

Mr. Stanfield: We are not going to retreat from that commitment, from that responsibility, from that obligation. Anybody who wants to run for cover can run. We are going to stand and fight for the principle that when a government fails a nation, the result of that failure will not be that the government survives while the weak and the helpless pay the penalties for that failure. We want to know where the government stands on pensions, and we want that matter dealt with immediately.

There is no element of surprise in the situation that prevails here today. The government may not have the trust and the confidence of the country, but apparently it has the trust and the confidence of the New Democratic Party. A marriage of convenience has been arranged between the two parties, a union achieved by cynicism on the one hand and by sheer fright on the other.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: The rest of us have to watch this mating ritual which moves about in strange and complementary ways, each ensuring the preservation of the other, each dependent upon the other, and each counting upon the other in order to survive.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Stanfield: Sir, who would have thought that our hon. friend, the member for York South, after all his ardent declamations upon and against the party of the corporate welfare bums, would have volunteered to become one?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: Who would have thought that having declaimed upon four and a half wasted years, the hon. member would now be advocating still more of them?

Sir, I think I have to commend you on the way in which the various parties have been placed in this chamber. I think it appropriate that the government's true majority, the Prime Minister's personal bull pen, has been tucked away in the corner to the left underneath the public gallery. This party of Woodsworth and M. J. Coldwell, this party of intellectuals and ideology, of firm principles and lofty idealism, can now blush unseen—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: —and at least, so far as the matter now before the House is concerned, can remain unheard. This seems to be their disposition. Apparently they have no amendments to offer. They have no vote to cast in these present proceedings. They have assumed a new responsibility and a new role in this parliament, namely, to guarantee the continued existence of a truncated, repudiated government.

All of us recall the past orations of members of that party to my left, who described the Conservative and Liberal parties as old line parties, who described them as Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum. Sir, that was before the courtship and the marriage. Now, we have got the same old Tweedle Dee, but a brand new Tweedle Dum!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Address—Mr. Stanfield

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Who wrote that, Bob?

Mr. Stanfield: The hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) will get a credit if he would like to have me give him one.

Mr. Muir: That's about all he will ever get.

Mr. Stanfield: This party, the NDP, no longer profess to lead public opinion. Indeed, Sir, I understand they have taken polls and they are going to follow those polls. This is the situation of a party that once prided itself on having its own position, of accepting whatever the consequences were of that position. A party that once professed itself to be a party of principle, now has become the party of polls, procrastination and pontification.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Our venerable friend, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), a little over a week ago was asked if the government had done anything since October 30 to merit his confidence and support. I would like to quote his reply. What the hon. member says is usually worth quoting. He said:

I don't think so. I don't think any of the announcements have done anything more than give the impression of a government that is anxious to stay there. In terms of actual substance we have had nothing from the government that meets our views on taxation policy, nothing that meets our views on social security, nothing that meets our views on foreign ownership . . . so we don't see any great difference in the stance of the government today from what it was just before the election.

I agree with that statement. I am only sorry that the hon. member for York South no longer agrees with it. The fact is that there is nothing of substance in the throne speech that meets his views or mine on taxation policy. There is nothing tangible in the throne speech with respect to social security. And if there is anything in it that meets the hon. member's views on foreign ownership, I can only express my surprise at his newly limited objectives in that field.

The hon. member for York South cannot possibly be satisfied with the indications in the throne speech of government intentions with respect to taxation policy. He cannot possibly be satisfied with the Prime Minister's answer the other day which clearly indicated the government cannot even make up its mind whether or not to proceed with its earlier declared intentions to let the increase in income tax go into effect and stay in effect. Indeed, a month after the election, speaking to a business audience in Toronto the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) said that it was his intention to seek the early approval of legislation to implement the tax measures announced in the budget of May 8. Of course, the 3 per cent income tax increase was part of the budget of May, 1972. Indeed, Sir, although the Minister of Finance may show neither compassion nor concern for the taxpayer, consistency has been his virtue. He alone can claim to be consistent among all the gentlemen in the front seats.

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As I have said, we have been concerned with the urgent plight of our citizens living on fixed incomes, especially those who are retired and whose survival depends upon