

of these meetings. Let us hope that these meetings, which have been held each year since 1959, will become a well established tradition for years to come.

I know that you are most interested in knowing the stand taken by the Canadian delegates on certain important problems such as the Arctic, oil, gas and all sources of energy. I thought it was only fair, on my part, to leave to those honourable senators who were well prepared to meet their American colleagues, the responsibility to inform you of the discussions and especially the arguments put forward on both sides.

I now come back to an invitation I made at the beginning of my remarks. These are debatable questions and the most important ones confronting both governments today. You cannot expect to have a delegation share identical views on these debatable and contentious matters. This is why I am expressing a personal hope that honourable senators who do not share the views expressed at these meetings by our spokesmen from the Senate will take part in this debate at a later stage. I think it would be most interesting for us to have both sides of opinions expressed here, and it would be very interesting for the public opinion in this country.

On motion of Hon. Mr. O'Leary, debate adjourned.

The Hon. the Speaker (Hon. Mr. Deschatelets) resumed the chair.

#### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

PROPOSED STUDY OF PROCEDURES BY LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Monday, March 23, the adjourned debate on the motion of Hon. Mr. Martin that the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs be instructed to consider and, from time to time, to report on procedures for the review by the Senate of instruments made in virtue of any statute of the Parliament of Canada, and to consider in connection therewith any public documents relevant thereto.

**Hon. Maurice Lamontagne:** Honourable senators, I hope that my intervention this evening will have the effect of closing this debate and not starting a new one, as my last speech in this house did.

**Hon. Senator Martin:** You started a debate last week too.

[Hon. Mr. Deschatelets.]

**Hon. Mr. Lamontagne:** That is for a further debate which I hope we will have in this house also.

I would like, in trying to close this debate, to congratulate the Leader of the Government in the Senate for having introduced this most important motion. I would also like to congratulate the other honourable senators who have made very interesting contributions to this debate. I do not intend this evening to discuss in detailed and specific terms the substance of this motion. Others have done this much better than I can, and I do not want merely to repeat what they have already said. I intend rather to look at this motion in the broader framework of the general evolution of our political system, more or less in the vein that was used so effectively by Senator O'Leary, who preceded me during this debate. I also want to look at the changing centres of decision in our political system and the evolving role of the monarchy, parliamentarians, both ministers and backbenchers, and civil servants at different stages of that evolution.

I would like in particular to try to describe the fall of absolute monarchy, the rise and fall of ministers, the rise of civil servants, and the beginning of their twilight which I am sure will be speeded up if the motion before us is approved. My experience as a former civil servant, an advisor to the Leader of the Official Opposition in the other place, a Minister of the Crown and now an elder backbencher, has given me some knowledge as to how our system has evolved, especially since the early 1950's. One of the main themes of our debate has been that the doctrine of the supremacy of Parliament was more a myth than a reality, and I agree with this to a large extent. Parliament may be the source of political power, but the exercise of that power is done mainly elsewhere.

The view was also expressed during the debate, that conditions had worsened recently and that, somehow, Parliament was losing the supremacy it once had. I do not agree with this second proposition. On the contrary, I believe that the supremacy of Parliament has always been a symbol, and that it has tended to become more of a reality only recently. I am also convinced that this recent trend will be further reinforced if the motion now before us is approved and if effective steps are taken to provide for a careful and continuing parliamentary review of delegated authority.

To prove my point, I do not need to go back to the first stage of absolute monarchy. It is