



**Mitch  
Panciuk**

## Electing senator won't solve problem

This weekend, Provincial Conservatives chose their candidate for the Senate election which is going to be held next month. I guess with the choosing of Bert Brown to carry the P.C. Party's colours, this means that they are really going to go ahead with an election to fill the Alberta vacancy in the Canadian Senate. The Prime Minister has already said that he wants a list of names, but Premier Don is trying to pressure him into achieving an elected Senate.

An "Elected Senate" — let's just think about it for a moment. It sounds like a great idea, but then again so does Utopia and Socialism (some may say they're the same). They are good ideas, but really impossible to achieve.

There is no way anyone can defend the current system of appointed Senators which exists in Canada today. It's blatant patronage and costs the Canadian taxpayer millions of dollars per year. Polls have indicated that Canadians in every region of Canada want an elected Senate. People cannot see the need of our current appointed Senate.

But the Senate can play an important positive role in the governing of Canada. It's one of the checks and balances which protects us Canadian citizens from corrupt governments in the event that we make the mistake and elect one

which assumes office under falsehood. An elected Senate can be a major benefit to Canadians.

Don Getty has made Senate Reform his personal crusade. Personal Crusade... isn't that what John Turner said about Free Trade when he asked the Trudeau-appointed Senate to over-ride the elected House of Commons and not pass the Free Trade bill? "It was [John Turner's] reason for being born — his life long purpose" was somehow the way that he put it.

Maybe Getty can use that to explain why he's around — God knows there has to be some reason. So while not checking with his party membership, nor receiving a mandate from the voters in the last election, Getty is going to "ram" ahead with electing the first Senator to the un-elected Senate.

Getty hopes that this will prompt the other provinces to agree on his "Triple-E" proposal: elected, equal, and effective. What still puzzles me is how does electing a Senator get us the equal and effective part? All that it's going to do is get all 104 of them elected. The 104 Senators are broken down with the four Western Provinces having six each, Ontario and Quebec having 24 each, the Maritimes 24, Newfoundland six, and the Yukon/N.W.T. two.

Getty is hoping that by electing our Senator, the other provinces will follow suit and elect theirs.

too. Just put yourself in Ontario or Quebec's shoes: would you give up a ratio of 4:1 in your favor over almost all of the other provinces? Never! That's where Getty is dead wrong about this Senate process.

What Getty is going to accomplish, all because of his selfishness, stubbornness and his inability to see past the end of his nose, is to create a hell of a mess. From this mess, he will forever end any chance of a Triple-E Senate which will be able to protect the less populous Provinces from Central Canada.

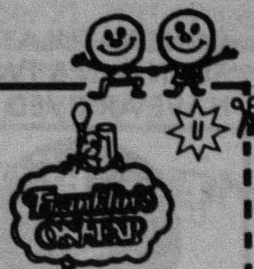
The Senate has an absolute override over the House of Commons on everything except money bills and constitutional amendments. They showed what they can do with the Free Trade Bill last summer. What is that going to do to a Prime Minister and his ability to govern fairly and effectively? How will the Senate be more receptive to Western Canadian concerns when it will forever be controlled by Central Canada?

An elected Senate is a good idea. What Getty has done is take a good idea and make it a terrible solution. Let's stop and define how the equal and effective parts will work before sealing Western Canada's doom by electing the first Canadian Senator, and setting about the chain reaction that destroys our country.

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