

was approved by Parliament a few years ago with comparatively little opposition. It was based on the idea of establishing closed lists such as exist in the United Kingdom, with provision for annual revision. The cost of maintaining this system in Canada, where the shifting of population in certain urban areas is as great as 30 per cent per annum, was found to be prohibitive. The closed list, however, is a sound accessory to a democratic system of government; and it is to be hoped that a fair compromise may be found somewhere between the extremes of the present open list and the proposed expensive system of revision under the original Franchise Act.

In this connection, it is also time to consider seriously the adoption of a measure of compulsory voting such as exists in our sister Dominion of Australia. Privileges carry with them corresponding responsibilities; and a democratic community such as we are supposed to be has every right to expect its members to vote at election time, thus removing an all too common complaint on the part of a select but increasing number of well-to-do people that politics, as an active interest, is something to be avoided.

May I thank honourable members for their courtesy in listening so patiently to my remarks. I now have the honour of referring them to the resolution which I have already moved.

Hon. GUSTAVE LACASSE (Translation): Honourable senators, I desire first of all, in fulfilment of the pleasant duty called for by the occasion, to thank the Government leader in the Senate for having invited me, for the second time since my appointment to this Chamber, to second the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. You will understand the emotion I feel at this moment, for the present occasion brings back to me the feeling I experienced when, for the first time and when still a young man, I participated in the deliberations of the "Sages of the nation." I think it is exact to say that in the course of the last decade this Chamber has renewed its membership to the extent of forty per cent, and still the Grim Reaper continues to decimate our ranks, apparently bent on disproving the theory of senatorial irremovability. No more than the common run of mankind can we place ourselves beyond his reach. Death accomplishes periodically what the Constitution does not allow the voters to do. It is therefore with a feeling of sincere admiration that I join my personal congratulations to those which were tendered yesterday to our still very active leader (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) on the completion of forty years

of uninterrupted devotion to his country in the public life of Canada. The zeal and enthusiasm he has brought to the service of his fellow-citizens is and will remain the inspiration of his juniors.

I wish also, in the name of this Chamber, to tender to the new occupants of the seats recently made vacant by death the hearty congratulations of their colleagues on the official recognition which their appointment to the Senate constitutes of the services they have rendered, in some capacity or other, to the Canadian community. I am sure that the judgment, intelligence and goodwill that they have already shown elsewhere will prove most valuable in the consideration of the matters of public interest which constitute the work of this Chamber.

Coming now, honourable senators, to the examination of the official document which is called the Speech from the Throne, a document which sets forth each year, at least in outline, the sessional programme, I shall endeavour to make as complete an analysis of it as possible, keeping close to its text, without attempting more or less justified digressions. Some will probably say of this document—the phrase has become quite familiar to me since I have had the honour of sitting in this Chamber—that it is far more remarkable for what it omits than for what it contains. Be that as it may, I think it is substantial enough to form the subject of many interesting studies.

Following a brief reference to the Coronation of Their Gracious Majesties King George the Sixth and Queen Elizabeth, as well as to the Imperial Conference held immediately after these imposing ceremonies, the Speech from the Throne briefly mentions the return to a state of relative prosperity which has become more and more marked in recent months. The Speech notes particularly the increase in revenue, the expansion of our trade with other countries and the gratifying decrease in the number of unemployed. This general improvement, the Speech however admits, has been somewhat marred by the unfortunate situation of that vast area of Western Canada at one time proudly called the granary of the Empire. Mention is also made, and very properly, of the means taken by the Government to remedy these conditions and if possible prevent their recurrence. As to the other undertakings of the Government, such as the Employment Commission, the inquiry into the textile industry, aid to returned soldiers, inquiry into the economic and financial bases of Confederation, and distribution of legislative powers, we shall soon