

and win elections. Groups which are defined by their race or ethnic origin—such as native people and urban immigrants who settled here after World War II—might find their social intergration within the political system somewhat easier if they could run as candidates in smaller, more populous and less diversified ridings where their relatively greater electoral importance would have a stronger impact on election results.

Again I quote from the same page:

In a larger House it would also be easier for women to get elected. According to the 1980 results, women candidates stand a better chance of being elected in smaller ridings. In the past the size of the legislative assembly has probably never been considered as a likely explanation for the political success of women.

Finally, I sum up the conclusion of Professor Courtney's study, and this should not take me more than three minutes:

If however the gradual increase in the size of the House of Commons were to follow the forecasts inherent in the amalgam method, the political regime might gain non-electoral benefits with respect to representation. Since it provides for the gradual increase in the number of MPs, the amalgam method more faithfully reflects the democratic principle of representation by population and to the less populated regions of the major provinces. A larger House might lead to improved electorate participation, to the political commitment and participation of the citizens, and to the electoral success of women and minority groups.

That is the beauty and usefulness of the amalgam formula I tried to defend at the second reading stage.

The present government, by acting hastily with this poorly constructed piece of legislation, possibly with an election in the back of its mind and in its misdirected zeal to cut costs, is doing Canada a disservice, especially this country's minorities and less fortunate regions.

I would ask Senator Flynn to read and reread Senator Courtney's submission to the House of Commons committee.

Senator Flynn: Senator who?

Senator Corbin: Excuse me, I mean Professor Courtney.

What is the price of democracy? Too high, says the present government!

Today we are far from the spirit that inspired the Fathers of Confederation. Power is a heady brew!

I spoke and argued a great deal when the bill was being considered.

Although I had the satisfaction of forcing the government to realize that my criticism was well-founded and exacted from the government a formal promise to have the text corrected later, my conclusion is and I repeat . . .

Senator Flynn: Possibly—

Senator Corbin: But Senator Flynn, you are contradicting the minister.

Senator Flynn: No, just read the report.

Senator Corbin: I will remember that. But I prefer to believe what the minister said in committee.

Senator Flynn: He said he would submit it for consideration, nothing else. These are false representations, like most of your comments this afternoon.

Senator Corbin: Calm down, Senator Flynn, you will have an opportunity to take the floor at the conclusion of the debate.

Before doing that, however, check what the minister, Mr. Hnatyshyn, said before the committee.

Senator Flynn: I did hear and understand him!

Senator Corbin: Yes, much as you had understood the debates in the House of Commons before Christmas. Talk about understanding!

In conclusion I repeat that we could have benefitted from the expertise of other witnesses to improve this bill, had it not been for the sword of Damocles hanging over our collective senatorial heads.

We were subjected to that kind of blackmail last year. Again this time they would like to blackmail us, but it will not work.

Somebody somewhere said that the electors get the MPs they deserve. The Senate was established to uphold provincial and regional interests, and to protect the House of Commons against its own excesses. Beware the government that manhandles the Commons and does not listen to the Senate, for the electors will remember!

I thank you, honourable senators.

In the name of Senator MacEachen, debated adjourned.

● (1510)

[English]

EXCISE TAX ACT EXCISE ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Simard, seconded by the Honourable Senator David, for the second reading of the Bill C-80, intituled: "An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act and to amend other Acts in consequence thereof".—*(Honourable Senator MacEachen, P.C.)*.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, a few weeks ago I read a letter that the Honourable Donald Fleming sent to the *Globe and Mail* commenting on a review which had been written by Mr. Peter Newman about his political memoirs. That stimulated my memory to recall that when Mr. Fleming spoke in the House of Commons, he used to tell the members what he was going to say before he said it. I always thought that that was a useful habit because everybody knew when the speech was about to terminate or when they could take a short recess in the