

ing. The committee, I think in its last report, drew attention to the possibility of a debt ceiling as a principle of government expenditure. Some of the witnesses before the committee—I think all the witnesses to whom this question was put—demurred on that as a principle of expenditure and taxation. My own feeling is that it has a great deal of merit. In saying that, I am not suggesting that there can be any long-term and inflexible ceiling, but I think the committee has done a service to those who have responsibility in this area by drawing attention to the concept of the debt ceiling to their attention, because this is one of the considerations that surely must come into any budgeting process.

As I said earlier, we have indications that this year the budget will be balanced at rather a higher level than last year, but it is to me at least welcome that there will not be any addition in this part of the budget to the national debt this year, although there will be other additions.

Senator Leonard, in presenting the report, used the word "breakthrough" as an indication of the kind of report that the committee decided this year to present to the Senate. I do not think that is any exaggeration. I believe it is a breakthrough for this Senate committee to have spent the time and taken the trouble to gather together this information, much of which is not readily available elsewhere, particularly the charts and the comparisons therein.

In concluding, honourable senators, I again compliment Senator Leonard for his planning, foresight and overall concept of the kind of job that the National Finance Committee of the Senate has done at this time in the general Canadian interest—and I hope will do even to a greater extent in the future.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. G. Percival Burchill:** I rise to make only one observation and, of course, to congratulate the committee and Senator Leonard on a superb report. I shall speak on one of my old themes, that of getting this report into the hands of the public.

One of the failures of this chamber is that the wonderful abilities disclosed in these reports are not more widely known. The remarks made by Senators Leonard and Everett yesterday and by Senator Grosart this afternoon die in this chamber; they do not get outside. We would do well to give serious consideration to devising means of broadcasting these reports so that the public can read, mark and inwardly digest them.

I wonder whether we could not do something of that sort through the schools. Senator Grosart referred to how little knowledge was broadcast about budgeting. Those of us who have seen the television program "Reach for the Top" must have been impressed at the vast amount of knowledge of the scholars appearing on it. It is fantastic and amazing to me. No matter what is the area of knowledge being discussed, they seem to be able to move from one subject to another and give the right answer. It makes me feel very humble and very ignorant as I look at these girls and boys and note how well they answer the questions. Perhaps something along those lines could be devised in the area of national finance. I wonder whether the pupils in our schools have much knowledge of our national finance, and whether we could give consideration to finding a way by which it could be got across to our schools.

Last year when the committee was considering its report I made a very silly remark about, "Who is going to sound the fire alarm?" That went all over the nation. I do not remember how many letters I received from many provinces, just in response to that offhand remark. But that is where it ended.

**Hon. Mr. Choquette:** That is the only kind of remark the newspapers pick up anyway.

**Hon. Mr. Burchill:** This report should be in the hands of the reading public of Canada, and we must seriously consider how to get it there.

That is all I have to say, except again to congratulate Senator Leonard and his committee.

**Hon. Lazarus Phillips:** Honourable senators, I propose to take only a few moments of your time and to confine myself to consideration of the merits of a ceiling on the national debt, referred to in paragraph 14 of the report. Before doing so, I wish to add my words of congratulations to and profound respect for my friend Senator Leonard, who has been an inspiring leader of our Standing Senate Committee on National Finance. There has never been any trouble in his getting a quorum, for the simple reason that we all respect him so much that we attend the meetings with alacrity.

Members of the committee will know that I took a very strong position and have very strong views on a ceiling on the national debt. Indeed, I would think that paragraph 14 has been inserted in the report more or less by way of a concession to me, because honoura-