

Editorial

Debate of public issues is the heart and soul of parliamentary life. The media prefer to treat politics in terms of personalities. Federal-provincial conferences continue to pre-empt Parliament and the rules of many assemblies leave much to be desired. But notwithstanding these problems excellent debates do take place in Parliament, in provincial legislatures and, to an increasing extent, in various committees of federal, provincial or territorial legislatures. Good speeches or good debates often receive little publicity. If reported locally they are rarely transmitted to other parts of the country. Therefore the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* proposes to publish more or less verbatim extracts from debates in various legislatures on subjects likely to be of interest to our readers.

The first two articles, taken from the Senate Hansard, deal with a classic subject of political debate in this country – the arguments for and against an elected Upper House. The Fathers of Confederation wrestled with this question as have successive generations of students and practitioners of the political art in Canada. In recent years Senate reform has been the subject of a myriad of reports by Royal Commissions, research institutions, pressure groups and journalists. But what do members of the Senate have to say about their own destiny?

The case for an elected Senate is put forcefully by Senator Duff Roblin who began his speech by acknowledging that he was rising in a chamber where probably no more than a handful of members shared his opinion. The debate was joined by a number of Senators, including Peter Bosa, who said that while he used to think an elected Senate was a good idea, as he looked further into the matter he came to the conclusion that there were better ways to reform the Senate.

In this issue we are also featuring an article on the Parliamentary Stone Carvers. Ottawa residents take great pride in having one of the world's most attractive legislative buildings in their midst. Alterations, however minor, to the building are followed with great interest by the local citizenry, few of whom begrudge the not inconsiderable sums required to maintain the building in its traditional splendor. Even those who work in the Centre Block, however, rarely catch a glance of the sculptors who have contributed so much to its uniqueness.

The article by Mary Peck on the 100th anniversary of the New Brunswick legislature shows that Ottawans are not alone in appreciating their legislative building.



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