

Lack of communication is the greatest barrier to understanding, and I am happy to see that it is gradually being broken down, particularly in this country. I note that honourable senators are making a determined effort to speak both in English and French. The other ethnic groups are also striving to be able to communicate their thoughts in one or other of the official languages of Canada, while preserving their own cultures, and indeed, religions, which they brought with them from abroad.

I do not know how many honourable senators have had the opportunity of visiting some of the towns and villages of the western provinces, but I have, and I was amazed to note the harmony, *bonne entente* and sense of national unity that exist in those communities. Some towns whose population does not exceed four thousand people might have as many as six churches whose denomination may be identified by the style and structure of the buildings. These people, many of whom have migrated to Canada from countries now behind the Iron Curtain, understand and appreciate the true meaning of freedom of speech, freedom of thought and freedom of worship, and when we see them living side by side in such close harmony and adapting themselves to our way of life we cannot help but realize that we possess, besides our vast natural resources, all the necessary human and spiritual resources with which to build a strong nation and a great country.

Honourable senators, it is easy to be pessimistic. Indeed, in this imperfect world, a dedicated pessimist will always find plenty of ground for gloom. And today, both nationally and internationally, Canada faces challenges as serious and as pressing as any it has faced in the past. Nevertheless, in my opinion, Canada is in a position as favourable as that of any other country in the world to meet its present and future challenges, whatever their character. May I list some of the basic reasons for this belief:

Canada's material resources are virtually unlimited and, especially to the north, virtually untouched. We are already aware, from the Speech from the Throne, of the Government's plan for the development of that vast part of the country.

Canada's human resources consist of approximately 17 million people—English, French and a great variety of other ethnic groups living together and growing together, in the manner I have just described, as Canada expands. Some of us may see 50 million people in Canada, and, if not, our children will.

Canada's system of Government, based on the British Parliamentary tradition, is the equal of any in the world. Among other

things, it conduces to stability of Government—a necessary and desirable condition which, as honourable senators know, is rare enough in other countries. I will take my cue from the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Macdonald), and avoid the temptation of indulging in narrow partisan observations, but I think it is quite clear from the recent election that the people of Canada were not satisfied with a minority Government which might be dislodged at any moment by caprice, accident or design, and that they made their will known unmistakably from one end of Canada to the other. There will be a Canadian Government firmly in office for at least the next four or five years, and this in itself is a good thing. I will go no further, though my instincts might urge me to extend my observations at this point!

Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Hon. Mr. Choquette: In addition, we now have a truly national Government, fully representative of all provinces, which Government should be in a favourable position to eliminate or reduce sectional rivalries and to accommodate, so far as possible, the views and aspirations of all the provinces.

Further, the people of Canada, as the honourable senator from Winnipeg South (Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson) has already said, have in effect restored the two-party system. I think most honourable senators will welcome this eventuality. Certainly it is an understatement to assert that a multiplicity of parties does not contribute to the orderly functioning of the Parliamentary system.

And finally, in my view, Canada has the finest Civil Service in the world, capable of accomplishing what may be asked of it by Government in the days ahead.

Honourable senators, having made these few remarks, I would like to express my pride and pleasure in being able to join with you in transacting the business of Parliament. It has been said by eminent senators that, although appointments to this chamber are made on the recommendation of the Government of the day, and although the Upper House is organized along party lines for the transaction of public business, these lines are not severely drawn. I have seen many evidences of this in the short time that I have been here, and this happy fact increases my pride of membership. Many honourable senators are rich in parliamentary experience, whether in the House of Commons, in provincial legislatures, or in this chamber. Moreover, all honourable senators have attained distinction in some field of endeavour quite