

## THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 22, 1950

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

### PUBLIC LANDS GRANTS BILL

#### FIRST READING

Hon. Mr. Robertson presented Bill B, an Act respecting Grants of Public Lands.

The bill was read the first time.

### TERRITORIAL LANDS BILL

#### FIRST READING

Hon. Mr. Robertson presented Bill C, an Act respecting Crown Lands in the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories.

The bill was read the first time.

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Senate resumed from yesterday the consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's Speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Hon. Mr. Golding for an address in reply thereto.

Hon. John T. Haig: In rising to take part in the debate on the Speech from the Throne, I first want to pay my respects to the mover of the motion (Hon. Mr. Golding). I was delighted to hear his excellent speech yesterday afternoon. It sounded so pleasant to me that I looked around two or three times to see whether it was one of my own friends talking. I kept wondering about this, and finally I got our Whip to count our members, and I learned from him that the gentleman speaking did not belong to our group. He is a government supporter, but I want to congratulate him on his excellent address. I regret that I could not understand the first part of the speech of the seconder of the motion (Hon. Mr. Veniot), but I gathered that there is a fishing problem in the Maritime Provinces. If my honourable friend wishes any assistance with respect to that problem, he is certainly free to call upon the members from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, who will tell him all about the technique of growing and marketing wheat.

I should like at this time to say a word of welcome to the new member from Newfoundland (Hon. Mr. Burke). Within the last month a very distinguished member of the government, the Secretary of State (Hon.

Mr. Bradley), who comes from Newfoundland, visited my city. Both he and his wife had a pleasant time, and I know that the citizens of Winnipeg enjoyed their visit very much. Later a certain gentleman said to me, "Do you know, Senator Haig, these people from Newfoundland are very nearly civilized". I said, "Well, the ones I have met are civilized, but I do not know about the rest of them. There is a new man from there in the Senate this year; I have not met him yet; he may be civilized, but I am not sure". Seriously, I do want to say to honourable senators from Newfoundland that the Secretary of State made a fine impression on the people of the city of Winnipeg, and in that respect his good wife was not second best.

Now, coming to the Speech from the Throne, I honestly think it can be described in three words, "bits and pieces". After a careful reading of the Speech I was unable to find in it any new program to meet the pressing problems of the day. Such matters as amendment of the constitution, the United Nations, the conference in Ceylon, the cold war and such kindred subjects are discussed, and no doubt these are important in themselves, but there is no suggestion as to any cure for the difficulties arising therefrom.

I will not go into a discussion of the constitution. There was a conference between the federal government and the provinces, and so far as it went I am glad of the progress that was made. But I am not one of those who becomes extremely optimistic all at once. That conference was only a sort of cocktail party preceding the real discussion of the constitution. Cocktail parties are, for some of us, very pleasant affairs, as this conference was, but the real problems will arise at the subsequent conference when the categories are dealt with. I will only say at this time that as a Canadian I hope that conference will reach a conclusion satisfactory to all the provinces. I say "all the provinces" advisedly, because the united Canada which we all desire can be achieved only if every part of the country feels that it has got a fair deal from all other parts.

I hope that the premiers and their colleagues and assistants from the various provinces will come to that meeting with the idea that they are going to get a fair deal; and that they will get one. We do not want any constitutional arrangement that will breed trouble in the years to come. I do not believe the public men of this generation are so much abler than the men who drafted the British North America Act of 1867 that members of this house will not rise in their places fifty or eighty years from now—for I think the Senate will still be in existence then—and