

resource industry is very important. Essentially all the business activity is related to the activity surrounding agriculture, mixed farming, the energy sector and light industry.

The economic conditions are not healthy. The impact of the National Energy Program and the devastation that was heaped upon our part of the country as a result of the odious policies of the National Energy Program have inflicted irreparable harm. It will take a long time for many of those industries to recover. The small business sector directly associated with agriculture and the energy sector exists in an uncertain climate. There have been many bankruptcies, many failures.

In the farming community we have had our share of bankruptcies. Farm incomes are the lowest since 1938. Last year net farm income fell by roughly 40 per cent in western Canada. These issues clearly need addressing. I am pleased that the Speech from the Throne and the economic statement have gone some distance in addressing the concerns of agriculture.

We are an exporting nation, particularly with respect to our agricultural products. We are not a price setter, we are a price taker. Therefore, we must do everything we can to reduce the input costs of our agricultural products. We have addressed that by addressing fuel costs. Interest rates are coming down. That certainly is a very major cost component. We hope to address the issue of the chemicals we spray and the fertilizers we use. Those are very expensive input costs. We must do everything in our power to bring down the cost of farm inputs. Only in that way can we alleviate some of the cost-price squeeze pressures that are inflicted upon producers.

In listening to the debate up to this point, I find that there has been a lot of rhetoric floating around and very little substance flowing from the Opposition. What puzzles me is that they tend to forget that there was an election on September 4. There was an election where the Canadian people clearly voted for change, an election which gave the Progressive Conservative Party a clear national mandate to set this country on a different course. Yet we hear the same old rhetoric from the socialists and the same old rhetoric from the Liberals, all of which has been rejected by the Canadian people. Will they ever learn?

On September 4 Canadians voted not only against the Liberal government of the day. They voted for a Progressive Conservative alternative. There is no question about that. I might say that they voted against socialism. They voted against a brand of socialism that is depicted by those two Parties which sit close together molycoddling. They have not changed and they will not change.

• (1520)

I see the former Member for Oshawa sitting in the gallery. The Hon. Michael Starr was a very distinguished Member who served this place with distinction and honour. He visited my office earlier today and reminded me that even the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) almost lost the election this time. His majority was cut from 12,000 to 2,000.

The Address—Mr. Mazankowski

I suppose that if the election campaign would have lasted another week or so, we might have got him too.

Not only did the Canadian people vote against the Liberal government but they voted against the Liberal-NDP brand of socialism. They voted for something positive. There is no question about that.

Mr. de Jong: The election is over; tell us what you are going to do. Come on, tell us.

Mr. Mazankowski: There will be lots of opportunity to do that. I think it is very important to set the record straight. The Canadian people voted against a Party which left a legacy of broken promises and hidden agendas. We know what the legacy of that Party was. It was crippling interest rates, massive unemployment, burdensome debt and a weak Canadian dollar. It was a Party which killed the entrepreneurial and creative spirit of Canadians. That is perhaps the biggest disaster that was inflicted on Canada by the alliance of those two Parties. Those two Parties destroyed investor and business confidence. They turned optimism into despair and anxiety. As a matter of fact, their legacy is a legacy of heartbreaks and broken dreams, a legacy of business bankruptcies and farm bankruptcies.

It is amazing that members of the NDP get so irritated. They know that they were a part of this action. They were a part of the action taken on the NEP.

Mr. Waddell: How were we part of it? Name one.

Mr. Mazankowski: Yes, I will name one right now. Members of the NDP across the way supported the National Energy Program.

Mr. Waddell: Nonsense! That is not true.

Mr. Mazankowski: That is absolutely true.

Mr. Waddell: That is a lie.

Mr. Mazankowski: It cost the people of Ontario 90,000—

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Minister should not lie to this House—

Some Hon. Members: Order!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): I would like to remind the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) that he should not use the term that he just used, if I heard him correctly.

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to withdraw the word "lie" because it is unparliamentary and replace it by saying that the Minister obviously knows, if he follows the votes, that we did not vote for the National Energy Program. He is a sensible and good Minister and an honourable man. He should not mislead the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): I would like to recall to the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway that, first, the