

THE SENATE

Wednesday, September 27, 1961

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

NATURAL RESOURCES TRANSFER (SCHOOL LANDS) AMENDMENT ACT, 1961

AUTHORITY TO PRINT COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Hon. Salter A. Hayden, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce, presented the following report of the committee on Bill C-129, to amend certain agreements respecting the administration and control of natural resources in the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan:

Your committee recommend that authority be granted for the printing of 600 copies in English and 300 copies in French of the proceedings on the said bill.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

Hon. Mr. Hayden: I move that the report be adopted now.

Report adopted.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Hon. Mr. Hayden reported that the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce had considered Bill C-129, to amend certain agreements respecting the administration and control of natural resources in the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, and had directed that the bill be reported without amendment.

Report adopted.

THIRD READING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Hon. Mr. Hayden: Now.

Hon. Arthur M. Pearson: Honourable senators, I move that the bill be read a third time now.

Hon. L. M. Gouin: Honourable senators, on page 1173 of *Hansard* of September 25 there is a list of patriotic societies, associations of teachers and of school inspectors, and directors of education. They sent me a telegram in connection with this matter, and I believe

that some of my colleagues also received telegrams. I wish to add that the Dean of St. Boniface College has written to me to the same effect, namely, to ask us to try to protect the rights of the minority in the Prairie provinces on this question.

When the principle of the bill was adopted on second reading I reserved my right to speak on it on third reading and also to vote in committee. In the committee meeting this morning, I voted against the passage of the measure.

Now I do not want to be the cause of any disagreement but I believe that I should, in what I would call a quiet and firm manner, try to lay at the foot of the throne the grievances which I believe to be real and which are very deeply felt by the French-speaking minority in the Prairie provinces, particularly in Manitoba.

This morning in committee we heard the Progressive Conservative member from St. Boniface, Mr. Régnier. He spoke, in my opinion, with sincerity, with emotion, and even with passion.

Honourable senators, we must first try to put ourselves in the position of the French-speaking minority in Manitoba. They believe that if the present bill is adopted their situation will be worse than it is now. Mr. Régnier told us that under the present circumstances they are obliged to pay for the public schools, to which they believe they should not send their children, and they are also obliged to pay for their own parochial schools. He also said that every Sunday, when the collection is taken at his church, he has to give \$6. Thus, the result is a kind of double taxation: on the one hand, that which I would call taxation imposed by the legislature and, on the other, taxation which is self-imposed, for the sake of both religious and racial principles.

If one examines the object of the bill, as delineated in the explanatory note opposite page 1, one sees that the administration and control of the school lands and school lands funds will be vested in the Prairie provinces

...with full power to administer and dispose of the school lands and the school lands funds referred to in the said agreements.

The agreements, which are reproduced as Schedules A, B and C, are practically identical in their wording. They refer in particular to section 7 of the formal agreement which is now in existence and which creates a school fund, the interest from which is to be applied, after deducting the cost of