

THE SENATE

Thursday, February 3, 1949

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Acting Speaker (Hon. A. B. Copp) in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

PRIVILEGE

Right Hon. Mr. Mackenzie: Honourable senators, I rise to a very important question of privilege affecting the printing of parliament. According to our Minutes of Proceedings, the report of the Committee of Selection presented yesterday was read. I think that all honourable senators who were present yesterday know that it was not.

Further, the statement was made in debate that yesterday's procedure was the same as that followed in 1947 and 1948. I have taken the liberty of checking *Hansard* of 1947 and the *Journals of the Senate* of 1948, and I find that in each year the report was properly presented to the house. I mention this purely by way of correction.

CULLERS BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Mr. Robertson presented Bill G, an Act to repeal the Cullers Act.

The Bill was read the first time.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

On the Orders of the Day:

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson: Honourable senators, a few days ago I had the privilege of introducing five bills which now appear on the order paper for second reading. The honourable members who have been asked to explain these bills are prepared to do so today. However, when these items are called I intend to ask that they stand, so that we may proceed this afternoon with the debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. When we adjourn today I intend to ask that the house stand adjourned until Tuesday evening next. At that time we can proceed with this legislation, and perhaps continue the debate on the Address. The members of this house possess considerable talent and experience, and I am sure it would be to our own benefit and that of the country at large if as many honourable members as possible were to express their viewpoints in this debate.

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. Farquhar for an address in reply thereto.

Hon. John T. Haig: Honourable members, I said a word or two yesterday by way of compliment to the mover and seconder of the address, so I need not refer to them again. I join with honourable senators who have voiced a feeling of concern, which all Canadians share, at His Majesty's illness, and hope for his speedy recovery. It was some relief from the bad news to learn as we did with delight, that a Prince Royal was born to the heir presumptive, the Princess Elizabeth, and that he had been named "Charlie". To people of Scottish descent that name must be very pleasing indeed.

I shall not discuss the Speech from the Throne item by item, as has sometimes been done, because nearly all of it will be the subject of legislation, and in my judgment it is better to wait until the various bills are available and we know what the legislation actually contains.

The year 1948 was an important one for Canada, especially in the matter of the leadership of our two great parties. The former Prime Minister, Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King, resigned, and a great Liberal convention was held in Ottawa at which his successor was elected. I personally was pleased that the Liberals met in convention for this purpose. It is not very often that conventions are held by the Liberal party. They say that these meetings are unnecessary, that when they get a leader they keep him for a very long time. Well, I am not so sure that this will be the fortune of the present leader. Apart from that consideration, I suggest that a national convention is an excellent way of hearing from the "grass roots" people all over the country. I had the pleasure while at my summer home of listening to a good part of the broadcasting of the Liberal convention, and when, according to the reporter, a gentleman in the back of the hall asked "What about tax reduction?" I said to myself "How familiar that sounds to anyone who is in a position of leadership."

I am glad that the Right Honourable Mr. St. Laurent has been selected to lead the Liberal party. If that party should be returned to power at the coming election, which I expect will be held on June 27, 1949—

Hon. Mr. Howard: Oh, it is fixed!