

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Wednesday, May 5, consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Hon. Mr. Bourque, seconded by Hon. Mr. Aird, for an address in reply thereto.

Hon. Allister Grosart: Honourable senators, I welcome the opportunity this motion gives me to add my compliments to those already expressed to the mover (Hon. Mr. Bourque) and the seconder (Hon. Mr. Aird) for the highly skilful way in which they commended the motion to the Senate.

Senator Bourque has that great advantage, which some of us envy, of being able to express his views with easy facility in both languages. Senator Aird gave us a perfect demonstration of the logic of his mind, and it seems to me that for that reason he made the most conservative speech I have heard since I came to this chamber.

I pay my respects to Your Honour and take pleasure in passing on to you some of the compliments I have heard on the manner in which you maintain our goodwill and good humour most of the time, and particularly for the guidance in the rules that from time to time you are able to give to some of us more needy members.

I pay my respects, of course, to my own leader (Hon. Mr. Brooks). I am sure we all are glad to see him back in the Senate tonight, after being away on Senate business. I understand that within a month or so he will be celebrating his fortieth anniversary of consecutive service in one or other of the Parliaments of Canada. We on this side certainly owe much to him for his continuing guidance and wisdom, which are among the ornaments of the Senate.

Honourable senators, I turn now to the motion before us. Whatever else may or may not be said about the document on which the motion is based, it is certainly a comprehensive program. Indeed, it is hard to think of anything of current interest in the Canadian political scene that it does not comprehend. One has the feeling that one of His Excellency's advisors might have been told a month or two ago to read the newspapers, make a note of everything that any group or person said the Government should do or say or think, and make sure it was included in this document. It is all here. According to my own count, the document

promises us at least 53 pieces of legislation, to enact new laws or to amend existing laws.

Some people called it an election program. Indeed, one of the leading newspapers supporting the Government headed its report, on the day after we heard the speech here, with the very succinct headline: "It is an election!" Personally, I think it may have closer affinity with one of the hobbies or avocations of the Minister of Agriculture. I find it to be very obviously a dual-purpose program, designed to be milked perhaps pail by pail if the session can be prolonged, and, if not, to be fattened up for election purposes later on. If my experience with such things is worth anything, I would say it will need quite a bit of fattening if it is to serve the latter purpose. The skeleton is there all right.

Careful attention has been given to emphasizing most of the important points in the body politic. There is something for the urban voters, for the rural voters; for the employed, for the unemployed, for the re-employable and for the past-employed. There is something for the supporters—and I am not criticizing it on this ground—of U.N., NATO, and the Commonwealth. There is something for the would-be reformers of the House of Commons and even for that very small group of Canadians who feel there might be some value in proceeding with some reform of the Senate. There is something for those who have profound feelings about "God Save the Queen" as an anthem, as well as for those who have profound feelings about "O Canada". There is something for the young, something for the old, something for veterans and something for ethnic groups, new and old.

If you are a supporter of Canadian publications, you are told that their position is to be strengthened. On the other hand, if you have favourite American magazines, they are at the same time to be given what appears to be a perpetual monopoly of magazine dumping rights in Canada. I hasten to say that I have nothing against *Time* or *Reader's Digest*—I read and subscribe to both of them—but I do wonder why it is that they are to be given these magnificent privileges.

Indeed, if there are those who think that too much money is spent in this country on elections, they are told there will be limitations on such spending. On the other hand, it is also suggested that the Government will now be required to spend more money than ever on elections.