

that the Senate has lost its purpose. I think that is a good phrase and I think it bears repeating because it is something that might give some meaning to and understanding of what is taking place around you.

One should not tease people and one should not accuse people who see things differently from oneself, but the fact remains that I have grave doubts as to how much serious consideration was ever given to the possible effect of what was being done, and that a very high percentage of government members voted the way they did, not because of what they were trying to bring about, not because of what they expected to happen, but because they were voting with their party. As I said on an earlier occasion—and exception was taken to it—I thought we gave a pretty good demonstration that there is at least one of your number who was prepared to vote for whatever he was bloody well told to vote for, regardless of what it might be and regardless of what his opinion of it might be. We had the experience in this chamber of seeing an honourable senator, who is not here today—and I am sorry to speak in his absence, but we had the spectacle of his standing here and advancing all the reasons why certain actions should not be taken, and then not waiting for amendments to be made. Don't let anybody give me the story that "he fixed it up and changed his mind in the interval." When he made his second speech it was different: "The resolution has been improved; the resolution has been amended." Maybe it had been and maybe he voted for it, but it is damned true that he told us, standing on his own two feet, that he would vote for it, no matter what happened to it.

Senator Marshall: Right.

Senator Donahoe: He said, "I am going to hold my nose and vote for it."

I do not know how many honourable senators shared his views, and I do not know how many were motivated by the same thing and voted in the same way. All I know is that they voted that way, and we are about to get the amended Constitution, amended in a way unseen or unheard of for more than 115 years, the results of which, I submit, are not fully recognized, appreciated or perhaps even expected.

● (1540)

I am an old man. I do not expect to live long. "Thank God," say some people. I do not expect to live long, but I do expect to live long enough to see the Constitution come to Canada. I expect all of the more healthy and more sturdy people in this chamber to live much longer than I, and to reach the day when they will say, "What, in the name of heaven, possessed us to have that kind of Constitution? Why did we go American? Why did we establish the American type of government in this country? Why did we forsake the parliamentary form of government which had been ours for more than 115 years and which had served us well?"—and don't tell me that it has not served us well. Don't anyone on the other side stand up and say "This house is no good. Unless we reform it, we might as well not have it." I happen to think that is true in the case of those who have occupied seats in this chamber and have not done their duty. But that is another story, and don't anyone tell me

[Senator Donahoe.]

that it has ever been that bad. What has happened in this country cannot be laid directly at the feet of those in this chamber because, after all, we have exercised the power given to us in such a manner that we have not interfered with the exercise of power by those who have been elected by the people. As I said a short while ago, some can say that that is craven; others can say that the Senate has been ineffective; but no one can say that what I have just said is not the truth, because ever since I have been in the Senate we have never exercised the power of veto; nor have I heard anyone stand and say that on such-and-such an occasion we did exercise the power of veto.

So, I come back to my argument, which is the main thing which impels me to make my speech. I say that the quality of those who will be prepared to sit in this house, to exercise a vote which comes to them by virtue of seeking election—a vote which will be meaningless, a vote which can have no effect; to express opinions which cannot be heard; to make arguments which can have no cogency; to try to persuade people to agree with those arguments—the quality of those who will be prepared to seek election to exercise such a privilege, if one can call it a privilege, will, in my opinion, be far less than the quality of those whom I now have the honour of addressing, and of those who have not seen fit to be present to hear my address but who will, I trust, read my remarks on a future occasion.

I now wish to bring my speech to an end by expressing two or three thoughts; and I want to show the source of those shots—thoughts.

An Hon. Senator: "Shots"?

Senator Donahoe: They are shots as well as thoughts. It was a Freudian slip on my part.

I consider what I am about to say to be pungent and correct. I hesitate to do this, because I have been rebuked for asking questions concerning newspaper articles. However, I have never heard anyone read a rule which says that one cannot refer to articles in a speech, and I propose to refer to them. Here is the first article. It is not really the article to which I am going to refer, but only the headline. It says:

Vacancies Prove People Don't Believe in Senate

Balderdash! Why are there vacancies in the Senate? Because the man who is the Prime Minister of this country causes vacancies to exist in the Senate. We die; we retire; we move off; our seats are here; and Joe Blow, on the street, cannot come in here and occupy that vacant seat. Someone has to be tapped on the shoulder by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and he has to say it is his wish that he come here.

I do not see Senator Stollery here. I would explain to him how he got here, if he were around, but I won't. I say that is a faulty headline to an article attempting to prove that people do not believe in the Senate. It proves nothing of the kind. It proves only that the Leader of the Government in this country has a deep and abiding contempt for the Senate and that he will be happy when the day comes when he is no longer faced with the necessity of dealing with it in any capacity.