

*Bankruptcy Act*

this debate, in spite of the fact that it is the taking of the advice of some of them which results in the criticism of others.

Most of us will agree that the work which the Senate has done on this bill, and which it does on all the measures that are introduced in that body, is of an exemplary character. We are greatly indebted to the Senate for the work which it has done. But we see what happens in a short parliamentary session if we follow the advice of the hon. member for Lake Centre and have a large bill such as the Bankruptcy Act amendment bill introduced in the Senate which has more time to consider these matters than we have, and particularly at the end of the session. Their deliberations resulted in what has happened in the present case, namely, in the bill coming from the Senate to the House of Commons toward the end of the short session. The presentation of the bill in the Senate could hardly have had any other result than that which it has had, because they have given it careful consideration. That has taken time. The bill comes to the House of Commons and is dealt with as soon as a congested order paper will permit. From this house it will go to the banking and commerce committee and be considered by that committee in due course. This result I think was unavoidable because of the introduction of the bill in the Senate. It indicates that with a bill as large as this one proves to be, it may be impossible to get it cleared up in both houses in one short session unless it is introduced first in the House of Commons at a time when hon. members have more time to consider a matter of this kind, so that later consideration may be given to it in the Senate.

Under the present circumstances the government is quite disposed to heed the suggestions that have been made by the hon. members for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis), Lethbridge (Mr. Blackmore) and Inverness-Richmond (Mr. Carroll) that the passing of the bill be not pressed. We have no thought that it should be pressed. It is our desire that the duties of the house with respect to the bill be properly discharged, and that the bill be sent on to the banking and commerce committee for careful and adequate consideration. If it cannot be carefully and adequately considered there, it will not be reported back but will be reintroduced at the next session of parliament.

In view of the full and careful consideration which the Senate gave to this bill in its committee, where they heard various delegations, and the fact that many of the difficult points in connection with the bill were threshed out and disposed of, I should think,

sir, it might be surprising to hon. members how quickly it can be dealt with in the House of Commons committee. Hon. members, particularly those who are lawyers, will agree that what is required in measures of this kind in connection with difficult points that arise is clear thinking. Once that clear thought has been applied to these difficult problems, the disposition of them at some later stage, even by another body, is facilitated. A great deal of thought has been applied to these difficult problems in the Senate. A great deal of clear thought has been indicated by the various delegations which appeared before the committee of that body. I would hope that in view of the careful consideration which has been given to it by the Senate, and the fact that there are no important changes in the law other than those which I have stated—a matter really of four important changes—it might be possible to dispose of the bill in the House of Commons committee in a much shorter time than the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) thinks will be necessary. If it is not possible to dispose of it properly—and for that the committee will assume responsibility—then of course we have no desire to insist that it be passed at this session.

In conclusion I should like to make a comment on a matter which was referred to by the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker). He said there was nothing that could be done in the Department of Justice at the present time that would be of greater benefit to the country than to revise the statutes of Canada, which have not been revised for upwards of twenty years. He also referred to the necessity of revising the Criminal Code, which has not been properly revised for a much longer period than that. I should like to say, as I am sure that he himself upon reflection knows, that we have been seized of the desirability of the course which he urges, and that in the Department of Justice we have had for some time a committee revising and consolidating the Criminal Code, under the chairmanship of Chief Justice Martin of the province of Saskatchewan. We also have a committee considering the revision of the entire body of statutes of Canada, under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice of Canada, and considerable progress has been made. Indeed the bankruptcy bill is one of the steps in that general revision; because we are trying to have the Bankruptcy Act consolidated and revised with a view to its being then included in a new volume of the revised statutes.

I entirely agree with the suggestion that the hon. member for Lake Centre has made—