

breakdown which has occurred in Canada under nine years of the Trudeau administration.

I agree, Mr. Speaker, that the paramount issue of our times is not inflation, unemployment and the resulting social unrest caused by these two evils. Serious as these problems are, they are not insurmountable. The discomfort, unrest and concern that they cause will eventually force people to act and to put things straight, provided that the reform machinery of the democratic system has not been too badly damaged or destroyed during the Trudeau years.

In my opinion, the paramount issue of our time is, therefore, the preservation of our democratic system. This means the preservation of our basic freedoms which we tend to take as our birthright and which are threatened today as never before by the sanctimonious hypocrisy of the present Liberal administration. Unfortunately, most Canadians take their personal and political freedoms as much for granted as the air that they breathe. This may be due to the fact that through an accident of history or geography we are located in one of the most sheltered and secure spots on the world map. It is no exaggeration to say that had our southern neighbour been a country like Germany or Russia, Canada may not have emerged from the colonial stage as a separate political entity. It is, therefore, rather obvious that Canada exists today as a self-governing, free country only because it is lucky enough to have democratic America as its big neighbour along the longest undefended border in the world.

Moreover, as I view the new wave of totalitarianism which is clearly under way, it is equally obvious that the one and only real safeguard of the freedoms we take for granted is America's strength. Alone, Mr. Speaker, we are defenceless. Whether we like it or not, whether we admit it or not, it is a simple and self-evident fact that only the United States among the democracies still has the power to make a direct attack on any member of the Atlantic alliance too risky. It is that power, and nothing else, which has kept the armies and the tanks of the Soviet Union behind the iron curtain under what is called détente. For years the primary objective of communist strategy has been the splintering of NATO and the isolation of the United States. Under the present government, Canada has been a willing pawn in this power play. We have reduced our contribution to NATO. We have reduced our armed forces to something like 72,000 people.

**Mr. Danson:** It is 78,000.

**Mr. Crouse:** The Minister of National Defence (Mr. Danson) has corrected me; he says it is not 72,000, but 78,000. That is only four times more than the communist forces that we are indirectly helping finance in a war of aggression in Angola. It is a shameful participation in NATO and in the détente that we share in enforcing throughout the world. I say to you, sir, that we are facing dangerous times.

None of these acts by the present administration has gone unnoticed by the United States, whose leaders can well recall that it was our Prime Minister who went to Moscow and ranted about American threats to our identity from a cultural,

*The Address—Mr. Crouse*

economic and perhaps even military point of view. Just imagine where those words were said, Mr. Speaker. "Please come in and save us from the threat of American aggression"! Nationalism, therefore, as it is presently being—

**Mr. Danson:** He did not say that.

**Mr. Crouse:** The Minister of National Defence can make his own speech, but I happen to have the Prime Minister's address in my office. If the minister does not happen to have it, I will supply him with a copy, which states very clearly the words I have repeated. I took those words from the Prime Minister's speech; I just copied them, and they are exactly as he uttered them when he was in the Soviet Union. So let us not have any foolishness on that score. I know that the Minister of National Defence is quite capable of taking care of himself, but I have quoted to this House and to the people of Canada the words of our Prime Minister. If the minister is ashamed of them, he can make his own defence of the Prime Minister at another time.

Nationalism as it is presently being practised in Canada through its Quebec separatist version, with the underhanded approval of our Prime Minister and his government, is as destructive today as it is out of date. At stake in this abrogation of responsibility by the Prime Minister and his cabinet is not our identity—as he implies—but, rather, our total freedom. That is what is at stake.

Faced with these facts, faced with the mismanagement of our economy and our blundering nationally and internationally, Canadians do not need to wonder about the loss of confidence in our country by Canadian and international investors. Our dollar has dropped from a peak one year ago of something like \$1.03 to 89 cents the other day. And is it any wonder? What else can we expect when Jean-Luc Pepin says publicly that it may be too late to save Canada? This buttresses my contention that he and his colleagues should never have been appointed to lead the Canadian unity debate. This work and most of our royal commissions should be under the chairmanship of someone in the Canadian Senate. After all, some four former premiers sit in the Senate as senators, yet one of them has so little to do in the Senate that he has time to draw his full pay as senator and also draw his full pay as president of Dalhousie University.

I believe that the Senate should be retained, but I also believe that it should be put to work in the manner I have described. We could then put some of the best business and legal brains to work on some of our major problems. As we are all well aware, these problems are manifold, and the words in the Speech from the Throne are the clearest admission to date by the Trudeau government that its economic policies are not working and must be changed. Business failures, with the consequent loss of millions of dollars, are taking place at an unprecedented rate across Canada this year and are expected to continue at an accelerated pace in 1978 and beyond.

● (1442)

The latest figures show that as of August 18, business failures reached 2,612—an increase of 29 per cent from what