

of the functioning of the Parliament of Canada, which stands at the apex of our governmental system.

Honourable senators, if I read Her Majesty's Speech from the Throne correctly, it seems to me that most of the Government bills to be introduced during this session will have financial implications which would prevent their introduction, in the first instance, in this chamber. So far as public legislation is concerned we will therefore be primarily concerned with so-called "money bills" which will have already passed the House of Commons. With regard to all such legislation, whether financial or otherwise, I have two principal comments. In the first place, I think that we would all do well to remember that the Senate has not, traditionally, resisted the adoption of any piece of Government legislation for which a government has received a clear popular mandate, whether as the result of a general election or otherwise. Nor would it, in my view, be inclined to do so in future, in the absence of the most compelling reasons for believing that the issue should be referred once again to the electorate.

So far as I am concerned, I propose to have full regard to these important precepts and principles. However, in so doing may I add this: there will be room for argument as to whether or not there has been a popular mandate for any particular bill. All Government bills will be examined in an honest endeavour to determine whether there has been such a mandate, but this examination will not be conducted in any unfair or hypercritical way.

In taking this stand, I am in good company and in step with history. Eminent statesmen in this house and in the other house have also been of this opinion. The Right Honourable Arthur Meighen has had something to say on this subject. Here are his words:

Where there is a mandate for legislation which comes before the Senate; where such legislation was clearly discussed and placed on the platform of the successful party in an election, then only in most exceptional circumstances should there be any attempt or desire on the part of the Upper House to refuse to implement a mandate by its concurring imprimatur. No one, however, who has thought the subject out can say that under no circumstances should legislation coming to the Senate from the Commons, though clearly supported by a popular mandate in an election, fail of support in the Second Chamber. It has been plainly and tersely enunciated by Sir John Macdonald, by George Brown and by Maritime statesmen, as well as by Taché of Quebec, that the Senate's duty, or one of its duties, is to see not only that wise legislation, having for its purpose nothing but the public good, is allowed, irrespective of mandate, to become law, but in certain conceivable events to see to it as well that the public of Canada, which may at one election have endorsed extraordinary proposals, has opportunity, if such proposals are of a particularly dangerous or revolutionary character,

to think the subject over again; in a word, that the Senate may, under certain circumstances, be allowed to appeal from the "electorate of yesterday" to the "electorate of tomorrow".

In the second place, as I have said before in this house, the Senate has often asserted, and on many occasions exercised, the right to amend money bills wherever the amendment would not increase the appropriation or any charge upon the people. On the other hand, I have also expressed the view that the Senate should not lightly, or without the most mature reflection, seek to alter the terms of a money bill in such a way as to affect materially the balance of ways and means. While reserving to the Senate its constitutional prerogatives I will, for my part, while in opposition continue to respect this important principle.

Finally, honourable senators, may I remark that this chamber, in accordance with my understanding of the intention of the Fathers of Confederation, is organized along party lines. However, party lines are not severely drawn in this chamber. There is an important judicial or quasi-judicial element in our principal transactions and deliberations, which we all recognize, and which I hope and pray will continue. A very great senator, the Honourable Raoul Dandurand, found himself during his tenure successively Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Government in the Senate just as, somewhat surprisingly, my honourable friend Senator Haig finds himself. At the same time I, equally surprising, find myself in the opposite position. May I quote the words of our distinguished predecessor in both offices, Senator Dandurand, in the Senate Debates of February 12, 1936:

The framers of the Confederation intended this chamber not to be a duplicate of the Commons . . . if we felt and acted as though we were, our usefulness as a second chamber would be gone. The Senate is not a duplicate of the House of Commons. We stand above the sharp divisions of party that exist in the other chamber, and we approach all questions with a desire to do our best for the general interest of the country.

Honourable senators, I do not feel that I could say more without weakening the effect of my earlier observations. May I simply repeat that throughout my whole term as Leader of the Government in the Senate I received the utmost courtesy and co-operation from the honourable senator who now holds that position, and I can assure this house that my endeavour will be to extend to the Leader of the Government at all times the same courtesy and co-operation.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Haig, the debate was adjourned.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 3 p.m.