

member for Bow River, issued a statement calling for an elected Senate.

I wrote the honourable member for Crowfoot and asked him to tell me the advantages he found in an elected Senate. He replied with a long dissertation on the causes of western alienation, which ranged from Louis Riel through to the National Energy Program, but did not give any reason for the Senate being the source of any western alienation.

The honourable member for Bow River was much more brief and probably a bit more accurate. He said the Senate would pass anything. I agree with him on that, the Senate will pass anything, but, honourable senators, I point out that the major source of alienation in western Canada is the National Energy Program. That did not originate in the Senate; that originated in the House of Commons and was passed by that elected body.

If elected members are that much more efficient, and that much more representative, one would anticipate that the House of Commons would not do that type of thing, yet I am sure the honourable member for Bow River would be the first to maintain that the House of Commons did that very thing.

I should now like to spend a moment or two on the presentation by Senator Roblin. He went on to develop the thesis that we should have an elected Senate, but then he paused and said: Watch it! That is dangerous to the House of Commons. We have to first of all protect the House of Commons. We can't have another elected body interfering with the House of Commons. That would mean the House of Commons would become even less significant than it is today. I fail to see, honourable senators, if both houses of Parliament are going to be elected, why they should not have equal power and equal responsibility.

Does Senator Roblin find political legitimacy in a second-class franchise that he does not find in the Senate today?

He then went on to that old red herring about the government appointing members to various regional and national bodies, and having such appointments approved by the Senate. He said that this could be a function of a Senate with reduced powers—powers vastly inferior to those of the House of Commons.

Honourable senators, I fail to see how a meeting of the Senate to approve the appointment of Mrs. Killjoy from Kinburn, Ontario, to the National Capital Commission would help the Premier of Alberta in his efforts to be represented in the central government.

Senator Roblin also suggested that the Senate could approve appointments to the Supreme Court of Canada. Asking a prospective appointee to the Supreme Court of Canada if he had ever signed an abortion paper is not going to help Premier Peckford of Newfoundland in his offshore oil dispute.

Honourable senators, as far as I am concerned, that would be a complete and utter waste of time.

Having established that we should have an elected Senate, Senator Roblin went on to say: Yes, an elected Senate, but for God's sake do not have an election; we have to find another

way of electing the Senate without having an election. He then looked around and came up with proportional representation and found certain merit in that. The leaders would select the candidates, and set their order of preference. If a party received 40 per cent of the vote, then that party would get 40 per cent of the appointments to the Senate.

That does not seem very democratic. I can see our current leaders having fun with that. Everybody would be expected to be very loyal and servile. If one disagreed with the leader, one would be placed 110th on a list of 50. I cannot quite see John Turner, Brian Mulrooney or Rosemary Brown—

Hon. Richard A. Donahoe: Even John Turner would have trouble.

Senator Frith: Or Dennis McDermott.

Senator Phillips:—making the list. John Turner wouldn't even get a royal commission.

I know this method is used in Germany and is often widely presented, but, honourable senators, I have a hard time accepting Germany as the fountain of democracy. As far as I am concerned, Germany gave us the Anabaptists and the Nazis, neither of which were interested in democratic government.

After the leader has selected them, the candidates can be approved or rejected by the public. In Russia, the Secretary of the Communist Party selects the candidates and says: You can have an election; you can approve them or reject them. We are getting dangerously close to that in some of Senator Roblin's suggestions.

The next one was transferral of votes. That is a unique idea. That means the losers win; the guy with the least votes is elected. Canadians often look around for something unique and distinctively Canadian, but I really do not think that Canadians want to be so distinctive as to adopt the motto: The last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

Honourable senators, in following Senator Roblin's argument, we have gone full circle. We started out with an appointed body, got to an elected body, and have now retreated back to just one minor difference—that is, the leader selects the candidates, and you can approve them or reject them. I wonder if it is worth our while neglecting all the problems facing this country and discussing an elected Senate just for that minor distinction.

Now, I do not want to forget the seconder of the motion.

Senator Marshall: Who is the seconder?

Senator Phillips: Senator Deschatelets.

● (1510)

If Barnum and Bailey had seen Senator Deschatelets coming in this case, they would not have said they needed a sucker every minute but they would have said once a week would do.

Quebec has traditionally guarded its special status within Confederation. As I said earlier, it has 23 per cent of the vote in this chamber. Once we start discussing an elected Senate, then discussion turns to so many from each province—or state,