

A system of permanent registration, properly devised and administered, would overcome these weaknesses in our election laws.

It may be argued that the Senate, not being the elected branch of Parliament, should not undertake a study of this kind. I do not agree with that attitude. It seems to me that, quite apart from the fact that we have more time than the other House, and better facilities for doing the work, the very circumstance that the Senate is not directly concerned with the application of our election laws, and thereby is free of any bias in regard to them, better equips it to give impartial study to the whole matter and to formulate recommendations for the consideration of Parliament. Any such effort on the part of the Senate, if it did nothing more than provide an opportunity for the expression of public views, would in my humble estimation constitute a fine service to our country.

There is yet another matter with which I think we might concern ourselves, and which directly affects this Chamber and its work. This is to make a study of, and to report to Parliament upon, the advisability of amending the Salaries Act and other Acts dealing with the remuneration of our public officials. It is a little-known circumstance that the Leader of the Government in the Senate receives no remuneration beyond his sessional indemnity. How the leader of this House can be expected to spend the time and energy necessary to the proper execution of its business, without being paid for it, is beyond my understanding. I submit that the office of Government Leader should be recognized as a full-fledged Cabinet position, carrying with it the same salary and allowances as are assigned to other ministerial positions.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BENCH: I would also suggest for similar reasons that the position of the leader on the other side should carry a salary status comparable to that of the Leader of the Opposition in the other House.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BENCH: There are other inequalities in our statutes relating to salaries. We are constantly hearing complaints about the basis of remuneration provided for the judges of the country, and I have also heard it suggested more than once that the salaries of deputy ministers and other civil servants should be reviewed and revised. If the Senate were to undertake a study of this problem and report its recommendations to Parliament, I

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suggest that thereby it would be making an important contribution to the machinery of government.

Now, honourable senators, I have ventured to put forward these suggestions to-day as a respectful indication of the great opportunities which we in this House have to advance and assist in the work of Parliament. These are only my own ideas. I am sure that other honourable senators more experienced than I am could add to the list very materially. May I add the hope that during this session the Senate may undertake some work on its own account which will effectively demonstrate to the Canadian people that we are not only a necessary but a very useful branch of our parliamentary machinery.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Roebuck the debate was adjourned.

The Senate adjourned until to-morrow at 3 p.m.

THE SENATE

Thursday, October 4, 1945.

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

PRIVATE BILLS

FIRST READINGS

Bill B, an Act to incorporate The Canadian Jewellers Institute.—Hon. Mr. Campbell.

Bill C, an Act to incorporate Dominion General Benefit Association.—Hon. Mr. Haig.

Bill D, an Act to incorporate International Air Transport Association.—Hon. Mr. Hugessen.

Bill E, an Act to incorporate Ottawa Valley Trust Company.—Hon. Mr. Lambert.

INTERIM COMMISSION ON FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

REPORT REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Hon. WISHART McL. ROBERTSON: Honourable senators, with unanimous consent, I would move:

That a copy of the first report to the Governments of the United Nations by the Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture, Conference Series, 1945, No. 1, laid on the Table of the Senate on 11th September, 1945, be referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.