Liberal-Democratic party of Canada, will have turned the country into a socialist republic. I hate to see the day when they band together to bankrupt the free enterprise system, to take control of the country away from the marketplace and turn it into a socialist republic.

[Translation]

**Mr. J.-Roland Comtois (Terrebonne):** Mr. Speaker, I am quite pleased to take part in this debate, all the more so because the comments we have been listening to for a few