

As a new boy, honourable senators, I received the material from Senate officials dealing with the history of the Senate, the speeches and statements of the Fathers of Confederation, and the reasons for establishing the Senate. I know I would be preaching to my superiors and my elders on the subject, and I will spare you quotations. I will spare you the zeal of the convert, as in the case, you may remember, of Claire Booth Luce when she had been converted to Catholicism and arranged, through her influential husband, Henry Luce, an audience with the Pope. When she went to see the Pope she exulted about the wonders of being a Catholic, how all the doctrine hung together so well, how it was such an inspiration in her life, and how it was the greatest thing that had ever happened to her, her conversion to Catholicism. His Holiness finally stopped her and said, "Thank you, madam, but I am already a Catholic."

So, honourable senators, I won't bore you with quotations from the Fathers of Confederation, because I know you have read the material and know it better than I. However, if I have read those books correctly, then they all agree that a study of the speeches and documents leading to Confederation illuminated three main themes or principles as foundations for the establishment of the Senate as one of the pillars of Confederation. The three themes are: property rights and the protection of property rights, minority rights, and provincial rights. I will not say anything about property rights, except perhaps you will permit me a very brief neo-Marxist digression. Few of us, if any, here are Marxists, but most, I think, are familiar with his teachings. I only in passing draw your attention to the report in the *Toronto Star* that an astonishingly large percentage of separatist supporters are not property holders, and that an equally astonishingly high percentage of federalist supporters are property holders. I leave it to those who are more skillful in the theories of Marx to try to make something out of the intriguing possibilities that flow from that aspect of our crisis. I am more concerned with the other two—that is, minority rights and provincial rights.

• (2050)

Clearly the Fathers of Confederation created the Senate for just the kind of crisis we now have if, as it seems, the present crisis does concern primarily minority rights and provincial rights, and the pressures of these minority rights and provincial rights are putting heavy strain on the organism. For that reason, I heartily support the government leader's initiative in drawing the Senate's attention to it.

But what can we do? I look forward to your individual interventions, honourable senators, in answer to that question. For my part, let me turn to my third theme, the party system.

I begin by confessing that I am a lifelong, unashamed and unapologetic partisan of the party system and, as a corollary, a supporter of one of our national parties. Since studying political science in university I have seen the party system as the lubricant that makes all the formal mechanisms of the Constitution work. I know that I have many colleagues here who share that belief. Many of us engaged fully in party politics before we were summoned here. Some of us were summoned

here partly, at least, because of that activity; I know I was, and I see nothing unnatural or shameful in that fact. Everyone I know wants to be a statesman, but it seems that no one wants to be a politician.

I was reading Alain's marvellous little book *Propos sur le bonheur* recently, and in one chapter entitled *Discours aux ambitieux* he has a comment that I think is relevant:

[Translation]

If you are not prepared to tell some home truths to a man who could open doors for you, do not say that you really wanted to get ahead; you were dreaming that you were, just as one sometimes dreams that one is a bird. It is as if you were dreaming of being a minister and not having to see people or manage anything.

[English]

I cannot understand why voluntary partisan political activity is often held in disrepute, and why it should be surprising when politicians are appointed to a political institution. We appoint scientists to scientific institutions; we appoint musicians to musical institutions; we appoint lawyers to legal institutions. In fact, our appointment here is not unlike the appointment of lawyer to the bench. A good judge gets his perspective and judgement partly, but importantly, from his previous experience as a partisan lawyer. We, as experienced politicians, can use that experience and our privileged, non-elected and, therefore, independent perspective to, among other things, meet the present challenge of unfulfilled minority and provincial expectations by encouraging Canadians to participate in one of our most important political institutions, the party system.

Honourable senators, let me cite a great Canadian in support of the key role of the political parties:

It is one thing for individuals to pursue their own interests, as they always have; it becomes a qualitatively different kind of society when individuals organize to pursue their individual interests collectively. National life has become a struggle for advantage among large and powerful organizations, not simply corporations and trade unions. Organized pressure groups abound.

The only organizations whose nature forces them to work toward a national consensus are the national political parties. Whatever their faults, weaknesses and shortcomings, whatever their stumbling, political parties must try to put together, and keep together by adjustment, a consensus which is acceptable to enough Canadians to get elected.

But the national political parties do not command the loyalties of as high a proportion of Canadians as used to be the case. Most Canadians prefer to give their loyalty and their support to an organization designed to service their particular personal interests... we should develop our forces of cohesion and in particular recognize the cohesive role that national political parties can play... but in fact national political parties are the only mass organizations we have which are forced to try to see the