

loops. I was very fortunate and honoured that Senator Hodges was available to escort me on my first entry into this chamber. I also feel very happy at finding myself in the company of Senator Farris and Senator McKeen—both of whom, like myself, are graduates of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly—and the other British Columbia senators, Senator Turgeon and Senator Reid, whom I am proud to number among my personal friends. As for those honourable senators whom I have not previously known, their warm welcome has brought me great comfort and relief from the fear which I experienced at first. I am sure I will find here an understanding and tolerance that will help me to make this new era in my life very much worth while.

Let me say, honourable senators, that it will be my lifelong objective to justify my appointment to this upper house by maintaining the high standard of dignity of the Senate and to bring honour and credit to this body, as well as to the beautiful and bountiful region which I represent, the Interior of British Columbia.

As time goes on I hope to be able to make a worthy contribution to many of the discussions of this house on various subjects of public interest, but at this time I propose to content myself with dealing very briefly with only two or three matters that are of particular interest to me at present.

First, I will deal with one of the newer subjects of public interest, the Gordon Economic Commission report, with particular reference to one of its recommendations. We have heard and read many comments on some of the highlights of that report, but I have yet to hear any comment on the particular recommendation which has to do with the raising of licence and other fees borne by motorists and truckers. Having a long experience in the automotive field, I know that there are many friends of mine across Canada who will be anxiously waiting to see if I am going to do my stuff as they consider it should be done. In all seriousness, I do think that that particular item in the report is worthy of very careful consideration. I am not unmindful that the Gordon Economic Commission was composed of a group of outstanding Canadian specialists who spent many months in the study of the details that went into that report, and it is not entirely fair to jump to hasty conclusions and judge the report hurriedly, but I do feel that a great many Canadians have little or no idea of the substantial contribution already being made to the public purse by the motorists and truckers of this country. They have been an easy mark; it has been an easy matter to col-

lect taxes from them. The motorists and truckers pay a very large proportion of taxes collected at every level of government—the municipal, the provincial and the federal.

According to the latest figures available we find that the provinces of Canada, on two items alone, those of registration and gasoline taxes, collect a total of about \$350 million yearly. And then, in the federal field, the excise tax and the sales tax collections amount to another \$175 million annually. To this must be added the federal sales tax on gasoline and other petroleum products. So that Canadian motorists and truckers are contributing in the provincial and federal fields alone a sum in excess of \$600 million in taxes per annum. That is a terrific amount of money. It is not so many years ago that the total federal budget did not exceed that figure.

In recent years there has been a tremendous change in the use of the automobile. Not long ago it was classed with jewellery and perfumes as a luxury. In recent months it has been established that well over 80 per cent of the mileage done by passenger cars in Canada is on essential work, and certainly 100 per cent of truck mileage is in the same category. So there has been a very great change from the time when the automobile may and could have been regarded as a luxury, to this day, when it fills so important an economic need in the whole scheme of things.

I would suggest that before there is any thought of increasing the tax burden on motorists and truckers, careful consideration should be given to a better distribution of the tax load. Other fields of taxation may be found wherein collections would be just as easy as from the people who constitute the motorists of this country.

There is another matter on which I should like to touch, although I hesitate to do so in the presence of the honourable senator from New Westminster (Hon. Mr. Reid). He had not arrived in the city, or I had not seen him, when I decided to say something on this subject. I am looking forward to hearing a lot more about it from him. I am intrigued with what has been accomplished by those with whom the honourable senator from New Westminster and our Minister of Fisheries have been associated in consummating very recently what has been called the "Pink Salmon Treaty". This measure is of tremendous importance to the fishing industry, which, again, plays a great part in the general economy of the Pacific coast province.

For several years Canadian fishermen and the industry on the Pacific coast considered that there should be an international agreement with the United States for the conserva-