

**An hon. Member:** Without even a bedroom.

**Mr. Stanfield:**—perhaps one of a family not receiving the necessities of life, food and clothing, deprived of the opportunity for education or recreation and with no chance of enjoying scores of amenities which people receiving middle or higher incomes take for granted.

Throughout the speech there is evidence of a lack of a sense of proportion, a preoccupation with legalistic matters, an utterly casual approach insensitive toward economic injustice and the blight of poverty in our land.

This Speech from the Throne ought to have contained, besides a reference to the backlog of business, a statement of the government's concrete intentions concerning the urgent problems facing Canadians. For example, a real, not a phony war on poverty; an indication of what the government proposes to do about unemployment, the replacement of the winter works program; the problems of students; the intentions with regard to a prices review board to combat inflation, housing, tax reform, western and other agriculture and many other items, including electoral reform.

In the third place, the Speech from the Throne should have gone on to outline the direction the government intends to take and to indicate the priorities which it proposes to establish over the life of this parliament. We are told:

It is proposed during the current session to elucidate priorities and to set in motion new policies.

What are these new policies, these new priorities, and where are they?

The speech goes on, tediously, laboriously and pedantically, lecturing us on every manner of subject under the sun. There is a repetition of the slogan "the just society". It is already becoming almost a parody of itself. Its currency is being devalued. The speech itself is an elaborate excuse for lack of action on the part of the government. Repetition of the slogan "just society" indicates that the just society is like charity in at least one respect; it covers a multitude of sins.

We have had our suspicions about this government for a few months. Now we find our worst suspicions confirmed. During the election campaign we all read advertisements saying, "Come, work with me." Since the election we have seen the establishment of regional desks and the installation of computers. There has been talk about brain banks

*The Address—Mr. Stanfield*

and talent tanks, talk about involving people in exciting adventures. A whole sophisticated apparatus has been installed. But it is still the pork barrel where the action is at.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Stanfield:** So far as involving people is concerned, Mr. Speaker, many are called but few have been chosen. Even the most ardent supporters of the government must have been disappointed. The promises which were so high are already dampened, and the hope for a reasonable stride forward toward the just society died last Thursday in the first Speech from the Throne.

• (3:50 p.m.)

In five months in office this government has developed some very bad habits. It is perhaps too early to call this government reactionary, but it is certainly very casual. It is certainly insensitive. It has certainly become the most private government, the most secretive government in the democratic world. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, they really have in mind establishing not a just society but a secret society.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Stanfield:** In any case it is not just their obsession with secrecy that should raise our suspicions and our defences over the next few years. After all, they have a pretty good reason to be as secretive as possible. They have had no plans and they did not want anybody to find this out.

It is not only their secrecy that is involved. It is their strong tendency to be passive, to be careless and casual about problems that are serious and sometimes urgent—the tendency to let things simmer, to let nature take its course, to let things and people "stew in their own juice". And they play this waiting game with national problems, apparently indifferent, perhaps ignorant of the hurt and the hardship being inflicted on thousands of Canadians. It is an indifference, a carelessness that has already led to serious trouble. If this attitude is persisted in, Mr. Speaker, it will have this country in a turmoil before the government ends its term of office.

Look at the government's handling of labour-management disputes. Look at its handling of the postal strike. I suppose the government is congratulating itself that a settlement was reached within the guide lines it had established, and I suppose a few of the government's apologists are congratulating them on their success in sitting it out. What success, Mr. Speaker?