

That the Committee have power to report from time to time, to send for persons, papers and records, and to examine witnesses and to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the Committee;

That the Committee be empowered to retain professional, clerical and stenographic help as may be required;

That a quorum of the Committee be four members, whenever a vote, resolution or other decision is taken, so long as both Houses are represented and that the Joint Chairmen be authorized to hold meetings, to receive evidence and authorize the printing thereof, when three members are present so long as both Houses are represented; and

That a Message be sent to the House of Commons to inform that House accordingly.

He said: Honourable senators, Senator Murray, the distinguished former joint chairman of this joint committee, is with us. I assume the wording meets with his approval and I therefore ask that honourable senators support the motion.

Motion agreed to.

● (1440)

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

#### MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate resumed from Thursday, December 8, consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's Speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Senator Bosa, seconded by Senator Hébert, for an Address in reply thereto.

**Hon. John M. Macdonald:** Honourable senators, as I listened to my acting leader, Senator Roblin, telling me what short speeches I make, I must confess that I thought he might be trying to convey a message to me today for some reason or another.

**Hon. Royce Frith (Acting Leader of the Government):** Perhaps he would like them longer.

**Senator Macdonald:** In participating in the debate on the motion for an Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne I wish, first, to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion and then to associate myself with the Acting Leader of the Opposition and the Acting Leader of the Government in complimenting them on the excellence of their performance. Speaking personally, I know that Senator Bosa will not mind if I pay a special tribute to Senator Hébert. After all, we have heard Senator Bosa speak at various times and we have come to expect a good speech from him—and, I may add, he never disappoints us. However, it was Senator Hébert's first speech in this chamber and that made it much more difficult for him. As I listened to him, it seemed to me he sounded like a veteran member. Indeed, he made an excellent presentation, he gave an excellent speech. I look forward to hearing him speak many times in this chamber.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Senator Macdonald:** I also wish to compliment the Acting Leader of the Opposition, Senator Roblin. As is his custom, he gave an impressive address. I thought Senator Frith did exceptionally well, especially when one considers how little of substance he had to speak about.

In making a few comments on the contents of the Speech from the Throne I want to be kind to, and considerate of, the feelings of the government, since I know that no matter how bad its record is—and it is very bad—it is doing the best it can. Thus, I keep in mind two things. First, I do not regard the Speech as a blueprint for either immediate or, indeed, remote action, but rather as a vague, general statement of pious intentions. Second, I regard it chiefly as a pre-election manifesto which in some way or other tries to appeal to all voters. I think the Speech must have been written in the forlorn hope that a kind electorate would overlook and forgive the wretched performance of the government over the past few years, especially its dismal performance in matters affecting the economic life of Canadians.

To be fair, the Speech does contain some matters which, if implemented, deserve support. I suppose all Throne Speeches do. Certainly, the emphasis on youth employment, especially the provision for first-job opportunities, is commendable. I hope legislation to realize this end will be introduced soon. I also welcome the proposal to assist single pensioners by increasing the supplement paid to them, and I hope that proposal, too, will be implemented soon.

I can see great possibilities in two new programs mentioned in the Speech, namely, the incentive to hire Canadians through a national voluntary service and the creation of a conservation co-op to employ Canadians to carry out essential tasks in reforestation and national park development. This could be the beginning of a permanent source of good employment for a large number of people. I look forward with interest to hearing more about these two matters.

Honourable senators, having made all these nice comments about the Speech, in fairness I must make some mild criticism of its contents and lack thereof. I certainly believe that, when the Speech is examined as a whole, any fair-minded person will agree that it is a pretty dismal document. By proclaiming now, even in general terms, all the matters it believes it should proclaim, the government is, in effect, saying one of two things. To this point in time either it has not been aware of the economic and social problems faced by Canadians—especially those Canadians without employment and, in too many cases, with no hope of employment—or it has been aware of them. It is difficult to believe that even this government could be so out of touch with reality as to be unaware of them, but if the government did know of these hardships, then it must stand condemned before the bar of public opinion for not taking massive action before now to remedy, or at least alleviate, the economic evils which have, and are having, a very serious and depressing effect on not only the unemployed but also those who fear the threat of unemployment. With respect to the unemployed we can count as many as two million of our people.