

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 62—GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Lewis:

That this House condemns the Government for its failure to live up to the commitments made in the Speech from the Throne on April 14, 1980, and for its conscious disregard for the practices of Parliament and the Constitution of Canada, and urges the Government to prorogue the current, unconstitutional Session of Parliament, convene a new Session, and outline its policies before Parliament in a Speech from the Throne.

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I was very interested as I listened to the words of the Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's (Mr. Simmons). I listened with real feeling because of the reaction they evoked. He used such words as "we, the Government, will deal with people with compassion"—

**Mr. Simmons:** True.

**Miss MacDonald:**—and "we will look after those in need." Then at one point he said "the Government is not slow at handling patronage." He seems somehow to have combined those two thoughts, that is looking after people in need and the Government's decisiveness with regard to patronage. What we come up with is a list on the compassionate side of the Government dealing with people like Arthur Erikson; Donald MacDonald; Alastair Gillespie; Joel Bell; Maurice Strong; Don Jamieson; Michael Pitfield; Jim Coutts; Martin O'Connell; Peter Stollery; Jack Austin; Judd Buchanan; the list could go on and on and on.

**Mr. McGrath:** And the saints come marching in.

**Miss MacDonald:** That is the way in which this Member and the Liberal Government deal with compassion for those in need.

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Line up at the trough, boys.

**Miss MacDonald:** I must say that is a shameful performance when one looks at the real need in this country, when one considers the hundreds of thousands, the millions of people out there who are desperately in need.

What does an Hon. Member on the Government side do? He justifies the fact that the Government never has to produce a Throne Speech in this House of Commons. It has been three years since the Government produced a Speech from the Throne, three years since it brought forward what had traditionally been an annual document in the parliamentary process. There was a time when even a Liberal Government would have felt it necessary to outline to the House and to the nation the nature of its legislative proposals for the current year. The Hon. Member for Willowdale (Mr. Peterson) does not seem to think that is necessary. I have to tell him that has been traditional in parliamentary democracies. Other parliamentary democracies and jurisdictions follow that procedure.

### Supply

They still think that is the normal thing to do. Governments in such countries feel it is incumbent upon them to inform the people of their intentions. They feel it is right and proper. It is part of the process, for the edification of the Hon. Members opposite, of being accountable. Accountable is a word that has been removed from the lexicon of this Government.

I stress, Sir, that the practice of yearly presentations of governmental intentions is normal procedure for a responsible Government. But this Government in whatever it does is neither normal nor responsible. Abnormality and irresponsibility are the hallmarks that most characterize those who sit on the Government benches today. Along with that abnormality and irresponsibility there goes a degree of arrogance that is absolutely unmatched in its scope.

Can't you just hear these denizens of power, Sir, scornfully saying to the masses, "What do you mean, give you a Throne Speech every year? We gave you one three years ago. Be satisfied with that." The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his cronies can carelessly dismiss the Canadian public, parliamentary tradition and governmental responsibility in a single breath or with a single gesture.

As in the long Parliament of Oliver Cromwell, this Prime Minister feels that a Throne Speech once a decade is sufficient. But having produced only one such document in three years, surely the least we can expect from this Government is that it make every effort to carry it out, to live up to the expectations it created.

That Throne Speech of April, 1980, makes for interesting reading. But I am not urging all Canadians to rush off and get a copy for tonight's bedtime reading, not unless they want to cry themselves to sleep. But when you read it, Mr. Speaker, you have to wonder at the ponderous and resonant phrases that echo through it. With what rapture and excitement it predicted Canada's entry into the decade of the 1980s. The Throne Speech of April, 1980, outlined a program of action designed to provide for greater security for the elderly and expanded opportunity for youth; equality for women and a national development policy that would provide jobs and stimulate growth. Then going on to extoll the Parliament's virtue the Throne Speech contained this sentence:

All these commitments will be kept, these pledges redeemed, the mandate fulfilled.

Nothing could be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker.

● (1610)

Canadians have been deceived and misled by the Government and its spurious pledges. Here is the reality of that so-called program for action. The first part of it was greater security for the elderly. Today in Canada there are 650,000 elderly Canadians, people over the age of 65, who are living below the poverty line. That number will drastically increase, as we have a rapidly aging population. Those people are the forgotten generation by the Government.