

*Supply*

I am a bit concerned that this motion is made to be a little cute and is motivated by revenge more than anything else. It does not really express concern for the unfortunate economic situation that most Canadians find themselves in today. It is unfortunate that in the lead-off speech made by the Liberal Party the member did not cite any of those concerns, that he only quoted the polls and referred back to the debate that took place in 1984 when the Tories presented a similar motion to the Liberal government of the day.

I was hoping that if the Liberals were going to be bringing forth a motion of non-confidence in the government, it be one that contained some substance and that the debate would contain some substance and not just a bit of a gimmick to try to bring about a little revenge for a motion that the Tories brought against the Liberals several years ago that was equally devoid of substance.

• (1240)

It seems to me that one of the reasons why Canadians have lost confidence in Parliament and in parliamentarians is that they see these kinds of gimmicks going on in the House of Commons where one party is attempting to get revenge on another party for a slight that it experienced eight to ten years ago.

Canadians do not want to see that kind of thing. They want to see the substance of their concerns discussed on the floor of Parliament and they want to see something done about their concerns. It is unfortunate that in his opening speech the proposer of this motion did not get down to the substance of the things that people in Canada are concerned about.

There is no question that in terms of managing the economy for the benefit of all Canadians, the current government in office has been a massive failure. There were promises made when it came to office in 1984: the promise of jobs, jobs, jobs made by the current Prime Minister; the promise to reduce the national debt and to eliminate the national deficit; the promise through privatization and deregulation to improve transportation, communications and even that old Conservative whipping boy, the post office.

There was the promise of tax fairness and the promise of the government and the Prime Minister to create a government of national reconciliation. When you look at these promises and at the promise made by the Conservatives to protect social programs as a sacred trust of this nation, you have to, as every Canadian has done, measure the Tories against the promises and against their own standard which they established in 1984. Every Canadian has to judge that this government has been a

massive failure even when judged against its own standards of performance.

It is not necessarily a failure of unprecedented proportions. I would like to draw attention to some of the comparisons that should be made between the Tories and the Liberals. When you measure the performance of the Tories in office against the performance of the Liberals in office, you find that in terms of failure they come to an absolute dead heat.

We like to talk about the Liberals as a party that talks like New Democrats in opposition and acts like Tories in office. It is reminiscent of Tommy Douglas' old stories about the white cats and the black cats in mouseland. It does not matter which colour of cat is in office at any particular time, it is still bad for the mice and basically that is the situation we are facing.

If the point of this resolution is to call an election so that we can switch the black cats with the white cats, what is the point in any case? It is going to be just as bad for Canadians in the short term and just as bad for Canadians in the long run. What we need is a new way of approaching government in this country and a new kind of leadership. We need a new style of leadership in this country and that style of leadership does not seem to be coming from either the Tory government on that side or from the Liberal government on that side.

That leaves a pretty good option, the leadership potential of the member for Yukon, the leader of the New Democratic Party. If an election were going to bring about that eventuality, Canadians would be very hopeful about the outcome of an election. You would see some changes in this country that would really serve the interests of the people of Canada, rather than dealing with the motivation of revenge between the two parties that have currently switched back and forth between office over the last several decades, the last century of the history of this country.

If that were the outcome of the election, Canadians would have some hope for the future.

When I hear the Minister of Finance speaking in this House and answering every single question from this side with the statement that everything is going along okay and using the term "the fundamentals are in order", it is pretty clear to me that either the minister is out of touch with the fundamentals or his definition of what the fundamentals are varies to a great degree as to what the fundamentals are for those many Canadians out there. He is also fond of quoting, as the member for Calgary Southwest did in her presentation to the House,