

hors Québec, for its part, recommended in 1979 that a House of the Federation be created, with elected members.

The Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, in its 1980 report on certain aspects of the Canadian Constitution, better known as the Goldenberg-Lamontagne report, recommended that although all appointments to the Senate should continue to be made by the federal Government, every second appointment should be made from a list of names submitted by the provincial or territorial Government concerned. The primary criterion would be to maintain a good balance in the representation of different segments of society and of the expertise required for effective performance of the Senate's functions.

If I continue with this, it will show Canadians are right in their observation that all they have done around this place is have reports on the Senate. For example, I could go on to talk about the Quebec Liberal Party, which presented proposals in its beige paper; "A New Canadian Federation".

**An Hon. Member:** What party is that? Are they still there?

**Mr. McDermid:** They are still around, I understand.

In 1981 the Canada West Foundation revised its previous position. In 1982 the government of Alberta published its position in a discussion paper entitled "A Provincially Appointed Senate: A New Federalism for Canada".

Finally, I come to the report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons known as the Molgate-Cosgrove Committee on Senate Reform, which report was released in January, 1984. That report concluded that the Canadian Senate should be elected directly by the people of Canada. It would strengthen the authority of Parliament to speak and act on behalf of Canadians in all parts of the country.

However, the committee noted that its conclusion was not reached lightly or easily. It summarized the differences of views in these frank terms:

● (1630)

Although a substantial part of the testimony we heard favoured direct election, a roughly equal part opposed it, mainly on the grounds that a Parliament with two elected houses cannot be reconciled comfortably with the principle of responsible government as it has operated in the British and Canadian traditions. Some highly respected people in public life and in the academic community prefer a reformed system of appointment to election. Among this group is one member of our Committee.

Thus I come back, Mr. Speaker, to my original question, after all those divergent views, namely what sort of fundamental reform of the Senate should be undertaken. Is there any way to ensure that a constitutional conference at this time could eliminate forthwith the absolute veto of the current appointed Senate, which is the most pressing concern for this House, and, at the same time, put into place a new or reformed body? I think not, Mr. Speaker, not if such reform is to be carried out in a considered and orderly fashion that allows for a full examination of the different options and the eventual achievement of consensus. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we

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must first deal with the absolute veto of the present Senate before we commit ourselves to a process of reform which will take time to conclude successfully.

I am hopeful, now that all these reports are in, that this Government will in the next three or four years, once it tackles the depressing economic concerns of this country, take time to examine these reports and recommendations and bring forward a recommendation so we can start the very important process of Senate reform which is so badly needed.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the applause from all sides of the House being afforded me at this time.

**An Hon. Member:** Only for the moment.

**Mr. Boudria:** I am pleased to participate in this debate. It is the third such debate we have had in the last several days on reform of the Senate. I was not party to the second debate, but as you will recall I participated in the debate on the motion proposed by the Hon. Member for Scarborough West (Mr. Stackhouse) the other day in which, if my memory serves me correctly, he wanted reform of the Senate, but in his view if we failed to reform the Senate, we should abolish it. I took exception to that remark. In my view in no way should we as Canadians ever undertake to dismantle one of our parliamentary institutions.

We have often said that our parliamentary institutions are in danger right now with the large concentration of power the executive has over our legislative branches of government. It is obvious to me that if we eliminate one of the branches of our legislative part of government, we will, therefore, pass that power on to the executive. We will have more and more concentration of power and that worries me, Mr. Speaker.

We should also remember, as I indicated the other day in a speech I made in this House, that the Senate in the past has been a very useful instrument. It has been very effective. We often measure any form of initiative by any perceived or otherwise efficiency that it may have had or that we think it may have had. We should, however, measure any institution by its successes. I referred the other day to the Parliament that was elected in 1979 which had only two Government Members from the Province of Quebec. One of the two founding linguistic groups of our nation was represented in the Government by only two Members. We had a very difficult situation at that time. Without the Senate it would have been impossible for the Prime Minister of the day to appoint Members to the upper House, prominent Francophones, subsequently being able to appoint them as Cabinet Ministers.

**An Hon. Member:** Pierre Juneau.

**Mr. Boudria:** The Hon. Member on the other side will recall that in 1979 the now President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret) as well as Senator Asselin and a number of others were appointed to the Senate in order for that province to be represented in the Cabinet of our country. I am sure the Member sitting across from me would be the first to agree that