

Summer Recess

for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). It has also been a pleasure to work with the member for Nepean Carleton (Mr. Baker) when he was House leader for the Conservative Party. It was with these four opposition Houses leaders that we, on this side of the House, had to compromise during this very long session to obtain the extraordinary results I mentioned earlier. I trust that in the future we will be able to improve the mood of the House, to improve the mentality that must prevail in a self-respecting institution and, in conclusion, I should mention that we build great hopes on the reports of the Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure. I believe that such hopes are realistic and I sincerely hope that these pressing changes will come true so that Parliament can become the most respected institution in Canada.

• (2110)

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Madam Speaker, may I say at the very outset that in spite of what the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) stated in his opening remarks here this evening, one thing is abundantly clear and that is that this country in every respect is in worse shape today than it was when this session started. It is in worse shape economically, and it is rather interesting to note that the minister failed even to acknowledge the state of the Canadian economy when he went through his litany of achievements. He said absolutely nothing about the economy. In terms of the attitude of Canadians, in terms of the negativism that exists in this country and in terms of the divisiveness, the cynicism, the lack of confidence, the frustration, the hopelessness, the despair, the alienation and the regional alienation that exists, there can be no question that we have slipped badly during the course of this session. No amount of rhetoric or justification from the President of the Privy Council will change my mind or the mind of many Canadians in this country about that.

I am not proud of this session, Mr. Speaker. It has been the longest and the most destructive session, clearly the most divisive session that we have ever experienced in our history. It has not been a good session for Canada and it has not been a good session for this institution.

My purpose in rising to speak tonight is to try to identify and review some of the offensive measures and initiatives which this government has taken to cause that. I want not only to identify and deal with some of those offensive issues but, more important, I want to seize upon this opportunity to implore this government, as it prepares for its fall legislative program, to change its course and to change its direction. It must stop the destructive lunacy that has characterized it over the past two years.

The course this government is following and has followed is not only idiotic but it is most dangerous. As a result of its policies and actions, this government is not only destroying important sectors of the Canadian economy, it is destroying the lives and fortunes of individual Canadians throughout this land. It is destroying a once vibrant entrepreneurial spirit that

epitomized Canadians from coast to coast, and a growing number of Canadians in all regions of Canada are giving up economically and politically.

As I said in my opening remarks, there is in this country tonight a feeling of hopelessness and despair. I submit to you, sir, and to all hon. members in this House that if this country is going to remain as a cohesive federal unit, then this government must stop attacking one region of the country while it accommodates another.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (2120)

Mr. Mazankowski: I want to speak tonight as genuinely and as sincerely as I possibly can. I plead with the government to stop and consider what it has done and what it is doing to the country and to Canadians. I urge it to change its course and to change direction, because individual Canadians throughout the country cannot stand by much longer and accept the abuse and the hurt which has been thrust upon them by this government.

In that context I want to speak briefly about the political situation in western Canada. I do not want to sound alarming or hysterical, but I want to signal a warning to the government and to all members of the House of Commons that the separatist forces in western Canada are not dead. The separatist movement is alive. It is working away. It is developing a platform. It is in the process of solving some of its internal problems. It should not be discounted or written off. Perhaps more important is the fact that the western separatist movement is attracting individuals, working men and women across the whole spectrum of society, farmers and ranchers, businessmen, and especially young entrepreneurs who felt that there was a real era of opportunity in western Canada. Many invested heavily, many became involved in business enterprises, and many have seen those businesses collapse and disappear simply with the stroke of a pen and a change of the rules, laws and regulations emanating from the government. There are doctors, lawyers, housewives, teachers, oil executives, managers, economists, professors, and even rodeo riders who are members of the western separatist movement.

An hon. Member: They are a bunch of cowboys.

Mr. Mazankowski: Yes, there are a few cowboys. They are fairly knowledgeable people too. I am surprised that that comment would emanate from a member of the New Democratic Party. I do not think there is anything wrong with being a cowboy.

Mrs. Mitchell: Cowpersons.

Mr. Mazankowski: They provide Canadians with a worthy service and excellent beef which we all enjoy from time to time. Many of these individuals who have found a haven in the western separatist movement have never been involved in politics before or associated with political movements. I say that these people who are involved are not radical sensationalists looking for a short burst of attention. The majority of them