

case of resource industries. The reduction of the federal sales tax from 12 per cent to 9 per cent is definitely a step in the right direction, but it is not addressed to the heart of the problem of the costs that overburden the Canadian manufacturing industry. Moreover, it is not entirely sure that the benefits of the operation will be fully passed on to consumers. The indexing of the basic exemption for personal income tax purposes will at the most enable a taxpayer to keep his purchasing power.

The tax credit granted for employment expenses which is raised from \$250 to a limit of \$500 seems generous at first sight, but it is really quite small for workers and will not fully compensate for the increase in transportation costs and the price of tools. I sincerely regret that the minister has found necessary to increase the airport tax by 15 per cent. There is no clearer evidence of the wealthy bourgeois mentality which characterizes this government than this tax increase the principal victims of which will be the passengers with little or no means. Air travel in this country is not for the exclusive use of the rich businessmen and vacationers.

The airplane is a vital means of transportation in the outlying areas of Canada, be it in the North or in regions where other means of transportation are not available, or on the many islands off our coasts. I am especially referring, as far as my province is concerned, to the people of the Magdalen Islands among others, who can reach the mainland by plane only and who are not exactly among the richest citizens of our country. I am also referring to the workers of the north coast and of new Quebec who once in a while want to visit their families in the Gaspé peninsula. I am also thinking about the Indians and the people working on the James Bay project whose transportation expenses will go up again. And what about the people of Prince Edward Island, of Newfoundland, of the Northwest Territories or of the northern parts of all our provinces? What about all the Canadians who are scattered all over the country and who have no other means of transportation but the airplane to get together at Christmas time or for the funerals of one of their relatives? I am thinking of those new Canadians of less than modest means who may want to go back home, to the old country, for one last time. The government would not have acted otherwise even if they had actually wanted to get at the most needy of Canadians.

I also regret that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) has not seen fit to adopt our party's recommendations regarding deductibility of mortgage interests and property taxes on a homeowner's principal residence. This measure, which would be of immense benefit to our economy in several industrial sectors, will be one of the Progressive Conservative party's top priorities after the Canadians have given us the mandate to govern this country. And since the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) likes to link the economic problem with that of national unity, I do not think that it is irrelevant for me to say a word about the pitiful and deplorable speech given over the week-

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end by the head of this government before the Ontario Liberals.

● (2012)

I am not much impressed, Mr. Speaker, by the Prime Minister's efforts to propel himself into the role of defender of Canada's unity. The Canadian people are not too willing to forget that it was under his government and because of his political actions that disunity came to Canada. Nor are they too willing to forget that his arrogance and his rigidity as regards constitutional matters are the main reason why so many Quebecers want out and why the present Quebec government was elected. Recent polls published in Montreal's *La Presse* also show that opposition to the Prime Minister, his policies and especially his government, has reached an all time high. They are of such nature as to convince voters that maintaining this party in power any longer is the surest way to push a majority of Quebecers into the arms of the party currently in power in Quebec. Even though the right hon. Prime Minister drapes himself in the Canadian flag in an effort to present the figure of a national hero, he cannot prevent anybody from seeing through the desperate manoeuvre of a politician eager to divert the attention of the public away from the economic chaos in which he has plunged the country and the serious divisions he has created among the various Canadian ethnic groups. Canadians will not fall for this pitch by a man whose credibility has fallen to the zero level. They will remember his stand against controls during the 1974 election campaign. They are not about to forget this huge political fraud, Mr. Speaker.

Should the right hon. Prime Minister decide to masquerade as the saviour of our country, Canadians would only laugh. This so-called repart against separatism reminds one of the famous repart the Liberal party claimed it had risen against conscription. It was not very solid. Such ridiculous claims would only make people jeer if they were not accompanied by slanderous remarks against those who oppose the government. Never has there been a party leader, let alone a Prime Minister, who has questioned his adversaries' loyalty to Canada. I do not doubt the sincerity of the leader of the government when he claims that only his policies can save Canada from disaster and I have nothing but pity for his blindness, but I deny him the right to accuse the leader of the opposition or any other public figure for that matter of being disloyal to Canada, just because he happens to favour a greater decentralization of power and a more active role for provincial governments.

Incidentally, we have an indication of the sincerity of the right hon. Prime Minister when he states that he is willing to discuss a new power sharing formula with the provinces. The right hon. Prime Minister goes too far when he calls all those who do not agree with him "enemies". This man who claims to be the only one capable of uniting Canadians is the only one who,