

The Address—Mr. S. Robinson

dissertation on what he thinks is necessary in terms of economic policy. I would like to thank the Hon. Member most sincerely for his advice to the Official Opposition. I appreciate the constructive approach that the Member takes. His Leader indicated the position of the NDP as a Party at the beginning of this sitting. I am glad the Hon. Member is separating himself from his colleagues in the Party, as he often does.

His Leader, the Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), said that the preoccupation of the New Democratic Party would be to attack the Conservatives at every possible opportunity. I accept by inference that that means they would support the Liberal Government in order to attack the Conservatives. I would like to deal specifically with some of the points that have been raised by the Member in terms of the economic policy of the NDP.

Over the course of the Christmas break the NDP underwent a "Laxertive". They received advice from their senior policy adviser, Mr. James Laxer, who has typified the Party as being basically still in the 1950s as far as philosophy and policies are concerned. The seatmate of the Member for Burnaby, the Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Miss Jewett), has dismissed Mr. Laxer as irrelevant and not appropriate. She has snapped her fingers at him and said he did not know what he was talking about.

I am taking a poll of all my friends in the NDP and I am interested in where the Member for Burnaby stands. Does he support the criticism of the NDP economic and social policies as enunciated by their senior policy adviser, Mr. James Laxer, who ran for the leadership of the Party? I know what the Member thinks about the Conservative Party because he is critical of our Party. I would like to know what he thinks about his own Party. Could he in a very few words tell us whether he supports Mr. Laxer's observations or whether he shares the position taken by the Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam that Mr. Laxer knows not of which he speaks?

Ms. Jewett: Try and make something out of that.

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn) has given me an opportunity to reiterate once again my concerns about the total absence of policy of the Official Opposition and to put on the record the stand which was taken by the Finance critic for that Party.

He refers approvingly to his Party's stand on specific issues as "a blurred shadow" or "a moving target". He goes on to say that in principle he favours universal access to such programs as family allowance. He favours taking us back to the old days of the means test. I would be most interested to hear the comments of the Member for Saskatoon West on that particular suggestion. I know that the Member for Saskatoon West is a strong supporter of the economic policies of the Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie). The Hon. Member for St. John's West goes on to say that in most cases he approves of Mr. Lalonde's actions and he rarely attacks the Minister in the House of Commons. That is a most interesting admission, Mr. Speaker. The Finance critic for the Conserva-

tive Party is so taken with and so enamoured of the policies of the Finance Minister that he does not even feel motivated to get up and attack those policies.

When the Member for Saskatoon West raises questions about economic policy, I suggest that what he and his Party have an obligation to do is to put on the record the fact that they have no policy. Or indeed, if they do have a policy, as the Member for St. John's West indicates, it is a policy which basically supports the Government in power.

I am also pleased that the Member for Saskatoon West, in raising this issue, gives me an opportunity to point to the fact that both his Party and the Government are supported very heavily by the banking sector in this country. For example, last year the Bank of Montreal gave \$30,000 to the Conservative Party and \$30,221 to the Liberal Party.

● (1250)

Mr. de Jong: How much did they give the NDP?

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): My friend asks how much they gave the NDP. Of course, they did not give a penny to the NDP. The banks recognized the interests that they must protect and of course they donate to both the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. I do not know if the member for Saskatoon West received that kind of money, but certainly he can talk to his friends in the banking community in Saskatoon and I am sure they would be pleased to co-operate with him.

Once again I want to reiterate the point that the Conservative Party over the last three years voted together with the Government on 103 occasions, which is almost twice as often as the NDP, and they are the Party which is effectively keeping this Government in office, a Government which long ago lost its mandate to continue.

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise today on behalf of the constituents of Athabasca to take part in the Throne Speech debate. First I would like to congratulate you on your elevation to the chair. I know it might be difficult at times but I also know by reputation that we can look for impartiality from you. In turn we will give you our fullest co-operation.

I also want to congratulate the new Speaker of the House of Commons. It has been my pleasure to have known him during my time here. As a new Member coming to the House of Commons I was always very pleased with the kindness and consideration that he has shown me in the past.

The latest Throne Speech certainly did not deliver what we needed. It particularly upsets me to see a Throne Speech delivered so late in the term of office of the present Government. Since 1980 the Government has been working on one Throne Speech, creating the longest session in the history of Parliament. In the latest Throne Speech we needed a speech which meant what it said and not simply a statement which repeats words that will blanket the population and attempt to include everyone without being specific.