

The Address — Mr. Deans

directly at them and taking into account their skills and needs? No.

Mr. Manly: She talks like a Liberal.

Mr. Deans: As the Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands (Mr. Manly) says, she talks like a Liberal.

Mr. St. Germain: That is not nice.

Mr. Deans: That is probably true. Probably some day it will become unparliamentary in the House of Commons to say that about somebody. I realize that I have but a minute remaining.

● (1720)

The tests which the Government has to take are clearly not being met. They have not been frank. They have not been honest. They have not been understanding. They have not done those things they said they would do. They have done those things they said they would not do. They have not provided the jobs they said they would provide. They have done away with jobs that were already there. They said they were going to create new research and development, but they do away with the only effective research and development in this country. They are going to hand the country over to the foreign investor without any *quid pro quo*, without any demand.

In closing, this Government has failed the test. It has been a short time, and I recognize that. I cannot really say that they will not recover. I certainly hope on behalf of this country that they do. Up until now it has been a dismal showing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions or comments on the Hon. Member's speech?

Mr. King: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member a question. Between 20 and 25 per cent of the budget of the Government of Canada is occupied with paying interest on the national debt. The equivalent figure in the United States, which the Hon. Member chooses to be critical of on many occasions, is 12 per cent. My question to the Hon. Member is what proportion would be acceptable to the Government of Canada, the Opposition and the people of Canada? What proportion of the national budget does he believe should be expended on interest on the national debt?

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is a direct answer to the question. Let me try, however, by saying to the Hon. Member that he will recall that when he sat in the back row over on this side that during the years 1980, 1981 and 1982, when interest rates were rising at a very rapid rate, interest rates which incidentally contributed significantly to the size of the national debt as they contributed to the high levels of unemployment because of a decrease in purchasing power and the inability of corporate and smaller industry to maintain itself, we in this Party were arguing for a measure which would have controlled interest rates. Had he and his Party supported us instead of going off on some other tangent in support of the Liberal administration, had his Finance critic now Finance Minister (Mr. Wilson) been prepared to support

us instead of supporting the former Minister of Finance, and the one previously, in trying to press the Liberal administration of the day into bringing interest rates down, the national debt would be nowhere near where it is today.

I want to say to the Hon. Member who asked the question that it is upon his shoulders that the national debt rests. It is on this Member's shoulders, along with his colleagues who were here, that the national debt rests. It was they, together with the Liberals, who refused to deal with the primary problem in Canada, that being interest rates.

Mr. St. Germain: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member a question. He referred to the Hon. Member for Okanagan-Similkameen (Mr. King) being in the back row. I cannot see any difference being in the front row or in the back row. We all represent Canadians regardless of where we sit.

The Hon. Member blamed us for causing the deficit to rise. He said we are responsible for the deficit, which is related to high interest. How does he expect to reduce the deficit and control interest when he is advocating the same type of irresponsible spending that his friends to the right of him have been carrying on for the longest time? He is advocating make-work programs. He does not want to recognize the great social benefits we have already brought to the country through improving the widows' allowances and veterans pensions. The Member wants to ignore the improvements and the good things that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has done since taking on the leadership of this country.

The Hon. Member is not giving the Government a chance. He is coming totally negative, like he was before. He does not seem to have the smallest bit of positive attitude within him.

The only way we are going to get this country together again is by working together as Canadians, you and I and all Canadians. I would like the Hon. Member to elaborate on this aspect. He blames us for the spending. He blames us for the high interest rates. How would he have done it? I would also like his comment on whether he would have brought in exchange controls.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I know now how Ministers feel when they are asked 72 different questions at the same time. With regard to the interest rate problem, the Hon. Member will remember, I am sure, although he was not here for the entire last session of Parliament, that the New Democratic Party on numerous occasions attempted to move amendments to the Bank Act which would have made the banks much more responsive and responsible. We were defeated at every turn by the combined Liberal and Conservative Members on the committee. That is for starters.

I suggest to the Hon. Member that he does not have to be far-sighted. He can look within his own constituency. I defy him to tell me where things are better now than they were before the beginning of September. I defy him to tell me where the jobs are. I listened to him earlier talking about how many people were unemployed in his constituency.