

It is amazing to me that such a final and serious verdict should be perpetrated on 22 million Canadians or those that use saccharin as a result of an experiment on rats.

Secondly, Dr. Charles Best, the very distinguished co-Nobel Laureate, the co-discoverer of insulin with the late Sir Frederick Banting, has said:

I do not accept the conclusion that as a result of this experiment diabetics should discontinue using saccharin, and much further work has to be done.

As a matter of fact, he advocates that they continue to do so.

Honourable senators, thank you for your attention and patience. I love a scientific paper. In view of all this scientific evidence, this particular problem should not be referred to a committee until further epidemiological studies have been concluded.

On motion of Senator Petten, debate adjourned.

THE SENATE

APPOINTMENT OF SENATORS—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Jacques Flynn rose pursuant to notice of April 27:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the question of the appointment of senators.

[*Translation*]

He said: Honourable senators, if I have felt it necessary to draw the attention of the Senate to the question of the appointment of senators, and I mean more specifically the appointment of Progressive Conservative senators, it is because of certain recent statements made by the Prime Minister and the government leader in this house.

So far I have commented on this question in a general way only without making reference to the conversations and the correspondence that took place with them. I did so for very simple reasons.

First, traditionally, appointments to the Senate have always been the prerogative of the Prime Minister. Although he may consult his cabinet colleagues he has the last word.

Second, it has been the tradition also for the Prime Minister to invite supporters of the government in power to sit here.

Third, I admit that in practice the opposition could not and cannot demand anything in that respect, except perhaps to argue that there must be a certain balance in the representation of parties in this house and in that respect the official opposition must be able to carry out its responsibilities.

So if I raise this question I want to make it clear that it is not in the sole interest of the Progressive Conservative Party that I do so, but in the interest of the Senate.

Because in more than 40 years the Liberal Party has been in power for over 34 years, and the Conservative Party for a little less than six years, that tradition has resulted in an evident imbalance in favour of the Liberal Party. Suffice to recall that in 1957 when the Diefenbaker government came to power there were only five Conservative senators against 78 Liberals plus one independent Liberal and two independents. There

were 16 vacancies. Mr. St. Laurent had invited a Conservative friend of his, John T. Hackett, to sit here. It will also be remembered how furious the Liberals were that he did not fill the 16 vacancies at that time before calling the 1957 election. It is certain that Mr. St. Laurent was already concerned over that imbalance and that is one of the reasons which led him not to fill those vacancies.

With the advent of the Progressive Conservative government, the imbalance was partially corrected up to 1963 when Mr. Pearson became Prime Minister.

At that time, the distribution of parties in the Senate was as follows: 36 Progressive Conservatives, one independent Progressive Conservative, 59 Liberals, two Independent members and three vacancies.

As you know, the present distribution is as follows: 15 Progressive Conservatives, 74 Liberals, two independent members, one Social Credit Party member, one independent Liberal and 11 vacancies.

I believe it is recognized that the present distribution of seats in this chamber is inadequate, even though it is not as alarming as it was back in 1957. At the present time, the Senate assumes more responsibilities than before, especially through the work carried out by its various committees.

This is why public opinion is more concerned by the policy that the Prime Minister follows or should follow when appointing senators.

● (2050)

[*English*]

Honourable senators, the Prime Minister and the Government Leader in the Senate have made recent statements which seem to indicate that the only reason the opposition forces have dwindled so in the Senate is that the official opposition refuses to conform to certain simple rules set down by the Prime Minister pertaining to the replacement of Tory senators by Tories. Therefore, I think the time has come to shed some light on this matter and bring into the public arena a discussion which has gone on privately for some seven years.

Because references have been made by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Government in the Senate to discussions and correspondence with me, I feel I am at liberty to recall the details of such conversations and to quote from the correspondence.

The first discussion I had with the Prime Minister on the subject of replacing Tory senators with Tory appointments was in October 1970, at the Governor General's Ball preceding the opening of the 1970-72 session. At that time, Senators Aseltine, Gladstone, Hollett, J. J. MacDonald and Pearson were thinking of retiring but were interested in knowing if there was any hope of their being replaced by Tories. The Prime Minister's comment to me at that time was that he was prepared to summon some Tories to replace Conservative senators who retired. He was not very specific but suggested that he would certainly do something.

Well, the senators I have mentioned retired: Senators Aseltine, Gladstone, Hollett and Pearson on March 31, 1971, and