

There is one word more of a preliminary character which I wish to say, particularly to the large number of members who have recently joined this assembly. You have been warmly received already, and nothing that I might say could add to the cordiality of your reception, but I should like to assure you that I join most heartily in the welcome. I should like, however, to offer to you one observation and one suggestion. The observation is that you will find this to be a very friendly and a very appreciative assembly. This House welcomes members who take its work seriously and play their part in its debates and committees. I would add that I know of no deliberative assembly which is more generous in its judgment of speeches made by those who have a contribution to make, or more appreciative of hard work done by its members. I think—if I may again for a moment address the new members—that as in many other things, you will get out of this Senate just about as much as you are willing to put into it.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. HUGESSEN: If you take an active part in our discussions and work hard in our committees you will find compensation in the admiration, the esteem, yes, and the affection of your fellow-members.

My suggestion to the new members is that you take an active part in our debates. We are glad to hear new voices, and fresh points of view are always welcome here. It is true of course that during the war the activities of this Chamber have been somewhat curtailed and the amount of useful work possible to it has been somewhat limited. That condition I hope is rapidly passing away. If you will for a moment glance at the legislative programme for the present session, particularly in the field of international affairs, set forth in the Speech from the Throne, you will see a number of subjects in regard to which I think this House could do very useful work. We have, for instance, a reference to the approval by Parliament of the United Nations organization set up as a result of the conference at San Francisco; we shall have to deal with participation by this country in the International Monetary Fund and the Bank for Reconstruction and Development to be set up as a result of the Bretton Woods conference; we shall have to deal with the question of mutual aid for the rehabilitation in large measure of the countries of Europe. Those matters are all referred to in the Speech from the Throne.

Hon. Mr. HUGESSEN.

Now, honourable senators, those are matters of vast import, and they fall outside the region of ordinary partisan activities with which we associate, and quite rightly, the lower Chamber. It seems to me that the Senate of Canada can make a great contribution to the public life of this country by taking upon itself the function of deliberating upon international affairs in the same way that assemblies of similar character do in other countries. I refer particularly to the House of Lords in England and to the Senate of the United States.

The mention of international affairs leads me to the few topics which I wish to consider in relation to the Speech from the Throne. We have come to the end of the war, and sometimes I think it would be advisable if we were to pause and try to determine in our own minds what position Canada has reached as a result of six years of war. Now and then we are apt not to realize quite as fully as we might that this country has advanced very rapidly in international rank. We are now one of the important nations of the world. We were recognized at San Francisco as one of the most important of the middle powers, taking rank immediately behind those five great aggregations: the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, France and China. Perhaps sometimes we are not quite sufficiently accustomed to that idea; but that is the position we have reached in the world today, and it behooves us to lay our plans and shape our policies accordingly. In the eyes of the world Canada has reached a position of considerable importance.

That being so, I welcome those parts of the gracious Speech which tend to lay emphasis on our emergence as a nation. I refer particularly to those two passages which relate to a Canadian flag and to Canadian citizenship. Dealing first with the question of a Canadian flag—

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: May I be allowed to ask the honourable senator this question? I am not against a Canadian flag, but inasmuch as the Parliament of Canada has not yet adopted a Canadian flag, why is it that the Union Jack has been lowered and our merchant marine flag substituted for it?

Hon. Mr. HUGESSEN: As I am not a member of the Government, that is a question which my honourable friend should address to the leader on this side, not to me.

Let me quote the Speech from the Throne with reference to the question of a Canadian flag:

My Ministers believe that the position attained by our country among the nations of the world makes it desirable that Canada, like the other nations of the British Commonwealth,