

In less controversial and contentious areas than inflation, unemployment and energy, the government has promised numerous pieces of legislation; for instance, measures aimed at putting an end to any unfair distinction in rail tariffs—a rather vague term; a new port policy; the creation of a centre for the development of urban transport; numerous amendments to the statutes of Canada in order to ensure equality of treatment to women, and a host of amendments to various acts.

In the light of the experience gathered from the previous session it is difficult to imagine how the government will succeed in having Parliament pass more than a handful of the bills mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. The last session has shown that it is not the government, but rather the NDP which takes the initiative and determines the legislative program of Parliament.

It is clear that Mr. Lewis wants to do again what he did last session and to get angry at more or less regular intervals in order to force the government to introduce minor bills which will enable him to continue to claim that a minority government under his wing is the best solution for Canadians.

This situation remains nothing short of strange and illogical. How long will the government let the business of Parliament, indeed the nation's business, be controlled by a slight minority of members? Will they let 31 members, representing 17 per cent of the electorate, call the tune for more than 230 members chosen by 80 per cent of the electors?

A change is imperative in the House of Commons and it will come only with a new general election. In the interest of the country, I hope it will come soon.

[English]

**Hon. Mr. Buckwold:** Before the Leader of the Government rises to speak, I wonder if I may be allowed to ask a question of Senator Flynn.

**Hon. Mr. Flynn:** Or two.

**Hon. Mr. Buckwold:** Just one. The Leader of the Opposition, during the course of his address, made the serious charge—

**Hon. Mr. Asselin:** Give your leader a chance to speak.

**Hon. Mr. Buckwold:** I am merely going to ask a question.

**Hon. Mr. Walker:** Well, why don't you?

**Hon. Mr. O'Leary:** You are making a speech. Ask the question.

**Hon. Mr. Buckwold:** I have only just stood up. The Leader of the Opposition has made a charge against the government of serious mismanagement of the economy in so far as food prices are concerned. He referred to the fact that food prices rose 17 per cent during the past year. My question is: Do I gather from the comments of the Leader of the Opposition that he and his party begrudge the farmers of Canada a return on their investment of capital and labour that will finally give them adequate recompense, and make up for the many years when they sold their products, very often, at less than the cost of production?

**Hon. Mr. Flynn:** The interpretation put on my remarks by the honourable senator is entirely wrong. I suggest that he read my speech tomorrow, at which time he might possibly understand it.

**Hon. Paul Martin:** Honourable senators, at the opening of this new session of Parliament may I extend to Madam Speaker our assurance of confidence in her and the charming and able way in which she presides over our affairs.

Madam Speaker, you bring honour and credit to the Senate.

I agree with Cheryl Hawkes of the Canadian Press who, in writing about our proceedings, said of Madam Speaker:

Close friends say she is obviously in her element, meeting and bringing people together with her warm and likeable personality. She looks younger and healthier as Speaker, they say, than she did when serving on Senate committees, making trips to China, Hungary, Africa or Washington with parliamentary delegations and speaking to groups across the country.

Their Excellencies Governor General and Mrs. Michener have departed from Rideau Hall after seven years of active and dedicated service to the Crown and to Canada.

Roland Michener, a former Member of the House of Commons, later its Speaker, succeeded the late Georges Vanier as Governor General of Canada. He did not come directly to the office of Governor General from the political arena. After he left the House of Commons he was invited to join Canada's diplomatic service, and served with distinction as our ambassador in Delhi, India. Canadians have extended to the Micheners their appreciation and high regard for the service rendered while they were at Rideau Hall. When we thank Mr. Michener, we add our warmest thanks to his wife, whom we know for her interest in so many enterprises and, more particularly, if I may say so, for her interest in Thomistic philosophy as a student at the Medieval Institute under the eminent Professor Étienne Gilson.

[Translation]

The New Governor General, His Excellency Jules Léger, delivered the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the second session of the 29th Parliament of Canada.

Having been acquainted with His Excellency for many years, I can speak advisedly about him. As pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, he has a wide experience in several fields; he was a newspaperman; he filled several key posts in the civil service, more especially in two departments, External Affairs and Secretary of State. His very extensive knowledge will be quite useful in the carrying out of his new duties. He was ambassador of Canada in Mexico, Italy, France and Belgium. In short, he will fill with dignity the high office entrusted to him by Her Majesty the Queen on the government advice.

Mrs. Léger who is well known for her charm, her personality and her graciousness will be a valuable support for her husband who will be called to travel throughout Canada.

The former Governor General, the late Georges Vanier, has shown the importance of Canadian unity. His Excellency the Governor General will contribute to the understanding and the greatness of our Confederation proceed-