

Mr. Thompson: If I may, I will just finish this sentence.

An hon. Member: Carry on.

Mr. Thompson: The very fact that thousands of people elected us, sent each one of us here, indicates to me that we are leaders. Therefore we must go out and prove to Canada that we are leaders worthy of the confidence they have placed in us, that we might carry out our part in the ever increasing and important role of public administration as it relates to the over-all picture. We have therefore come to this decision which I have now made clear, namely that our only alternative is to go back to the people for an expression of their will.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I felt that the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) said some things with which I cannot help but agree. He said that Canada is a great nation and that we are one of the greatest peoples on earth. Since that, I assume, includes me, I feel flattered by his words and agree with him. It is the kind of peroration which is bound to get unanimous agreement. I might also say, Mr. Speaker, before becoming more serious, that the hon. member does not cease to astound me. When he read almost the whole of the editorial on the front page of the *Globe and Mail* before dinner it was obvious that he was going to be against an election taking place now. He then went to dinner and whether he ate something that agreed with him or ate something that disagreed with him—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Lewis:—I am not sure which, Mr. Speaker—he changed his mind, as he has a right to do. I merely mention it as a matter of amusement on this day of debate, which may be one of the last days of debate in this parliament.

An hon. Member: Be serious.

Mr. Lewis: I will be serious in a moment—not only serious, may I inform my hon. friend, but relevant to the issues that face Canada and the world, instead of the nonsense that we hear from across the way.

On a number of occasions we of the New Democratic party have indicated to the house and to the people that we have no confidence in the government. I do not think there is anyone here or elsewhere in any doubt about that. But I ask you, sir, to look at the omnibus amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson) and, indeed, at the omnibus subamendment moved by the leader of the Social Credit party. I suggest to you

Alleged Lack of Government Leadership that this is further evidence that the Liberals are so hungry for power they are not concerned with dealing with any specific matter that this house ought to be considering and on which this house ought to be asked to declare its mind. I will come to that specific matter in particular a little later. It also proves, I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the leader of the Social Credit party is so concerned with portraying an image to this house and to the country that he was not able, either, to place before the house some specific and concrete issue on which our votes should be cast.

An hon. Member: Oh, come off it.

Mr. Lewis: Why not a specific point? Why not have some specific policy? Unfortunately it is not possible for me on behalf of the New Democratic party to move an amendment embodying such a specific policy. Why not some specific policy on which we can declare our stand? As the Leader of the Opposition was speaking I could not help but notice with what glee, as well as a broad smile, he stated that his objective is to get this parliament home and this government out, and with what tremendous joy his followers behind him banged their desks, as if to get rid of this or any other particular government is the be-all and end-all of the exercises in this parliament and of the duties of members of parliament.

I have voted against this government and no doubt I shall have the opportunity to do so again. My party will greet any chance to go to the people and present our policies with the same satisfaction that we have always had in the past.

An hon. Member: Self-satisfaction.

Mr. Lewis: If we have the chance we will put before them what in our conscience we believe Canada and the Canadian people require, and if my hon. friend will wait he will see exactly what we will do with the chance when the time comes.

I suggest it is not enough for the benches opposite the treasury benches to talk in generalities about leadership and to talk in generalities about the indecision of the government. The party that is now the official opposition to the government was in power for 22 years and particularly from 1948 and 1949 to 1957, when the Leader of the Opposition was one of the most prominent members of the government then in power, we had the most do-nothing government in the history of Canada. This was the government which when faced with the needs of the elderly people of Canada, when faced with the duty to do something for those who had offered their lives for this country, felt itself satisfied,