

the House of Commons. I believe you were in the cabinet when cabinet duty was initiated, when a roster was established with each cabinet minister having to spend so much time in the House of Commons, and the rest of his time on department business.

Senator Guay: He knew he was going to appear before the committee on Monday morning, so he could have made arrangements to stay until the end of the meeting.

Senator Phillips: The difficult thing for a number of senators to accept is the decision made by the electorate last September. We repeatedly hear from those opposite about this being a matter of judgment, a matter of timing. Honourable senators, the public told honourable senators opposite last September that they did not want any more of their judgment or their timing. How many times must they hit you over the head? They have already hit you over the head 211 times, and you have not absorbed it. How many more times do you want to be hit?

Senator Sinclair: I am a hit man.

● (1640)

Senator Phillips: The honourable senator is certainly behaving like one. That was not formerly his practice, but he certainly seems to have changed because he has come under the tutelage of Senator Davey. If the honourable senator would just revert to being himself, he would get back to being a reasonable sort of man.

The \$6 million senator attempted to explain his instructions in committee. He has now been instructed not to divide the bill. Part II is now quite acceptable to the Liberals. Up until a week ago, they insisted that the bill be divided.

Honourable senators, why that change in attitude? Somebody in John Turner's office found out that, if the bill went back to the House of Commons, it would have to be debated again. We all know what would happen if it went back to the House of Commons. John Turner would have to explain the actions of Liberal senators. He is not any keener about being associated with them than senators opposite are to be associated with him. Mr. Turner wants to make sure that the bill is not returned to the House of Commons. That is why he does not want it divided.

Senator Sinclair asked why it should not be divided. The reason is that if it goes back to the House of Commons, it may be there for some considerable time. They will make senators opposite look like pikers by delaying it. Perhaps that is what they wanted in the first place—that is, for the bill to be returned and cause a delay.

Senator MacEachen: There was an all-party agreement.

Senator Roblin: Not to divide the bill.

Senator MacEachen: That was never discussed.

Senator Phillips: I wonder if Senator MacEachen has read the agreement.

Senator MacEachen: Yes. I will provide a copy of the *Hansard* in which the agreement is contained.

Senator Phillips: The agreement would not apply if the bill were returned.

Senator MacEachen: They never mentioned the Senate. We did not even exist in their minds.

Senator Murray: We meet every morning with them.

Senator Phillips: Do those in the other place realize that Senator MacEachen is a member of the Senate? I am sure they must.

Senator MacEachen: I have never tried to conceal it.

Senator Phillips: I hope he will from here on in.

The Liberals are awfully keen to see the estimates. They are trying to create a smokescreen by suggesting that there is something in the estimates they may object to. They keep asking what this money is going to be used for.

Has any senator opposite looked at the national debt recently? Do they realize what legacy they left behind? Do they realize that the interest on the debt next year will be \$24 billion? The borrowing authority requested for the first three months of the next fiscal year would merely pay half the interest of their legacy. Need they ask any more questions regarding the reason for the borrowing? I would think they would be the last people in the world to be asking what that money is going to be used for. I repeat, honourable senators, the interest on the debt next year will be \$24 billion, which is \$2 billion per month.

Honourable senators opposite pretend to stand up and say they want fiscal responsibility. I wish the honourable senators opposite had adopted that attitude years ago and we would not be in debt for eternity because of their reckless spending.

In our discussions about the estimates, one thing disturbed me. Senator Sinclair started equivocating about when this bill would be passed after the estimates were presented. He wants the estimates to be studied. He has been a member of this chamber now for perhaps one or two years and he must know very well that the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance studies the estimates every year. In committee the other day, Senator Stewart expressed the same sentiment when Senator Roblin asked for a guarantee that Bill C-11 would be passed as soon as the estimates were tabled. Then the expert on equivocation started shaking his head and retreating from his statement.

Honourable senators, let us have some clarification on that point. Will Bill C-11 be passed as soon as the estimates are tabled?

Some Hon. Senators: No.

Senator Phillips: Another "no."

Senator Sinclair: We still want an opportunity to look at them.

Senator Phillips: What is their intention in that regard?

Senator Sinclair: Within the next week.

Senator Phillips: Honourable senators, since I know there will be a number of questions, I will omit some of the points in