

Supply

During the course of the Liberal Government which was in power for 20 years, it did nothing to help diversify the western economy. Hon. colleagues will remember one time back in November, 1980 when there was something known as the western economic development fund which was worth \$4 billion. It was supposed to be worth that. It was a vanishing \$4 billion. The Hon. Member who introduced this motion said this, as appears at page 4417 of *Hansard* for November 4, 1980:

Further, we would like to point to the introduction in the Budget of the western development fund. It is designed to take the proper profits and revenues deriving from resources and recycle them back into western Canada to provide a much more diversified economic base.

The Liberals took the revenue and they recycled it back here, but it never got back to western Canada. The \$4 billion western economic development fund just vanished into thin air. So much for the commitment of the hon. gentleman.

We had a further reminder of that. At page 5128 of *Hansard* for November 27, 1980 the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry said:

We are talking an economic and industrial strategy for western Canada—

The Liberals had 20 years, not four years or two years, but 20 years, to diversify the economic base of western Canada.

We are taking steps to do that. There was a commitment in the Speech from the Throne and we are going to do that. Liberal policies created high inflation and high interest rates. Let us talk about farm prices. In 1984 when we were fighting the election campaign, farm prices were at the lowest level since 1938. That is the Liberal record. They failed to respond.

● (1720)

What the Hon. Member is suggesting in his motion is that we should have some meetings and a conference. The Liberals had a Western Economic Conference with a lot of fanfare and hoopla. There were a lot of recommendations but nothing was done. Under the LIFT program they were paying western farmers not to grow wheat. Can you imagine anything so absurd? The National Energy Program crippled western Canada. The Liberals dismantled the Crow. As a matter of fact, if they were in office today rates would probably be around \$11 per tonne. We rolled them back and froze them at \$6 a tonne. Neither can we forget what else they did with the NEP. They defeated our Government in 1980 over 18 cent gas. Rather than getting 18 cents from the Conservatives we get \$1.13, mainly in taxes from the Liberals. They destroyed co-operative federalism in this country. Remember the statement back in 1980? "Co-operative federalism is dead". Who made that statement? Mr. Pierre Elliott Trudeau. The Hon. Member who moved this motion was a member of that Government.

He talked about the coal deal. They had 20 years to put together a deal to move coal from western Canada to Ontario. We now have a Liberal Government in Ontario, and I would hope the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) would use his good offices to encourage Mr. Peterson to co-

operate with us in order to facilitate the movement of coal from western Canada to Ontario. It is a good deal for Canada. It is a good deal for western Canada, Ontario, and the environment. Yet we are not getting any co-operation from the NDP or the Liberals in moving ahead with the National Transportation Act. That is vital. If we are going to bring down the unit cost of transportation, that is a must. I hope the House Leader for the NDP will consider that.

The motion before us is interesting for what it says, but more interesting for what it does not say. There is absolutely nothing constructive. It proposes nothing but asks for an immediate meeting. I just went through some of the resolutions bandied about at the Liberal convention. There certainly is nothing there which might be helpful either. They want deficiency payments for agriculture. We have delivered. They want policies developed to reduce the cost of fertilizer, chemicals and other farm inputs. One of the first things we did was to remove the farm fuel tax. We have probably the cheapest farm fuel of any producing nation in the world, thanks to the initiative of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). The reason we are doing things in the agricultural industry is that this Prime Minister, unlike the two previous Prime Ministers, cares about agriculture.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: That was evidenced by his visit to the Outlook Conference. He was the first Prime Minister in the history of this country to attend an agriculture outlook conference. I see sadness among the NDP because they said, "Oh, no, Mulroney won't deliver. Wise won't deliver." Then they said, "Yes, he will deliver but only in the form of a loan. It would have to be tied to some diversion of acreage or another LIFT program". Then it was going to be an interest-free loan. They tried to mislead, perhaps not intentionally, the farmers of Canada. They tried to create anxiety and fear. Then they tried to attack the credibility of the Prime Minister. I will tell you that this Prime Minister has delivered on agriculture just as he has delivered on energy. He has delivered for the West. He will continue to deliver because he cares about the West and he cares about Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: Let us talk about unemployment in western Canada. Let us look at the record. The Hon. Member promotes his Leader as "Honest John", a great guy, builds on the Liberal record. Here is the Liberal record on unemployment in western Canada. In Manitoba in 1980 when they last took office, the unemployment rate was 6 per cent. When they were kicked out in September, 1984, it was 9 per cent. In Saskatchewan it rose from 3.9 per cent to 8.5 per cent. In Alberta it rose from 3.9 per cent to 12 per cent. Four years of Liberal rule gave Alberta an increase in unemployment from 3.9 per cent to 12 per cent. In B.C. it doubled from 7.5 per cent to 15.2 per cent.