

Alleged Lack of Government Leadership

is it in its present form? What are we supposed to do? They say, why don't you organize? How can you organize to secure the consideration of something that the opposition is doing everything in its power to prevent being enacted? They have followed that course.

I want to see an examination of legislation. I want to see all the bills looked into carefully. I do not want to take from parliament the right to discuss any particular matter, but when you get the same repetitious nonsense during the discussion of all the bills that have been introduced you can only conclude that what is being done is being done for a purpose. They are going to vote non-confidence to prevent us bringing in this legislation, they say, to prevent our bringing into effect something that has been requested over and over again, a feed policy for the eastern farmers; that is on the order paper today.

The following resolution will appear on the order paper, to introduce a measure to provide for the adequate supply of feed grain for livestock in eastern Canada, for the establishment of an eastern livestock feed board; to provide for the making of assistance payments by the board in respect of the transportation, carrying and storage of feed grains. My hon. friends over in the Social Credit group have been asking for something like this. It is being placed on the order paper now, following a full examination that has taken place. Now you are asked to vote it down; to say you do not want it. Well, that is what the Liberals want to achieve.

What about the western farmer? What about the two-price system and the distribution we have made over the years? Are you going to turn that down? This is what it amounts to if you vote non-confidence. You say to the western farmer and the western people that such a system should not be adopted.

We have other matters of legislation in the field of trade and commerce, and so on, to accelerate the economy. I do not come before you to ask for your support. I simply say this. If you vote against us in the house you are actually playing into the hands of the official opposition. What about the other two parties? What about Social Credit? Well, no part of our policy is determined elsewhere than by ourselves. Yesterday, you were cajoled and pampered by the Leader of the Opposition. I never saw anybody smile with such a benign look in your direction. He loves thee, but he loved you not until yesterday.

An hon. Member: We know that.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, do you remember the stories they told of the Social Credit member immediately after the election? I am not going to put them on the record, but they had you as people who were going to government house in order to get your car and chauffeur and some of you supposedly went to Quebec city in order to find your office in the legislative building. When I heard that stuff I said that was the same old song as they sang in 1922 regarding the Progressives. They told the same stories, then, but at that time they did not have a chauffeur included. That was the attitude of the Liberal party and that has been their attitude throughout.

Do you remember the night of November 9 in this house when you were held up to contempt? Now they say, join with us. What for? For your benefit? I say to my friends of the N.D.P., greater love hath no man than the Leader of the Opposition for you today. When you line up to prevent this legislative program, you deny the budget for which you have been asking. I say to each and every one of you—I cannot speak to the unregenerate opposite because there is no hope of salvation for them—remember this group. I see them here often. This is the same bunch who trampled on the rights of parliament day after day, who destroy any vestige of argument and refuse us even the opportunity to speak. Have they reformed? Well, Mr. Speaker, we saw the nature of their reform a few days before Christmas when, by organized disorder, they prevented me from speaking in this house.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, the old question comes back, can the leopard change its spots? These are the facts. I place them before you as fairly as I can under the circumstances. They talk in the amendment about lack of leadership. I ask the Leader of the Opposition, is it leadership that he is showing in preventing parliament from dealing with these matters?

“Confusion”—who used that word?

First he said “I don't believe in nuclear weapons.” Then he went to New York and came back and said, yes. Then he went to his constituency and said “I did not say ‘yes, I was in favour of nuclear weapons’. I would only have them until I am able to get an agreement not to have them.”

Mr. Speaker, I ask this house for a vote of confidence, for the opportunity to do the things we want to do and have been denied the opportunity of doing. I have no appeals to make but I feel that the people of Canada want us to complete our legislative program, get our estimates through, and then all of us