

bring down legislation for the abolition of closure. I believe that all members of this chamber should approve that legislation.

I turn now to redistribution. In the Speech from the Throne the Government says:

To ensure that the redistribution of electoral districts is made objectively and impartially, you will be asked to approve a bill to establish an independent commission to recommend redistribution.

All parties, I suppose, have been guilty of gerrymandering, which is the political term used in connection with redistribution. Of course, the shining example of that was the Lake Centre riding. Before redistribution the Lake Centre riding was held by the present Prime Minister of Canada, and when the redistribution report was brought in all that was left of the Lake Centre riding was the lake. I do not know—perhaps the committee had a particular candidate in mind—but I might suggest that Jonah of Biblical times would have been an excellent candidate for the lake. However, the man who had held the Lake Centre seat had the courage to run in a renowned Liberal constituency, which seat he won, and he has won it on successive occasions since. I say that this Government, and the Prime Minister in particular, are to be commended for bringing in an objective and impartial measure, in the form of an independent commission, to decide how electoral redistribution should be made.

Honourable senators, I also wish to congratulate the Government on its winter works program. The Minister of Labour has been working in close co-operation with provincial and municipal governments and governments at every level. This program is working well, and is creating much employment.

I come now to the speech of my friend the honourable senator from Brantford (Hon. Mr. Macdonald). He talked at length about minority governments. As the honourable senator from Carleton (Hon. Mr. O'Leary) pointed out, minority governments have been known since the days of Pitt the Younger in England. In 1921 the then leader of the Liberal party, the Right Honourable Mackenzie King, had a minority government, and he faced the House of Commons with it. With that minority government he governed the country from 1921 to 1930 with the exception of a few months in 1926.

What has happened in the province of Ontario? My friend the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) and my friend the honourable senator from Toronto-Spadina (Hon. Mr. Croll) were members of the Liberal Government in Ontario, until differences occurred. I am not going to say anything about that, but they were

ministers of the Liberal Government in Ontario. What happened in 1943? The Liberal Government of that day, under the Honourable Harry Nixon, a very fine man, held about 60 or 70 seats, and when the election was over the Liberals had retained only 15 seats.

The Conservative party, led by the Honourable George Drew, had 38 seats, and I believe that the C.C.F., as it was then called, had 34. In that situation was there any suggestion made by my friends opposite that the Honourable George Drew did not have a mandate? They were greatly relieved that he and not the C.C.F. was in the driver's seat. There was no call for the immediate assembly of the legislature of Ontario. The election was held on August 4, and the legislature did not meet until sometime in February. Did we hear any hue and cry about a minority government, that no appointments should be made? Not a word.

Then we come to 1957, and what happened then? I take issue with my friend the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Macdonald, Brantford) when he says that the leader of the Liberal party, the Honourable Mr. Pearson, made the greatest comeback ever in history.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Willis: What about the situation in 1957? In the House of Commons the Progressive Conservatives had 51 supporters before the election, and after the election they returned to the house with 112 seats, a gain of 61. The Liberal party, under Mr. Pearson, returned 48 members to the House of Commons. In the last election he was returned with a total of 100 members, a gain of 52. So our gain in 1957 still topped by nine his gain in the last election. I just point that out to keep the record straight. In 1957, when the Liberals had 105 seats and the Conservatives 112, was there any suggestion made by the renowned constitutional authority, the Prime Minister of the day, the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent, that he should not give up office to the then Leader of the Opposition? Of course, I do not know, but I heard there were two or three dissenting cabinet ministers. However, the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent knew his constitutional history, and he immediately tendered his resignation to the Governor General of the day, who called upon the now Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker to form a government.

Was there any suggestion that that was a minority government? Was there any suggestion that he should not appoint judges, senators or others to official positions? Senators