

Senate Representation

where it is debated and amended. Subsequently it is returned for final approval to the house of elders, the *bundesrat*.

Mr. Woolliams: The wise men.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Remembering that they are the ones appointed by the provinces, it would be interesting to see that kind of framework in operation here. We could see a bill like the Competition Act, for example, or the National Petroleum Act submitted to the Senate first for general comment and, perhaps, suggested amendment. Then it would be brought back into this House, considered, passed and returned to the Senate, that body having the full power to amend it or defeat it, though being of a different political complexion.

It would make the temporary majority which sometimes blithely sits in this chamber think twice or maybe three times before going forward with certain items of legislation. But it would have the effect, in a federal constitution where there are differing responsibilities, of making possible a more equitable discharge of those responsibilities. At the moment we are seeing here a series of acts going forward—the Competition Act is one of them—in connection with which the federal government simply moves into what is clearly provincial jurisdiction under some spurious ground of need for order and good government and says, "We shall fill the lacunae, and if the provinces do not measure up, we shall jack them up." Mr. Speaker, this is a usurpation of power by a bureaucracy, a form of centralized bureaucratic thinking to which this administration and others before it have become captive. It is posing a grave danger to our constitution and to our national unity.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and I am warning members of this House, that the malaise which exists in certain parts of the country is growing. Do not think the malaise has died in the province of Quebec. It has certainly increased in the western provinces and it may yet appear in the Atlantic provinces. This is in part attributable to the actions, the philosophy and the centralized thinking of the Government of Canada intent on the usurpation of power. It may be a gradual process, but one notices the nature and type of legislation brought forward in the last two or three years and it becomes apparent that the pace of this usurpation of power has been stepped up a notch or two. I say that Canadians as a whole must step back, watch and re-examine their position.

I hope the government will choose the best men or women it can to represent the Yukon and the Northwest Territories in the other place, and that we shall see the beginning of a change in the nature of the appointments. As my hon. friend from Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) said, there are some eminently suitable public figures who have been appointed to the Senate and who discharge their duties as well as any member of this House. A number of them have the advantage of experience in this place.

It must always be remembered that the world was not discovered yesterday, that everything was not invented yesterday and that mankind was not born yesterday. There are a good many lessons from the past which can be applied to the present and the future. The work that comes

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

out of the Senate depends entirely on the initiative of the government. Their Honours have done excellent work in examining bills. The competition legislation is one example. Even before they received the bill they carried out an examination of the subject matter. Their report is an excellent one. I do not wish to sound patronizing when I say that many of the committees in the other place put our committees to shame in terms of the assiduity with which the work is pursued, the depth of study and the value of the contributions made.

In conclusion, may I say I entirely support the bill before us. I hope the appropriate appointments are made and that the vacancies which now exist are filled so that we may join with our colleagues in the Senate and make a far better job of considering legislation, watching government programs and discharging our responsibility to the people.

Mr. Ian Watson (Laprairie): Mr. Speaker, I spoke against this bill on second reading and I wish to reiterate briefly my opposition to it now. There is one feature of the bill which is obviously welcome—the fact that northerners will have additional voices here in Ottawa. No one can complain about that aspect. Nevertheless, I am opposed to the bill in principle. The government and its predecessors have on a number of occasions promised Senate reform and it is inopportune, to say the least, that we should be moving to add new members to that body before we have carried out the fundamental reforms which successive governments have promised.

I feel there is another side to the argument. It is entirely possible that the constitutional evolution of the territories may differ from the evolution which historically accompanied the development of the other provinces. A different approach might well be needed although, conceivably, no matter what kind of evolutionary path they may follow, representation in a reformed Senate might still be necessary.

● (1430)

In the present circumstances, the government should not be moving to add to this body. Let me reiterate. We all agree that the Senate is non-representative and non-elective. As long as it remains that way it is completely out of date. We should be moving to reform the Senate before we add to its members.

Mr. Gus MacFarlane (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate myself with the comments made on this bill, but I feel at this time that something more should be said concerning the people who will be going to the Senate itself. It seems to me that my words would probably not be quite appropriate, but I might abridge the words of the great Lebanese Kahlil Gibran, who thinks of the Senate as "To be a garden without walls, a vineyard without a guardian, a treasure house for ever open to passers-by". If we think of the manner in which the senators, having completed their years, look down upon us, then they might feel, as Kahlil Gibran said:

To be robbed, cheated, deceived, ay, misled and trapped and then mocked, yet with it all to look down from the height of your large self and smile, knowing that there is a spring that will come to your garden to dance in your leaves, and an autumn to ripen your grapes; knowing