

We know that these pronouncements were all hot air. The Government has almost doubled the national debt since it came to power. We do not argue that the deficit is a major problem. Where we take issue with the Government is on how best to address the problem.

The big business friends of the Government want cuts to social programs. We will see the extent to which they get their way when the Minister of Finance brings down his Budget. If big business gets its way, and so far all indications are that it will, then we know who will be paying down the deficit. It will be the same people, small businesses, seniors, and average Canadians whom we in the NDP represent. They are the same people who will be adversely affected by the Government's regressive sales tax. They are the same people who are struggling now under the high interest rate policy of the Government.

I listened with interest to the Minister of State for Housing (Mr. Redway) and his analysis of how that new Ministry will affect the housing situation in Canada. If the Government was really sincere about doing something about the housing problem in Canada, it would address the interest rate problem. The sincerity is lacking in the Speech from the Throne.

The Government, which seems so keen on adopting all the bad policies from south of the border, should try to adopt a good idea like the minimum corporate tax. In Reagan's America, a minimum corporate tax was adopted. I call on the Government to have the courage to do the same in Canada so that it is not the same middle class, seniors, and small business people who carry an unfair burden in the tax system.

High interest rates are also contributing to the deficit. All 10 provincial Premiers came to Ottawa a few weeks ago to urge an easing of the high interest rates. Why does the Government not wake up and look beyond southern Ontario?

Unemployment is still unacceptably high in the Atlantic and in the West. On Vancouver Island, where I come from, the official unemployment rate is over 11 per cent. People in my riding welcome growth in Ontario, but they do not accept being treated unfairly by the federal Government because housing prices in Toronto are fuelling inflation there. They are also fuelling inflation in my riding, where people from Toronto are coming to retire early. At least they will have the joy of having an

elected representative who will speak out on their behalf.

I noted with some optimism that the Speech from the Throne made mention of the Government's commitment to continue its support in the progress toward arms control. However, the rhetoric was washed away with the reality. The Government will continue to test first strike Cruise missiles on Canadian soil. It will steadfastly champion a defence strategy right out of the Pentagon Archives, *circa 1950*, complete with a fleet of nuclear submarines. What is more, later this year in Ottawa the Government will sponsor "ARMX '89", an armament swap and shop. So much for a commitment to arms control. There are a number of contradictions in the Speech from the Throne, but that is one of the more blatant ones.

The Government also talks of a reaffirmation of Canada's role in the international community. Last year, Canada gained a seat on the United Nations Security Council. This was achieved in large measure as a result of support from the less developed nations. Our reputation on the international stage has been built gradually by successive Governments over the past half century, Liberal Governments and Conservative Governments urged on, of course, by New Democratic Members of Parliament.

• (1430)

As with all things of value, the Conservatives of 1989 claimed sole credit. We have seen in this Government a withering away of the independence of our foreign policy. With respect to the free trade deal—it is all intermixed—we cannot see the economics separate from our international foreign policy. "Me too-ism" has struck down our former capacity to act boldly and with purpose internationally.

I have travelled internationally. It is not until you step outside Canada that you realize the extent of Canada's reputation in this area. It is far greater than the kind of money we are able to give, but it is based on that independence of foreign policy.

Over the past few months Canadians have witnessed foreign policy statements made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) one day and completely contradicted by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) the next. The Throne Speech does little to assuage the perception that foreign policy is adrift. Rhetoric and action fail to converge. Whether it be with respect to