

sentient voice in this Chamber in regard to any remedial measure that may be proposed by the government.

There is one other question upon which I would like to say a few words, which was not touched by my hon. friend, but which was mentioned by the hon. gentleman from St. John (Mr. Daniel). It is in regard to the improvement of highways. I take no exception to the form in which the announcement touching this question is made in the speech from the Throne. The paragraph reads:

It is abundantly evident that the highways of Canada constitute an important part of an efficient scheme of transportation. The necessity for improving our existing facilities in this regard is manifest and a Bill will be introduced for the purpose of enabling the Dominion to co-operate with the provinces in the accomplishment of this most desirable purpose.

I would like to inform the newly appointed senators of the proceedings of last year in regard to this measure. A Bill was brought down in a crude form. I am using practically the expressions that fell from the lips of the right hon. leader of this government in the other Chamber. It was a hurried Bill which in his mind could well be improved, authorizing the government to take a vote of money to be distributed through the provinces. When the government was asked what would be the basis of that distribution, the leader in the other House said that it would be in proportion to the population or to the money voted annually to the provinces. When this Bill came here the Senate in effect said: 'We have the statement of the present government that this money will be divided in proportion to the population among the provinces. This is the government policy. We would like to have it in the Bill.' The reason we gave was obvious. We said: 'If we content ourselves with the declaration of the government and allow this Bill to pass as it is, this declaration may bind the present cabinet for one session, but may not bind it for a second session, and certainly will not bind its successors, and in what position will the Senate be if this policy be departed from? When the Act is passed the government will simply need to put a certain amount in the estimates

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for that object and the Senate will have no say in the matter as the Supply Bill cannot be amended in this Chamber. The Supply Bill has to be passed or rejected in toto. When we had the declaration of the leaders of both Houses that it was the policy of the government to distribute that money in proportion to population what harm was there in inserting that in the measure?' We amended it in that sense. We made another amendment. There was a clause which seemed to give the power, when the provinces were willing by resolution of their legislatures to the federal government to disburse that money themselves. We thought it was not the function of the federal government to construct highways, but that it was the duty of the provincial government so to do, or of the municipalities, and we struck out that clause, but we left in their entirety the conditions the federal government could impose on the provinces in the disbursement of that money. We sent those amendments to the Commons, but they refused to concur in them. In this instance the House of Commons lacked courtesy towards this Chamber. When there is no concurrence on amendments made by one Chamber and those amendments are persisted in a conference can be asked to endeavour to adjust the difficulty. The House of Commons did not ask us to confer on these amendments, and I quite understand why they did not do so. They would have been face to face with the official declarations of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Railways, Mr. Cochrane. We had simply put in that Bill the declaration of policy of the government, and yet newspapers tried to raise a hue and cry against this Upper Chamber for having killed a Bill for the improvement of highways.

I felt that my hon. friend the Government leader in this Chamber was not quite satisfied when the House of Commons refused these reasonable amendments of the Senate, and unless the government desire to create a grievance against this Chamber by coming back with the Bill as it was, they will, I hope, reintroduce it in a form more in harmony with their own expressed policy. I will add a word on a