

THE SENATE

Monday, February 5, 1951

The Senate met at 8 p.m., the Acting Speaker (Hon. J. H. King) in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Senate resumed from Thursday, February 1, consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Hon. Mr. Stambaugh for an Address in reply thereto.

Hon. John T. Haig: Honourable senators, I am in a very fortunate position, for as none of my party colleagues are yet in the chamber, the party for the time being is unanimous in its approval of the words I am going to utter tonight.

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Hon. Mr. Haig: There is not a single dissenter.

I first want to join with the mover (Hon. Mr. Stambaugh) and the seconder (Hon. Mr. Dessureault) of the Address in offering congratulations to the Governor General on the renewal of his term of office for another year. I am one of many who wish it had been renewed for another five years, for he has been a great credit to Canada and has given distinguished leadership in the difficult times through which we have been passing.

I wish to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address. The mover is a comparatively new member of this house, and he acquitted himself well as a representative of the province of Alberta. I was unable to follow all that the seconder said while he was speaking, but I have since read a translation of his speech in *Hansard*, and he also made an excellent effort.

The usual practice in the debate on the Address is for the first opposition speaker to discuss the Speech from the Throne in some detail; but although many things worthy of discussion are mentioned in the Speech, I do not propose to follow that practice tonight.

The fact is that this session has been called to consider two matters, the first of which could be put under the heading of either international affairs or defence. Under present conditions those two headings are synonymous. The second question, which has not been dealt with as fully as it might have been, is the cost of living. I shall deal with these two problems to the best of my ability.

I should first like to say a word about the United Nations. I have said on previous occasions, and I repeat it now, that I am in favour of the continuation of the United Nations. I readily admit that that organization has made a great many mistakes. Time and again we have been concerned about its actions, and I have no doubt that a critic of that organization could find many mistakes to complain about. But I say most emphatically that until someone suggests a better method for the settlement of the differences of the nations of the world, I know of no other way than that of meeting around the table in the United Nations organization.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Haig: In my professional experience, and in life generally, I have found that the differences between men and women can best be settled by meeting around the table. The differences never seem so great when both sides are present. Like some other honourable senators, I have had the honour of attending the United Nations organization as a Canadian representative, and while I was disappointed and at times angry about its operations, when I thought about the matter afterwards I wondered what I could have suggested that would have been any better.

I turn next to the matter of the agreement among the twelve Atlantic nations, called the Atlantic Treaty. While I will touch only briefly on this subject, I wish to say that our government, along with other governments, is entitled to a good deal of credit for the organization of this body. In my general discussion of international affairs honourable senators may conclude that I am in doubt as to whether it will succeed. True, I have my doubts, and only the future will show; but the Atlantic Treaty gives us a chance to get the viewpoint of other countries, and this may be very important to us.

Before launching into my main topic I should like to touch on the question of the Canada Wheat Board. As the five-year pool has ended, this matter becomes most important to the three prairie provinces. During the five-year period there was handled approximately 1 billion 400 million bushels of wheat. I have no inside information, but my estimate, based on reports of the audit to the end of April last year, is that the balance of proceeds available for distribution amounts to five or six cents per bushel. If anybody wants to read the details—I do not know why he should—he can obtain in *Hansard* of June 12, 1950, the figures from the annual reports of the Canadian Wheat Board, which take into account the world price of wheat.