

we might enlarge the scope of the committee and deal with food prices. This suggestion was accepted. The committee was enlarged, but we did not start out on the odyssey my friend Thorvaldson speaks about.

Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson: Senator, please.

Hon. Mr. Croll: We studied it for a long time, and from that came the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the first of its kind, as he points out. It is strange the effect that that department had; it changed almost completely the buying habits of many thousands of consumers. You can see today what is happening in these various stores, in Loblaw's and Steinberg's and others, where they are now trying to lure the consumer in. It is interesting to note that the *Globe and Mail* of November 8, in dealing with the cost of living, points out that food prices, accounting for 27 per cent of the total, were down more than half an index point. Everything else went up. There has been a downward trend in food prices reflected right along, and this is clear to anyone who wants to examine the situation. But here was a Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to indicate concern for the consumer that has never been indicated before. This resulted from the work of this chamber. They joined us; we did not join them.

Of course these consumer groups must receive attention; they had a real cause and unless we did something about it, we would wind up in about the same way as the universities are today with their students. If you do not listen to their complaints, you do not leave them any alternative and then they go much too far. I think we have done a great thing in bringing about the establishment of this Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Honourable senators, let us look at some of the other work that has been done. Let us take the Report on Divorce. It is interesting to note that in February 1966 a bill was introduced in the Senate by Senator Roebuck; in March the necessary resolution was passed, moved by the then leader John Connolly, and on March 29 the members were appointed. Then the House of Commons decided on a resolution put by the Honourable George McIlraith that they would join with us in forming a committee, and the joint committee was established on June 28, 1966. From that committee came this report, and our contribution to that was second to none.

Getting back to the Senate again, I suppose I am a lifer in the Senate. I may or may not

receive time off for good behaviour, but I did not come into the Senate to earn a pension; I had one in the House of Commons for which I paid. I have not been able to draw a nickel out of it for 15 years. For me it is "Goodbye, Mr. Chips," but I am prepared to live with it. I am not prepared to go hat in hand at this stage, for if we do that we lose both our hats and our heads also.

A few days ago a senator was heard to ask, What is this Senate reform talk all about? Who is giving consideration to it? How is it that I have not been consulted, or no one has discussed it with me? Where can I get information about what is projected? Of course, honourable senators, the short answer to all that is that we need a Senate ombudsman, but that may not be available just at this particular moment. Here we are so barren of communications with the powers of government. Civil servants, provincial governments and others are being consulted, and yet there has not been a formal or informal discussion with us, to my knowledge. But I think I can help the Senate. There has been no Senate Liberal caucus on this problem to date, so I am not talking out of caucus; I am free to speak. I think I know the tenor and substance of the discussion, and I break no security and give away no caucus secrets. All I can give is corridor gossip, but selective corridors, if you don't mind, newspaper reports that were obviously leaked and some added knowledge from people and friends I have known in the House of Commons on all sides of the house for many years.

I think what is being considered are these matters: First, should there be a time limit? Should a time limit be fixed for service in the Senate—say, about 20 years? Then, what should the term of new appointments be, three years, six years or 10 years? Should an appointee be eligible for reappointment? Should there be provincial appointments, and how many? Should provincial appointments be made by the premier of the province or from a panel presented by the premier of the province to the Prime Minister who makes the appointment? What new special powers could the Senate be given to deal with the official languages bill, human rights, and treaty obligations? Should the Senate be given powers to approve new appointments such as Supreme Court judges, ambassadors, heads of agencies, cultural and otherwise—a sort of advise and consent as modified under the American system. Should the veto be removed and a delaying power only given to the Senate, and how should that be limited,