

Let me recall just two of the changes which took place during that period. In 1935 Canada had a population of 10,845,000 people. In 1957, after that Government had been in power for twenty-two years, Canada had a population of 16,589,000 persons. During that period while our population was growing we enjoyed great prosperity and our standard of living and general well-being was raised. Our total trade also experienced a terrific increase. On March 31, 1934, our imports totalled \$522,431,153 and our exports \$764,284,888, and our total imports and exports for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1934, amounted to \$1,286,716,041. By March 31, 1957, our imports had increased to \$5,792,549,000, and our exports to \$4,930,787,000, a total of \$10,723,336,000. Putting it in round figures I would say that from the time the old administration came into power, in 1935, our total trade had increased from \$1,286,000,000 to \$10,700,000,000, a staggering increase.

Honourable senators, we had great problems during those times, the most serious arising from World War II and its aftermath. During all that time the Government had the support and the co-operation of the people of Canada and we came through all right. We came through the war well and we came through its aftermath well. I am sure no one would deny that in the person of the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King and in the person of the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent we had two great leaders. I think, honourable senators, that the millions of people who supported the Government that went out of office can feel proud of the accomplishments which came about during the years in which that Government was in power, and of the leadership given to Canada during that time. We can only hope that the future of this country will be in as good hands, and that we shall continue to go forward in the future as we have in the past.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: Honourable senators, may I now proceed to the conclusion of my remarks? I should like to make a statement which I feel is a very important one. I am sure that this house and the country would wish me to indicate at this time the attitude which I, as the Leader of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition in the Senate, propose to take with respect to public legislation, particularly Government legislation, during this Parliament.

The circumstances in which those of us who are in opposition find ourselves are unusual but far from unique. I am confident that in approaching our parliamentary duties we shall have greater regard for the wisdom and experience of the past, and for the effect which our actions may have on future gene-

rations of Canadians, than for any exigencies, political or otherwise, of the present. We shall take the long view, backward as well as forward. Some may say that we can well afford to do so. I would prefer to say that this is our historic duty and that we shall do our best to discharge it.

May I be permitted to add, as an aside and in a somewhat lighter vein, that most things must grow into perfection. That is as true of this young and virile country and its system of government as it is of anything else. Mr. Borglum, the celebrated sculptor who fashioned the famous Mount Rushmore Memorial in the United States, was once asked if his work was perfect in every detail. He replied: "Not today. The nose of George Washington is one inch too long. But it's better that way. By the process of erosion it will be exactly right in 10,000 years."

To return to my main theme: Honourable senators, in view of our numbers, it will be immediately apparent that we could, under the Constitution, resist and, indeed, prevent, the adoption of every piece of legislation initiated by the new Government. On the other hand, we could allow that legislation to proceed through this house without comment or criticism. I feel sure that we will follow neither of these extreme courses. There are historic considerations which would dissuade us from adopting either alternative, and which I devoutly hope would similarly dissuade others who, in the future, might find themselves in a comparable position.

In the first place, the Senate was not conceived of by the authors of Confederation—who "builded better than they knew"—as a competitor of the House of Commons in the field of public legislation. On the contrary, one of its prime functions, in the words of Sir John A. Macdonald, is to take a "sober second look" at legislation which has passed the House of Commons. It is therefore a solemn trust, which all senators share alike, to examine with the utmost care all legislation which has passed the House of Commons. This we must do to ensure that those basic principles which all Canadians hold dear are not lightly or carelessly cast aside for any reason, whether through haste or impulse on the part of the House of Commons, or as a result of political expediency or compromise, or otherwise.

On the other hand, we recognize with Sir Robert Borden that any system of government based upon the British system could not function long if the executive and each of the houses of Parliament were to exercise their powers constantly and "to the legal limit". There should be, of course, common sense in all things, and certainly in respect