

equal in authority and responsibility with the House of Commons, and which numbered in its membership men of vast experience and wide general knowledge, could not be made more use of in the general business of the country. I returned to the Senate, and in an informal way discussed this conversation with some of my colleagues. The idea which had been advanced had a mixed reception. Some members were very much in favour of it and, indeed, never ceased to urge me to do something about it; others were not so certain about it. I recall one friend, who is not in the Senate now, but whose judgment I depended upon a great deal, being opposed to it. He did not argue that sometime, somehow, some changes would not have to be made, but he said to me: "Your position is that of the government leader in the Senate, your responsibility is to the government, to initiate legislation and get it through, and the better you are able to accomplish that the better you will discharge your responsibility to those who appointed you to office. True, you are also leader of the Senate, but that is only incidental; your primary position is that of government leader". He went on to say: "You are relatively new in this position, and my advice to you is to concentrate on the business of doing what you were appointed to do and not worry too much about the Senate. It has withstood a good many attacks and suggested changes of one kind and another. My advice to you is to concentrate on carrying out the duties of government leader." That advice was very easy to follow then, and is perhaps as easy to follow now. Primarily my position was as outlined in that statement. The government leader comes into this house without having been chosen by his colleagues. I do not know what goes on behind the scenes, but the peculiar fact is that the members of the Senate have nothing whatever to do with the choice of their leader, except to the extent that some of them may be able to influence the government of the day.

So, honourable senators, from that day to this, with one or two minor exceptions, I have done nothing about the matter. But it has been very much in my mind. I was very proud and happy to be appointed to this house. I consider appointment to the Senate to be one of the greatest honours that can come to anyone. It gives one an opportunity to render outstanding service to one's country, particularly at a time when it is in need of outstanding service, for, as Mr. King said, the complexity of the problems that this country faces and will continue to face is very great. So far as I am concerned, I have

never ceased to thank my lucky stars that I was appointed to the Senate, because I have been in the past, and still am, desirous of doing more than I have done.

May I say also that I have been delighted to be associated with the men and women who are members of this house. I doubt if it is possible to find anywhere else, under one roof, such an accumulation of talent and of business and professional experience. We have among our members, as we have had in the past, leading newspaper publishers, men who have achieved great distinction in other lines of business, men representing in a senior way all the primary industries, prime ministers of provinces, senior ministers of the Crown in both the federal and provincial fields—in short, men of such wide experience and eminent ability in various spheres throughout this country as to be able to cope intelligently with any question that comes before parliament. And it is to me, as Mr. King said it was to him, a matter of deep regret that, because of circumstances that do not seem to be the responsibility of any particular member, only a small fraction of the ability and experience of our members is utilized.

I repeat that I am proud of being a member of the Senate of Canada. So far as I know, almost every country in the world has a second legislative chamber in some form or other. The reasons that brought this institution into being at the time of confederation have kept it in being ever since, and in my judgment they will keep it in being, in one form or another, as long as Canada lasts.

But while I am proud to be part of this institution, I regret to have to say that I do not think it holds in the public mind today the degree of prestige to which its past, present and potential usefulness entitles it. My placing of this notice of motion on the order paper was not prompted by anything said to me by the Prime Minister, or by any member of the government or of this house, although one or two senators have from time to time urged me to do something about the matter. If you like, it was my own conscience that prompted me to the extent that I, a split personality so to speak—partly a representative of the government, and to some degree at least leader of the house—thought that I should do something. Therefore I have placed this motion before the house.

I am not going to promise that I shall not take up the time of the house for some time yet. What I am going to suggest that the Senate should do is perhaps not very different