

In short, Sir, the Speech from the Throne is in my view a high school essay in purple prose, and the more banal the idea, the more purple the prose. In many places it is an apology for past failure rather than a plan for future action. The rest is a histrionic pose waiting for the curtain to rise on the election which is apparently again to depend on froth, image and phrase. I am confident that this will not work in 1972 as it worked in 1968.

In the first session of this Parliament, on September 16, 1968, speaking in the Throne Speech debate at that time I uttered the following words:

The likelihood is, and I hope I shall be proven wrong—and I will apologize to the Prime Minister if I am wrong—that we shall wake up four years from now and find the same 20 per cent poor, almost the same regional disparities, a similar crisis in education, in housing and in urban life generally. No doubt there will be a patch here, a repair there, and an improvement elsewhere because whatever the stripe of the government we always manage to make a little progress. But the major inequalities and most oppressive social neglect will still be largely with us. The just society will still be a political slogan and a seemingly unreachable dream. More, Mr. Speaker, is the pity, because it is so unnecessary.

These were the words I uttered almost four years ago, and I say more is the pity indeed, a pity that unfortunately I do not have to apologize to the Prime Minister because my forecast proved to be not only right but in some respects an understatement of the conditions we find in Canada today. To the poverty which bothered our conscience in 1968 the government has deliberately added massive unemployment. Urban problems have multiplied. Congestion in our cities, pollution of the air and water, land speculation, regional disparities, poverty of our native peoples and the poverty of 20 per cent or more of our population, all this human waste in our society remains at least as serious and as unacceptable as it did four years ago. There have been some patches. There have been some little repairs here and there. The government can list some legislation about which it will boast as it did in the Throne Speech which closed the last session.

As I said in 1968, any government is bound to make some improvements, even this one, but only an insensitive and blind partisan can fail to see and admit, if he has any concern for people and any humility at all, that the years of this government have not moved Canada forward but have aggravated problems whose solution the Prime Minister promised four years ago.

I want to say to the Prime Minister, in view of some parts of his speech, that I condemn this precisely because I am proud of my country and its immense potentialities. I know that in the 100 years or more of its existence Canada has come a long way from its early pioneer beginnings. It has developed into a major nation with modern capacities and a great people. Governed sensibly with concern for people and with modern ideas and instruments, this country can in time eliminate poverty and inequality and build a society in which all Canadians take a proud part. This is what participatory democracy is all about, and it is the total failure of this government to respond to the needs of the modern society that my party condemns and that in my view history will condemn.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal party and the Progressive Conservative party live and function under the yoke of outmoded doctrines. They stand with their friends in the

large corporations, the only remaining doctrinaires within our society, with the exception of a handful of scatter-brained romantics of the extreme left.

The government and the official opposition are status quo parties. The Prime Minister does speak of change. What his action and his policy clearly reflect is his rejection of all real change in economic and social structures, in the balance of power within our society and in everything essential to the implementation of a system of human equality. His idea of change is expressed in the well-known proverb: "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

We of the New Democratic Party believe that modern technology demands increasing involvement of the government in the economy. The forces of the market can no longer serve the common good unless they are coupled with significant supervision and in certain cases direct control. Modern production has changed considerably, from the technical point of view as well as in complexity. For instance, the time lapse between deciding to produce a new article and introducing it in the market place has been extended, because of the elaborate stages in its development, the survey of the market and all the other factors now involved in the planning of production and its processes. Some even claim that a four- or five-year period is required in the case of a new car.

The main sectors of modern production require a great deal of time and money. The raw materials, the power, the many basic requirements as well as the infrastructure require the type of investment that only large corporations can finance.

In addition, finding the proper assortment of trained employees in the labour market requires time. These prerequisites of the post-industrial era foster the concentration of wealth and power in an ever decreasing number of units.

[English]

The objectives of these corporations are primarily the maximizing of profits and of power. Their investments and production priorities are governed by a market which they themselves control. Through modern image advertising on an unprecedented scale they create wants and needs to suit their interests. It is only by coincidence that their decisions may occasionally match the needs and priorities of society. Only public investment, public planning of the use of our human and material resources and large scale government involvement in setting priorities can successfully cure poverty, regional disparity and social alienation.

• (1520)

In Canada the corporate control to which I have referred has meant increasingly foreign corporate power. The objectives of the multinational corporations are not only those of profit and power but are global in nature and therefore take little account of the needs of a particular host country. This is why the New Democratic Party has been deeply concerned from its inception with the problem of Canadian independence. This is why we believe in the necessity of regaining control of Canada's economy so that the Canadian people will be in a position