

should have been notified that the bill was being brought forward. But, as the leader of the government has just stated, no kind of notice was given. From one end of the country to the other the public has responded very generously to appeals to subscribe to the Canadian Red Cross Society. We are now called upon to amend certain of the society's powers entirely, without the participation of the public, unless it may be said that we represent the public. As a rule, when a private bill is submitted, the public has the right to be represented; and although there have been many instances in another place where a suspension of rules similar to that now requested has been granted, someone representing the public has been present to concur in the suspension. It might be well to postpone action and give notice through the press of what we are doing, and that the bill will be taken up again at a specified date, when representations from the public would be received.

I do not wish to delay the house or to do anything which might be obnoxious to those who are sponsoring the bill, so I am prepared to consent to a suspension of the rules, but I am opposed to section 2. From what has been said here I gather that that clause, which changes the mode of governing the society, is regarded as important. Who is interested in this amendment? The public. Yet we are asked to allow those who now govern the society to alter its constitution in such a way as to confer upon themselves authority to continue in office. If the society desires this amendment, it should notify the public of what it is doing, and should secure not only our ratification but the approval of public opinion, without which no society can efficiently operate.

The Hon. the Speaker: The question is on the motion of the honourable Senator Turgeon:

That all rules respecting private bills be suspended in so far as they relate to the Bill 222, an Act to amend The Canadian Red Cross Society Act.

I must again warn this honourable house that consent must be unanimous. Is it your pleasure to adopt the motion?

The motion was agreed to, and the rules were suspended.

SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. Turgeon moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: Honourable senators, I took some time this morning to explain the bill and the objects of the proposed amendments. I shall not repeat the explanation. If in its wisdom the Senate sees fit to give second reading to the bill, I shall move that it be referred to

the Committee of the Whole. Then I shall move for the elimination of the section dealing with the annual value of the real estate which may be held by the Association, and honourable senators may deal with my proposal as they see fit. Once again I want to thank honourable senators for the kind and courteous manner in which they have dealt with this legislation.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the second time.

CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE

On motion of Hon. Mr. Turgeon, the Senate went in committee on the bill.

Hon. Mr. Fogo in the Chair.

On section 1—repeal of subsection 2 of section 5:

Hon. Mr. Turgeon: Mr. Chairman, I move that clause 1 of the bill be struck out.

Hon. Mr. Gouin: I second the motion.

The section was rejected.

On section 2—central council; executive committee; quorum:

Hon. Mr. Nicol: Honourable senators, this section would enable the central council to enlarge the number of its members and change the society's constitution without further reference to parliament in future. I think this would be against public interest. I would have approved of an amendment to section 1 so as to permit the society to hold real estate up to an annual value of \$200,000, but I think section 2 should be stricken out. I do not wish to appear unkind to the Canadian Red Cross Society, for we all know of the good work it has done, and I think I am not being unfair when I say that the public is dissatisfied because it has not been given the information to which it is entitled.

The introduction of the bill at this late hour, without notice, indicates to my mind the attitude of those who are now carrying on the society's affairs. In the governing body there are a number of well-known men. They are familiar with parliamentary rules and are aware that the public is interested in what the society is doing, so there must have been a reason for the procedure they chose to adopt. I do not think we should encourage those people to act in this way. Let them realize that they will be required to follow parliamentary rules, and that they cannot have a bill considered until after proper notice of it has been given. I might add that I see no objection to section 3, for that merely legalizes the French name of the society.