

of waging war, but with those related to the achievement of a fuller measure of social justice and security, prosperity and happiness, for our own citizens and those of the other nations of the world.

This prospect would seem to signal a broadened horizon of activity for the Senate as one of the two Houses of our Canadian Parliament. As was pointed out by the honourable gentleman from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen), during the six years we have been at war the normal functions of this House have been very considerably restricted. For the purpose of most effectively mobilizing the resources of our nation to meet and defeat belligerent aggressors, Parliament has seen fit to delegate to the Governor-General in Council and to Crown agencies much of its law-making powers. Whether or not we agree that these delegated powers always have been exercised wisely, none would venture to argue that the principle of delegation under the impact of war was not a sound one. However, one of the practical results of this step has been to leave the Senate much less opportunity to perform its normal function in the scheme of Confederation. The overriding needs of the emergency reduced to comparative unimportance matters associated with the rights and interests of minorities, not to mention the rights and interests and even the liberties of individuals, with all of which the Senate of Canada normally must be concerned.

On other occasions, both in and out of this Chamber, I have ventured to draw attention to the position which is held by the Senate of Canada in our parliamentary structure. Incidentally, I should like to seize upon this opportunity to convey to honourable senators an expression of my gratitude for the great honour which they conferred upon me at the last session by spreading on the pages of the Senate Hansard a copy of a speech made by me upon this topic at the city of Hamilton.

I do not intend to burden this House with a repetition of what I have previously said on the general subject of the Senate. I merely seek the indulgence of honourable senators for the purpose of respectfully pointing out what seem to me to be the expanding opportunities which now lie before this branch of Parliament. I am convinced that no position in our parliamentary scheme of things, excepting only membership in the Cabinet, offers greater scope for public service than membership in the Senate. Here we are free of motives of political prejudice; we are independent of the whims and fancies of public favour. We need be concerned only with a desire to act in the best interests of all sections of the Canadian people.

Notwithstanding these considerations, it would be folly not to recognize that the Senate of Canada, as a branch of our Parliament, has suffered a very substantial loss of prestige in the eyes of the Canadian public. It has been referred to as an "anachronism" and a "political limbo". It is so long since it has left any positive impression on the public conscience that many misunderstandings have arisen as to its purpose and its powers. In fact, in the writings of certain learned gentlemen who claim to be authorities on the constitutional aspects of Canadian Government, one can find considerable evidence of ignorance of the work of the Senate. Not long ago, I was amazed to hear it said by a distinguished member of the legal profession, one who ought to have known better, that the Senate has no power to initiate legislation. More recently a Saskatoon newspaper, in commenting upon the appointment of the honourable senator from Vancouver-Burrard (Hon. Mr. McGeer) described this House as the "sommolent arena". I am sorry that the honourable gentleman is not at the moment in his seat, but knowing him as we all do I am sure that none of us expect him now to fall asleep.

One does not like to recall these unpleasant references to the Senate, but if there is to be a realistic appreciation of the status of this body in the public mind it would seem necessary that we be frank with ourselves and also with the people of Canada. The shadow of the Senate undoubtedly has been growing less and less. If it is not to disappear entirely something must be done to improve the place of the Senate in the parliamentary sun. As every honourable senator knows, I am by no means the first member of this Chamber to address myself to this subject. In our records, dating from shortly after the Act of Confederation, there will be found expressions of a similar nature. Time and again it appears that efforts have been made by the Senate to induce the Government to give it more work to do, so that it may share more directly with the House of Commons the legislative burden. But almost all such attempts have proven abortive.

If, in their wisdom, governments see no advantage in using the facilities of the Senate, then, it would seem to me, this honourable House must formulate and execute its own programme for better serving the purpose for which it was created.

If honourable senators will give some thought to the way in which our Parliament functions as compared with the Congress of the United States, they will realize that, whatever the technical position may be, there is