

ent bottles but we still do not know what kind of draft the Leader of the Opposition is preparing for the people of Canada. We ask, what is their position on economic policy? What is their position on industrial strategy? What is their position on constitutional reform? What is their position on the role of Quebec in Canada? What is the official opposition's position on the guaranteed income, which has been endorsed and disowned so often that it is difficult to know how that party could guarantee anything?

What is the official opposition's position on foreign involvement in the economy? Today the Leader of the Opposition gave the foreign takeover bill hell in the House. A few days ago he said he would vote for that bill, but today it was worthless, insignificant and a charade. Where do they stand on social justice? Where do they stand on questions of social life, the quality of life in Canada?

There is hardly an aspect of public interest and public policy that this government in the past four years has not legislated upon or on which it has not declared to the public where it stands. There are undoubtedly some remaining issues but no government in the history of this country has done a better job, perhaps too good a job, of telling the people of Canada where it stands on controversial matters.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: The Leader of the Opposition—I must give him credit—did bring in a new tax proposal.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen: He came up with a new policy in the budget debate when he brought forward his constant dollar income tax proposal. Probably it was the only time in this House that confusion was put forward as a major national policy.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen: Since then the Leader of the Opposition has dropped that proposal; at least he has not talked about it recently, or today in the House of Commons, because the careless rapture felt by the disclosure of that proposal has now dissipated in the subsequent bleak dawn of practical enlightenment.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: It was a rosy scheme in which the taxpayer would pay his taxes in constant 1971 dollars. If it is a good scheme, why restrict it to tax payments? It should work right across the board. Maybe we could give back tax overpayments in constant dollars, or maybe we could pay the members of this House in constant 1971 dollars. But probably we ought to leave aside that question of the Leader of the Opposition for a moment; we do not know what he stands for.

Members of the official opposition have very little to offer, so far as I can make out, except their working over bones of policies and old programs that come back again and come forward again, that are withdrawn only to be put forward once more. One almost expects them to come

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up with the slogan of Sir John A. Macdonald in his last election campaign: The old flag, the old party, the old leader. But they cannot very well do that either; they are somewhat constrained in that particular situation.

I have listened so often to these speeches on supply days that all I can say is that the performance of that party—here I agree with the leader of the NDP—has been bereft of inspiration. It does not inspire anybody, certainly not in this House. It is devoid of constructive thought. It is really bankrupt of any worth while solution to the problems of Canada. All we get from that party is a long, interminable keening over the state of the nation. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, one can search through the speeches of the Leader of the Opposition, his statements, his pronouncements, his television interviews, his radio interviews for some smidgen of an alternative policy. What would he do, in contrast to this dreadful government? We never hear anything about that. There is no alternative, no proposal. He is like a mourner at the funeral of his own party.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1700)

Mr. MacEachen: When I listened to the leader of the New Democratic Party I took exception to some of the things he said. I thought he was a modern man; I thought he lived in the 1970s. I did not believe that his attitudes, his policies and prejudices were still firmly anchored in the 1930s. We have, in the unrehearsed and obviously unprepared address of the leader of the New Democratic Party, a real demonstration from the heart of what he felt. In my view the *New Statesman* would not even publish it. It was the old hat of the thirties. He tried to tell us that conditions in the area I come from are worse today than they were in 1938. Nobody who lives there and nobody who knows that part of the world would agree with him.

I thought it was rather typical that he should anchor his position so solidly to the thirties and drag out that old stuff about corporations pouring money into the coffers of the Tory party and the Liberal party, and that therefore we are all supine servants of the corporations. Mr. Speaker, there is no more careful defender of the corporations in his constituency than the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent). He is very upset if there is any indication that a corporation in the Maritimes is to be helped by this government, because he recognizes as well as I do that corporations provide jobs and if they close their doors in his riding or in Cape Breton it is a serious matter for a Member of Parliament.

We are not corporation oriented; we are not servants of any corporation in this country. Any party that in one session has been able to put on the legislative program the family income security plan, the guaranteed income supplement program, increases for the veterans, the Local Initiatives Program and the Opportunities for Youth program—programs for which such bodies are hardly enthusiastic—is hardly frail or supine.

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, it must have given the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) a good deal of satisfaction to get a lot of his frustrations off his chest in one fell swoop. He has had to present some of the bad, poorly drafted legislation that we