

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1730)

Mr. Trudeau: Those were the days when the NDP was arguing, in the early and middle-sixties, that minority governments were the best government for Canada, that minority parliaments could work and that minority parties had a role to play. Let me just read something, Mr. Speaker, that indicates that in fact, in the view of one impartial observer, this parliament has accomplished something. I am not going to read from the prorogation debate and other material that I have to give the record of this government; I am going to read something which was published in the *Globe and Mail* on April 23, 1974.

An hon. Member: The *Globe and Mail*?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, the *Globe and Mail*, which is not always this government's greatest friend, which is why I read from it. This is what this impartial observer had to say about this parliament:

It may be useful to remind Canadians of what the first session of this parliament was able to accomplish—

Then it goes on to enumerate.

—a substantial increase in basic old age security pensions and the assurance of automatic future increases every three months in line with the rising cost of living; the expansion of benefits under the Canada Pension Plan; major improvements in veterans allowances and pensions, including the recent extension of the Veterans Land Act; substantial increases in family allowance payments; a 5 per cent cut in personal income taxes with a minimum reduction of \$100 and a maximum reduction of \$500 to ensure that low and middle-income Canadians received most of the benefits; subsidies to offset increases in the cost of milk and bread; changes in the National Housing Act to provide funds for land banking and home purchase assistance for low-income families; a Foreign Investment Review Act that could help stop the takeover of our industry and keep Canadian jobs in Canada—an export tax on oil to ensure better returns for Canadians and to make possible substantial subsidies for eastern consumers while a pipeline is built to Montreal; and finally, the Election Expenses Act, which marked an important beginning in controlling election spending by parties and candidates, in forcing disclosure of political contributions and in checking the influence of powerful vested interests.

The author of this article, Mr. Speaker, is none other than the hon. member for York South.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Just a fortnight ago the leader of the NDP was making great speeches and giving great enumerations indicating the achievements of this minority government. Let me quote the following paragraph:

Taken together as a package of legislative achievements, I have no hesitation in saying that they are greater accomplishments achieved in 18 months than any obtained by recent majority governments over four years.

If they want an election on that, then we will have an election on that, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: The NDP leader probably had limited time and space, because there are many other items he could have listed, many of them of interest to him and his party. For example, the policy of this government to produce self-reliance in oil before the end of the decade; the agreement reached with all ten provinces in order to

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ensure the best possible protection for Canadians in areas of pricing and supply; the total reorganization of social security programs that was put forward last session by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde); improving housing for native people; elimination of capital gains taxes on family farms passing from generation to generation; increased feed freight assistance in eastern Canada and British Columbia; the five year period of restriction on capital punishment; the privacy and wiretap legislation; the green paper on conflicts of interest for which that party in particular had been asking for so long and about which they are completely silent as to what parliament should be doing now we have put the policy before them.

I could add the items that have been brought in in this short session of parliament thus far, Mr. Speaker: the act to amend the Fisheries Development Act; an act, to which royal assent will be given in a few minutes, to amend the Export and Import Permits Act, legislation that is so important in controlling the price of food in this country and in keeping away the effects of inflation; the act to amend the National Parks Act; the act to amend the Farm Improvement Loans Act, the Small Businesses Loans Act and the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act; and the Railway Relocation and Crossing Act.

There is something that has to be explained here. Mr. Speaker. According to the NDP today, and perhaps for the past few days, this is the session that has been paralysed, that has not been doing anything. We have sat only 48 days this session. Sixteen of those days were controlled by the opposition and 32 were government days. These are the bills that have been brought forward. I shall be referring later to the bills that are still on the order paper and which will disappear if this House provokes a general election.

Why the change, Mr. Speaker? What has happened? This parliament, which 15 days ago was so productive, has suddenly become paralysed. In spite of the items on the order paper and the legislation promised in the Speech from the Throne, legislation that would be introduced very soon, suddenly we discover that the NDP is withdrawing its support. The NDP has discovered that this is a paralysed government. The NDP leader is now the fastest gun on TV: he is claiming a shoot-out with every channel that wishes to focus its cameras upon him. From a former self-righteous teacher of a religion to be called "making parliament work," suddenly—overnight—what has happened? For 18 months the NDP has prospered by loudly demanding things that the Liberal government was doing anyway.

● (1740)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: The NDP was loudly proclaiming that these things were happening, thanks to the NDP, and that the outstanding productions of this parliament were due to the actions of the NDP.

An hon. Member: Right on.

Mr. Trudeau: Now, Mr. Speaker, the leader of that party is popping up on television, tilting toward a forest of