

The Address—Mr. Stanfield

● (12:20 p.m.)

The government has exhibited the same cold detachment when groups or regions in special need have sought help from it. Pensioners have received neither help nor encouragement; farmers trapped by an emergency have been treated to rather special lectures delivered on a tour, and persons seeking housing have been told that there is no crisis, while the 20 per cent of our population who live below the poverty line have still apparently made no impression upon this comfortable cabinet of Canada.

A correspondent of the *Montreal Star*, Mr. W. A. Wilson, wrote the following on September 27:

No member of Mr. Trudeau's cabinet could legitimately make a speech today outlining the social philosophy of the government for the simple reason that it has none. As time has gone by, this has become starkly clear and, with all that is good about the present administration, it is a shortcoming that we are likely to find overwhelming long before the next three years are over...

The government has made a great show of consultation. They have heard many people. It would be interesting to find someone to whom they have actually listened.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanfield: It would be interesting to find someone in the government caucus to whom the government has listened, not to mention the majority of the members of the cabinet.

There are a goodly number of young men on the government benches—I am referring particularly to those elected for the first time during the last session—who came to this house with a sense of commitment, wishing to be involved with the real problems of the people and wishing to get things moving. I wonder how those men feel today. The apologists of the government, and there are not as many as there were, argue that this is all part of a plan, a master strategy which devotes the first three years to planning and restraint and then bursts forth with a bright new image in 1972.

Mr. Baldwin: Like Napoleon retreating from Moscow.

Mr. Stanfield: Instead of a new image we need new action from the government, and this would certainly be something new. According to the apologists, it is all a matter of timing worked out by those omnipotent computers, just like the timing of the white [Mr. Stanfield.]

paper on taxation which has been mistimed so often.

If the government is deliberately doing very little now so that it can come on strong in an election year, it is not worthy of office. The mandate of the government is for four years, not to sit tight and discuss things for three.

We needed a throne speech that would provide an agenda for action, and I hope the Prime Minister will give us his agenda for action this afternoon, in case we are misinterpreting the throne speech in some way. I hope he will give us a statement of priorities, a strong expression of the concerns of the federal government. Instead, it seems to be clear that the government intends to lead the house in discussion in the forthcoming year, according to the following statement:

...a systematic appraisal of Canadian society and of the basic principles that are to guide it.

How very elevating, but what a sour taste it must leave in the mouths of the poor, the underprivileged, the aged and the unemployed who have been waiting for the just society for 18 months and through two speeches from the throne. How sour a taste it must leave to be reassured now that the government is properly engaged in making sure that their telephones are not tapped. How disillusioning it must be to those, especially the young, who have been waiting for positive leadership and waiting for the government to develop the country physically and to develop our human resources.

There is not a word about over-all national development of our young and growing country. Of course, there is one statement in the Speech from the Throne, at page 10, to the effect that our resources are immense but they are not inexhaustible. The same might be said much more appropriately about the patience of the Canadian people. There is not a word expressing concern for the opportunity of Canadians to achieve an adequate education or attempt to ensure that financial resources are available to them. There is not a word regarding training opportunities for individual development. Instead, the following statement appears in the Speech from the Throne:

The government regard national progress and individual fulfillment as indivisible components of its mandate.

That statement should certainly blow the minds of the electors at the shopping centres in the next election.