

THE SENATE

Thursday, March 7, 1974

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.
Prayers.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Leopold Langlois: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 45(1)(g), I move that when the Senate adjourns today it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, March 12, at 8 o'clock in the evening.

Motion agreed to.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from yesterday consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's Speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Senator Robichaud, seconded by Senator Perrault, for an Address in reply thereto.

Hon. Fred M. Blois: Honourable senators, like those who have preceded me in this debate I, too, wish to pay my respects and good wishes to Madam Speaker and compliment her on the dignified and impartial manner in which she presides over this chamber.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Blois: I am sure all honourable senators were pleased when Madam Speaker was appointed to preside over this very important office. I believe she is the only woman presiding over a second chamber in North America.

We wish you, Madam Speaker, continued success and good health during this second session of the Twentieth Parliament of Canada. When you were appointed to this high position all Maritimers were very proud of you. Your appointment as Speaker of the Senate was a wonderful compliment to you, your own province of New Brunswick and to all the Maritime provinces.

I wish to express my thanks to the Leader of the Government and to the deputy leader, on behalf of the members of my party in this chamber, for their co-operation with us. Also, I should like to express my own appreciation and, I am sure, that of all honourable senators, to the Clerk of the Senate, the First Clerk Assistant, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod and his staff, all of whom have been very helpful to honourable senators.

I want to express my personal appreciation to the Liberal Whip, Senator Buckwold, who worked with me when I had the pleasure of acting as Conservative Whip during the necessary absence of our Whip, Senator John M. Macdonald.

In passing on these few compliments, which are sincere on my part, I am not forgetting the charming page girls

who have been most kind to all of us and who have brightened this chamber with their smiles and deportment. I know these complimentary remarks are somewhat unusual, but I feel they are deserved, and, as I stated a moment ago, they are very sincere on my part.

I congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to the Speech from the Throne at the opening of this second session of the 29th Parliament. I think they did a very good job, considering the fact that they had to work hard at it. Naturally, I do not agree with everything they said, nor with their interpretation of the things mentioned in the Throne Speech. This is a country of free speech and everyone is entitled to his or her own personal views. Personally, I found the Speech from the Throne very vague, forcing one to try to read between the lines to see what the government had in mind.

Senator Perrault said that the Speech from the Throne reflects the concern of the government about the problems of inflation and rapid price escalation, because of which seemingly all Canadians must pay prices rising ten per cent or more every year without end. I remember that as far back as 1970 Prime Minister Trudeau stated that the government had inflation licked. In his speech Senator Perrault said:

So we have in the Throne Speech a number of measures designed to mitigate the effects of inflation.

If we have inflation licked, I wonder why we need these measures? For some time Mr. Trudeau has said that inflation in Canada is due to international factors, and that there is little the government can do. In fact, Mr. Trudeau has said that if a government cannot cope with self-induced inflation it deserves to be thrown out. I hope the people keep that in mind a little later this year, perhaps.

What are the real facts? Sixty per cent of our current inflation of 9.1 per cent is self-induced. International inflation may account for little more than one-third of our total inflation. Furthermore, the domestic or self-induced component of inflation has been escalating continuously since the last quarter of 1970, when Mr. Trudeau said that inflation was licked.

One senator who spoke earlier in our debate referred to the promises the government made in the Speech from the Throne read by His Excellency the Governor General. I do not recall one single definite promise. The Speech states that the government intends to revise farm prices and income structure, to guarantee farmers a stabilized income through joint government-farmer funds. It intends to prevent unreasonable increases in oil prices. It intends to establish a one-price oil marketing system, to set up a national petroleum corporation. It intends to develop a port policy. It intends to change the Bank Act, to facilitate provincial participation in bank ownership. It intends to