

To round out these introductory remarks, for full measure I should like to draw attention to the fact that this session marks the beginning of the twenty-fifth year of membership in this Senate for two of my colleagues on this side of the house. I refer to the honourable senator from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) and to my friend, who is absent today, the honourable senator from Vancouver South (Hon. Mr. Farris). Both these gentlemen were presented here and entered this chamber in 1937. Their contributions to the Senate debates and the work of our committees, both in form and in substance, have been a credit to Parliament and comparable, I submit, to those recorded in any other democratic assembly where good language is spoken.

The Throne Speech, which is now before us, is a rather remarkable assortment of some fifty closed packages in paragraph form. I will not attempt to review them all at this time. Whatever legislation may emerge from them, we shall have the opportunity to examine in due course.

At this time, however, I would like briefly to say a few words about two features of the speech. First, there is a reference to a prospective bill concerning the Senate. That bill has now come to us in advance of its presentation in the other place and is on our files. Its content is the same as that prepared for consideration last session but which the Government decided to withdraw before Parliament was dissolved.

During the election campaign the issue of Senate reform did not seem to receive much attention from any of the leaders or competing candidates. Certainly, it cannot be said that the Government which has assumed office has any mandate on this question from the Canadian electorate. Apart from the irregular constitutional procedure which some people feel quite seriously attaches to this proposed legislation, I maintain that instead of a measure of Senate reform being presented to Parliament this session, there should be one dealing with parliamentary representation in the House of Commons.

The principle of representation by population, which is supposed to underlie our system of government, is being flagrantly ignored in many of the growing electoral districts of this country. This condition is not new. It has been emphasized periodically over the years in connection with the redistribution and adjustment of the electorate in new areas. Many examples of this condition can be cited. The one outstanding case which occurs to me is that of the young member of Parliament for York-Scarborough. This constituency has a population of some 200,000 people and happens to be the most extensive

and most populated constituency in Canada. One might compare it, for example, with other areas less extensive and smaller in population, where representation both in the Senate and the House of Commons is out of all proportion to the number of electors involved. I mention this, without invidious implication of any kind, to emphasize the distorted basis of representation which exists today in the elective branch of Parliament.

Before I proceed to deal with the Senate in this connection, I should like to draw attention to a point which has already been referred to by my honourable friend from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) in his report of the Divorce Committee. I refer to the humiliating spectacle which we all witnessed at the end of the last session when some 325 divorce bills, which had passed logically and normally through the machinery of the Senate Divorce Committee, were held up in the other place in the last three days in defiance of pleas of the Prime Minister of Canada to have them passed.

If a reform of some kind in the procedure of the House of Commons is necessary to obviate that sort of thing, then I suggest very strongly that attention be concentrated in that quarter rather than in idle suggestions of reform concerning things that do not matter in this house.

In so far as the Senate is concerned, I submit, an adequate measure of reform should not be pointedly confined to the provision for an age limit. Methods of appointment and term of office—renewal of which might be based, as it is in Eire for example, upon attendance and performance in connection with its work—should come within the scope of any reform measure.

Some enlightening discussion of this subject may be found in Senate *Hansard* of April and June 1950, and February 1951. A resolution dealing with proposed reform of the Senate, introduced early in the session of 1951, was keenly debated here. The opinion of the Senate expressed at that time did not approve of the resolution in question, but held that this subject, which involved amendment to the B.N.A. Act, should be of equal concern to the federal Parliament as a whole and the governments and legislatures of the provinces, and that only with the joint approval of those bodies should any change be made.

Summarizing this reference to parliamentary reform, I believe that legislation affecting the machinery of Parliament, as it applies to both houses, is overdue. The House of Commons has become a distortion of the principle of representation by population; and the original purpose of this upper chamber, to safeguard provincial rights and the interests