

ly faithful to a political party. That is not anyway the main problem of the Senate or of the senators.

I will conclude what I have been saying about Senator Lapointe by telling her that she is replacing Senator Thérèse Casgrain of whom we were all very fond. As for me, I am certain that Senator Casgrain is as happy as we are that her successor is Senator Lapointe.

Hon. Mr. Bourget: Very good.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: Unfortunately, perhaps this is the last session that Your Honour will be occupying the chair since it is our practice that the Speaker should serve for only one Parliament.

If I wanted to blame you for something I might say that you take your responsibilities too much to heart.

You have a fantastic talent for defusing explosive situations and, as far as I am concerned, to prevent my saying more or less malicious things which come to my mind in the heat of debate. I am sure that, in this connection, the government leader is quite grateful to you. I am also grateful since one seldom regrets not having made certain statements while the reverse is often true.

[English]

Honourable senators, I would not want to return to the subject matter of the Speech from the Throne without assuring the Leader of the Government of my traditional co-operation in the discharge of his duties as they pertain to the Senate.

I fully agree with those who claim that the Senate owes much to Senator Martin for the new and improved image that many people now hold of the Upper House. His balance sheet should, quite properly, show more assets than liabilities in this respect. But, however much this may be true, I feel I must again remind him that he has a serious conflict of interest to resolve in his double role as member of the Senate and Leader of the Government. The doctrine of cabinet solidarity does not permit of his leading the Liberal members of the Senate into an objective study of government legislation, and the Senate, we will all agree, is supposed to be more objective than the other place.

I keep raising the point because the instances have been many wherein the leader on the government side of this chamber has shown himself to be more a member of the government than of the Senate.

The way in which he arranged for Bill C-259, that exercise in fiscal confusion, to be bulldozed through this chamber during what should have been the Christmas recess, without any discussion on the principles of the bill and without the possibility of any serious consideration being given to much needed amendments, is proof of the fact that his first allegiance is to the government, not to the Senate.

Almost every Canadian daily newspaper I picked up towards the end of December—they were published towards the end of December but I saw them only late in January when I returned from my trip to Europe—

[Hon. Mr. Flynn.]

seemed to carry a letter to the editor from the government leader trying to justify why the government had treated the Senate with such disrespect. I was not in any way convinced by his arguments, and I doubt whether any other reasonably-minded Canadian was.

• (1420)

Changing the subject for a moment, I have been told that Senator Martin has been appointed Chancellor of Waterloo Lutheran University.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Flynn: I congratulate him on his appointment, and on the laudable sense of ecumenism he displayed in accepting the appointment. Would that he were as non-partisan in matters political as he appears to be in matters theological.

Honourable senators, in last Thursday's Speech from the Throne the government, as I said earlier, attempted to take credit for all that has happened since April 1968 which could be in any way construed as having been beneficial to the country. With equal vigour it sought to deny responsibility for the failure of so many of its plans, projects and measures.

The Speech from the Throne suggested that legislation to be presented to Parliament during this session would, on the long-term basis, be most beneficial. The expression "long-term basis" is an obvious feint calculated to direct attention away from the dismal performance of this government over the past four years, and away from its lack of immediate solutions to the problems affecting us now.

The present Minister of Finance informed us not so long ago that the government was not interested in what happened yesterday or in what is happening today, but only in what might happen tomorrow. Such a desire to forget on the part of this administration can easily be understood. However, it is doubtful whether the electors will be quite so willing to forget what has happened during the past four years, nor will they be willing to overlook government inaction in the face of immediate problems, nor, for that matter, will they be content to hope for a better tomorrow made up of vague promises.

If, after four years, the government has not succeeded in providing proper leadership, and has failed miserably in charting a satisfactory course in the affairs of this country, why should anyone believe that it will be able to do so if given a new mandate? A new mandate would serve only to prolong the agony of those who deserve a better government.

Honourable senators, the business community, with abundant reason, lacks confidence in the government. As a result, capital investment is almost at a standstill, and expansion is not taking place at a rate anywhere near satisfactory.

The confusing tax reform bill, foisted on the business world supposedly to alleviate inequality and promote stability, the proposed amendments to the Canada Labour Code, the proposed Competition bill, the establishment of the Canada Development Corporation, and an expected