

*The Address—Mr. Ralph Stewart*

• (3:50 p.m.)

lost the election, to move a want of confidence motion in a government which began to sit only two days before and which by a large majority had been given a vote of confidence by the Canadian people by means of a general election. A year from now I could understand why it would be the duty of the opposition to look over the record of the government and decide whether or not they wish to vote non-confidence. But two days after the house sits, and before we even get started in our legislative program—? to me it is completely ludicrous.

I wonder whether the members of the opposition really understand the new philosophy which has been brought into Canadian politics by our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), and other people who are forward-thinking, as he is—a philosophy which caught the imagination of the Canadian people; a philosophy which we would like everyone to understand. But I wonder if the members of the opposition really understand it. Do the members of the opposition have a philosophy? I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment and subamendment which were placed before the house show that the opposition still does not understand. They criticize for the sake of criticizing. They said they wanted a more detailed throne speech. Could it be that they wanted more to criticize? Is this the true role of an opposition? I do not think the people of Canada want that kind of opposition. They expect the opposition to oppose and to keep the government on its toes, yes; but I am sure that they do not expect the opposition to criticize just for the sake of being in opposition. They spoke about poverty; they spoke about poverty as if it just suddenly came about and we had never experienced it in the past in this country. What do they expect the Prime Minister to do? Is he supposed to wave his wand and all of a sudden, 'poof', no more poverty?

This government has taken the most forward-looking step of any government in recent years by attacking the problem of poverty sensibly and logically, with the establishment of a new department of regional development. This is the way responsible government should be. But when we listen to an irresponsible tirade on the part of the opposition concerning a program which has not even been given a chance to start, then it seems to me that the opposition obviously is not interested in good government, that they are interested only in opposing and in criticizing.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) has obviously changed his tactics. He did not used to be like that. This is perhaps one time that he should have used his old tactics. This is one of the times that he should have said what he has so often said before, "Well, we'll see; we'll see." I think I understand why he has adopted this method. He is so afraid of being upstaged by his predecessor, the right hon. gentleman, that he feels he should beat him to the draw.

Speaking of the right hon. gentleman, those of us who have a great filial affection for the former prime minister are very happy with the tribute paid him today, and we are happy that his position in the official protocol list of precedents is so lofty. As a former prime minister he takes precedence not only over the previous prime minister but also over his own leader. This must make him very happy; and we are very happy with him.

Something that made me very sad indeed was to hear the Leader of the Opposition make reference to the fact that Her Majesty was not referred to in the speech from the throne. This to me was an obvious attempt to make a political issue out of the Queen. These are the old tactics that were used by the opposition in the past, concerning the flag. It seems they would like to have the Queen now made into a political football. Do they honestly think that the Queen is their personal property for them to protect? This is an issue that should not even have been mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, if he was sincere about his desire to help bring about good government in this country.

And then there is that group further to the left of Your Honour, whom I suppose we could call the leftists. I think the people of Canada spoke far more eloquently than I can as to their fate. Except for an accident of provincial considerations in Saskatchewan they have been relegated to where they belong. Again in this parliament we see them cloaking themselves in the shroud of self-righteousness and making sanctimonious pronouncements. Canadians are no longer fooled by this. Throughout the whole of the election campaign they were up to their old tricks, talking about the Carter report which most of them have not read, condemning a rise in the price of stamps as something against the poor workingman, when they knew so well it would have been the big firms that would have paid for it.