

Here is another editorial. It is headed, "Reforming the Senate". I shall read only two paragraphs:

Granted, an elected Senate would pose some problems, particularly in terms of resolving conflicts with the Commons. Considerable thought needs to be given to that point.

Nevertheless,—

Listen to this. You have been very good and very patient, and I thank you for that; but I want you to listen to this:

—I find it heartening that when Canadians think of regional representation in Ottawa they seem to feel that it is they, as regional federal electorates, who should be represented, rather than their provincial governments.

So far as I am concerned, that is merely another argument for extending the House of Commons, making it a bigger body than it is now, making it more unwieldy, adding to and augmenting the problem that is occasioned by the law as it now stands with respect to units of population.

Here is another editorial. It is headed, "Just imagine! A people Senate", and says:

Picture the people who would be available: doctors, civil servants, housewives, businessmen, teachers, students, sales people, secretaries, fishermen, mechanics—even (gasp) editors. Valuable and common-sense citizens who wouldn't touch politics with a barge pole. And a few weirdos for spice.

That is an article that has been cut from a reputable newspaper in Canada.

An Hon. Senator: Shame!

Senator Donahoe: The writer wants the people who are sitting in this chamber not to be former premiers, former attorneys general, former members of the House of Commons, valued people in their own communities, but the kind of people he has named, with a few weirdos thrown in for good luck.

Senator Frith: No change there.

Senator Donahoe: The public is being told that that is what is wanted, that what we have is no good, so let us go to something better. I do not consider myself to be a weirdo; I am merely a little eccentric. I do not consider myself to be a weirdo, and I do not believe that any honourable senator here is a weirdo. I do not consider that a weirdo has any place in this chamber or in making the laws of this country.

Then there is an article which deals with one of the premiers who gave their consent. I refer here to Premier Hatfield, who is of the same party as myself. He has changed his position. He now believes that Canada's Senate will never work. He spoke to students on this subject and said that the Senate debates on the Constitution were uninformed. I thought that my contribution was informed. I listened with great interest and disagreed most heartily with a number of propositions that were advanced by people on the other side, but never once did it occur to me to think that those who spoke were uninformed. If anyone is uninformed, I regret to say that I have to believe it is Premier Hatfield—

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Donahoe: —because were he well informed he would not make a speech of that kind.

Senator Marshall: He is one of the weirdos!

Senator Donahoe: He said that he does not believe that the Senate debates were informed. But I do not believe he knows what he is talking about when he makes that statement.

Senator Marshall: Right.

Senator Donahoe: Finally, to conclude—"And thank God," says someone—I shall read a brief editorial. It is the only one I saw which absolutely confirmed my own views. It is headed, "There is a Real Need For The Senate". I agree. I have been arguing all afternoon that we need a real Senate. It is very brief. I shall read it, and I promise that I shall then say very little.

• (1550)

Laboulaye said, in one of his lectures, that Jefferson, who had become so completely imbued with French ideas as even to admire the unicameral system of legislation, one day visited Washington at Mount Vernon, and, in the course of the conversation that ensued, the comparative excellence of the two systems came up for consideration.

They were discussing, in a friendly way, which is better, a bicameral house or a unicameral house.

After much had been said on both sides, finally, at the tea-table, Washington turning sharply to Jefferson, said, "You, sir, have just demonstrated the superior excellence of the bicameral system, by your own hand".

"How is that?" asked Jefferson.

"You have poured your tea from your cup out into the saucer to cool. We want the bicameral system to cool things. A measure originates in one house, and in heat is passed.—

Don't tell me there is no heat in the other place, because I know better.

—The other house will serve as a wonderful cooler; and, by the time it is debated and modified by various amendments there, it is much more likely to become an equitable law! No, we can't get along without the saucer in our system".

I am not an admirer of the American system, but it has one feature that we share with it; that is that we both have a bicameral legislature, and the function of cooling is attributable alike to the Senate of Canada and to the Senate of the United States. Washington said that the Senate of the United States was a cooler: I say that the Senate of Canada is a cooler. We do cause the other house to reflect; we give it time; we give it food for thought; and we do things to hastily considered propositions that reach us from time to time that have the effect of having those propositions reconsidered.

The editorial continues:

The same holds for Canada!