

THE SENATE

Wednesday, September 28, 1949

The Senate met at 3 p.m. the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

NEW SENATORS INTRODUCED

The following newly-appointed senator was introduced and took his seat:

Hon. William Alexander Fraser, of Trenton, Ontario, introduced by Hon. A. B. Copp and Hon. W. D. Euler.

PRIVATE BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Mr. Turgeon presented Bill E, an Act to incorporate Alberta Natural Gas Company.

The bill was read the first time.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Senate resumed from yesterday, the consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's Speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Hon. Mr. Godbout for an address in reply thereto.

Hon. A. W. Roebuck: Honourable senators, may I first join in the felicitations already offered by others to the new Speaker of this house. I should like to congratulate him upon attaining his present high office, which already he has demonstrated he can grace. I also wish to congratulate the two eminent senators who moved and seconded the motion for the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and I should like to extend my warmest welcome to the new members who recently joined us in this chamber, particularly the honourable senator from Trenton (Hon. Mr. Fraser), who has just taken his seat. He is an old friend, having been the member for Northumberland in another place. I hope that he and his fellow-freshmen, those who have come to us since the opening of this session, may enjoy their stay with us and find many opportunities for public service. I am sure the new member from Trenton, by his work and contribution in this house, will enhance the already high reputation which he brings with him.

I remember most keenly the great kindness with which I was received when I, together with other new members of that day, took my place in this chamber in 1945. The courtesy and good will with which my fellow-members accepted my opening statements, and the tolerance which they exhibited at

that time—and which I hope they will continue to exhibit—were of the utmost assistance in setting me at ease and making me happy in the atmosphere of the Senate. I only hope that we senators who are now sophomores, may not fail in our welcome and kindness to the newcomers who have just arrived as freshmen. I am sure these honourable gentlemen will enjoy the public service which this house makes it possible for them to render, and I am equally sure that the Senate of Canada will benefit by their presence here. I hope they will join in our debates and add their opinions and views to those of the older members.

Honourable senators, my task at the moment is to address you on the Speech from the Throne. I notice that the Speech forecasts a considerable amount of important legislation. Outstanding among the items mentioned is, first, the abolition of appeals to the Privy Council and, in consequence, the making of our own Supreme Court of Canada the court of final appeal for Canadian cases.

The second measure is the alteration of the British North America Act to permit of amendments by direct action of the Canadian parliament, rather than indirectly, as in the past, by resolution adopted by our parliament and acted upon by the parliament at Westminster. With the general purposes of both these proposals I for one am entirely in accord; but it seems to me that in the present speech I can perhaps make the greatest contribution by confining my discussion to the current problems of trade and finance, which were discussed with such clarity, force and excellence by the senator from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) last night. He read, and with some diffidence in following so notable a lead I propose to repeat, this paragraph from the Speech from the Throne:

Although the nations of Western Europe have made substantial progress towards recovery from the ravages of war, they have not yet been able to restore completely their economic strength. Their shortage of dollars continues, and international trade remains in a state of unbalance. The government is seeking by all appropriate means to cooperate in measures to restore economic equilibrium. The achievement of a pattern of world trade in which the trading nations can operate together within one single multilateral system continues to be the ultimate aim of my government.

The fact that the senator from Inkerman and I are both addressing ourselves to the same topic is, I can assure the house, a matter of chance and not of conspiracy.

In that paragraph Great Britain's shortage of Canadian dollars with which to purchase commodities in Canada seems to be attributed to the ravages of war. Of course honourable senators, the past is always a factor in the present, and in this as in many other matters the war is always a convenient excuse