

cratic principles, checking subversive ideas and restraining dangerous theories which would only spell disaster in this country.

The Hon. Joseph Rainville, my predecessor in this House as the member from Repentigny, was a shrewd business man. He played an important part in Canadian politics. I became acquainted with him at the time when he and I were reading law at the University of Montreal. He sat in the Model Parliament of that period; he was one of the Ministers, and I also held a portfolio, which, of course, entailed no heavy responsibilities. Even during that early period, Mr. Rainville was noted for his eloquence. He had a natural bent for liking and helping his fellows. He was one of the organizers of his party and I believe that at the close of his career he enjoyed the friendship of all. His friends, who were quite numerous, will keep a favourable remembrance of him. He was warm-hearted. He was fond of the arts, especially music. He helped many causes and a number of people. The demise of Hon. Mr. Rainville is accordingly a great loss.

I take much pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in congratulating you upon having been selected by the Government to preside over the deliberations of this House. No one was better qualified nor had a greater measure of experience for the high and honourable office of Speaker of the Senate. I hope that the performance of your duties will afford you nothing but satisfaction. We know that your rulings will ever be the exemplification of right, justice and fairness, and we ought to be pleased to have a Speaker of your character. The Government deserves our compliments for that appointment. You are succeeding a worthy Speaker, Hon. George Parent, who for more than a quarter of a century played an outstanding part in Parliament. He was one of the public men who have best served their fellow-citizens and their country. We know, Mr. Speaker, that you will maintain the same traditions of kindness and understanding as your predecessors, and I tender you my best wishes.

The speech which His Excellency the Governor General read in this honourable House on January 28 last is a most comforting and satisfying message. It heralds measures which will prove helpful to our country in many fields. One of the main measures announced is social insurance, which, provided the right formula is found, gives us the hope of being able to afford our people the protection they have a right to expect. We already have several social measures within Dominion jurisdiction, but the new project, will be much more comprehensive.

I feel justified in saying that the social security insurance project, protecting the people of this country against fear and want, is excellent, and that it is in principle acceptable to all; but what must be found is the method, the sound course to be followed in reaching the desired objective. It is important that the Canadian nation should ponder this matter, so as to avoid mistakes. We are all eager to protect our fellow-citizens against fear and destitution, and if this objective is to be reached, as mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, it is essential that a national plan be worked out to provide insurance against the inevitable effects of the principal economic and social risks.

We already have in Canada social security measures enacted by the Dominion Parliament: unemployment insurance, old age pensions, pensions for the blind and for disabled soldiers. And there are provincial Acts providing against accidents and sickness, and relating to hospital treatment, mothers' and widows' allowances and maternity assistance, but the Dominion Government now wishes to establish a social security plan for the entire nation, and to this end it intends to work out a complete national system of social insurance which, in the words of the Speech from the Throne, will constitute a charter of social security for the whole of Canada.

The Government intends to recommend the early appointment of a select committee to inquire into and report upon the measures to be taken for the establishment of social insurance, as well as the means whereby they could be included in a nation-wide plan. That committee will be instructed to study such a nation-wide system.

I believe that such a recommendation on the part of the Government is quite wise, for it is not sufficient to desire something useful; the manner in which it can be obtained and the way to make it most useful must also be examined. You all know, honourable senators, that in the field of social measures, the provinces enjoy certain rights, and that consequently it is imperative that a survey be made of what can be accomplished and of the manner in which it can be done without encroaching upon those provincial rights.

It is of the utmost importance, in connection with those post-war economic and social reconstruction plans for Canada, to establish a system which shall meet the particular conditions existing in this country. The idea is not to copy schemes which, although useful in some other country, would be useless in our own. The advice given to the Canadian Club by Mr. Cyril James, Principal of McGill