

Alleged Lack of Government Leadership

Mr. Diefenbaker:—a resolution arising out of the recommendations of the O'Leary royal commission on publications, the amendment of the Unemployment Insurance Act following the report of the Gill committee.

Mr. Pickersgill: That has not appeared.

Mr. Starr: Well, get the others through and these will appear too.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): When were the reports made?

Mr. Pearson: They are not on the order paper.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I sometimes wonder how that man is able to stand up with the guilty conscience he has. I am referring to the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate (Mr. Pickersgill).

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pickersgill: The Prime Minister has suggested that I have a guilty conscience. I would certainly have a guilty conscience—

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Pickersgill: Of course if hon. gentlemen opposite do not want to listen to me—I would certainly have a guilty conscience if after 17 government bills had been passed with opposition assistance in the first 60 days of this session, compared with an average of eight when the hon. gentleman had a majority of 200, I was complaining violently of obstruction.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I will not answer that, because it is just time wasted as well. All through the piece the hon. gentleman is not guilty. He is not doing any time wasting and I am going to accept his denial. We feel he is. He does not.

What about this question: when are we going to get this legislative program before the house? It all depends. The hon. gentleman says they do not hold it up. That leads me to deal with the course which has been followed by the official opposition. They say "Why don't you get these things before the house?" Hon. members heard the speech made yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition. It was part and parcel of that unrelenting search for power. I cannot explain the attitude. Last June, last May, by their guerrilla tactics they endangered the confidence of people in Canada. They continued to do that throughout the campaign. They sabotaged public confidence. They sniped at national achievement. Why have they been pushing for an election since the opening day last fall? They have been pushing for it because

they know that every day we are in office, with the rising impetus of our economy, the falsity of their arguments in the election is being proven.

I look down this chamber to my friends in the Social Credit party. I am dealing with them now; in a moment I shall be speaking about the N.D.P. I wonder what they must think of a leader who voted for an amendment proposed by the Social Credit party in accordance with their beliefs, an amendment proposing debt free money. When they were asked whether they believed in debt free money they said "No, no, we do not believe in it." As far as the New Democratic party are concerned the Liberals say "We are ready to merge with them, or at least to take them in". There is only one down there they do not want, according to the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Gordon), and that is the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis). He is a marxist, according to the hon. member for Davenport. The rest of them are all right.

Mr. Gordon: I would ask the Prime Minister to prove I ever said that. If he means by it the implication which sometimes goes with it, he is not telling the truth and it is high time he did.

Mr. Lewis: I think, Mr. Speaker, I have the only legitimate question of privilege, and I want to inform the house, in the words of Karl Marx, that I deplore the word "marxist".

Mr. Diefenbaker: The hon. member for Davenport did not deplore it, according to the Canadian Press. He asked me to read the statement. I will give the exact words. This is the report which appeared in the press. I read from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* of January 14:

The New Democratic members of parliament range all the way from those who would easily assimilate Liberal theory...except David Lewis who is an out and out marxist and who would never fit into our party.

Mr. Lewis: On a question of privilege may I say that the last part of the report, namely that I would not fit into the ranks of the Liberal party, is accurate. The first part is utterly false.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I thank the hon. gentleman for answering the other hon. gentleman.

I am going back over the arguments they used, the same arguments with which they undermined the confidence in this country. They said that as a result of our action in pegging the dollar, the dollar of the Canadian housewife would be worth 7½ cents less. They said the cost of every item of food, every article of clothing, every household requirement, would be increased. They said the cost of services would be increased. If