

THE SENATE

Monday, May 6, 1974

The Senate met at 2 p.m., Hon. Maurice Bourget, P.C., Speaker *pro tem*, in the Chair.

Prayers.

BUDGET SPEECH

ACCOMMODATION FOR SENATORS IN SENATE GALLERY OF HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tem*: Honourable senators, as previously announced, the Minister of Finance will deliver his budget speech in the other place at 8 o'clock this evening.

May I be permitted to remind honourable senators that none but senators will be admitted to the Senate Gallery of the House of Commons on that occasion. This step is being taken for the purpose of providing accommodation in the gallery for as many senators as possible. In this manner, senators will not be excluded from the gallery on account of many of the places being occupied by relatives and friends of senators.

May I add that such instructions were first issued in 1931 by the then Speaker of the Senate, the Honourable P. E. Blondin, and that this practice has been followed ever since by succeeding Speakers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Mr. Flynn: May I ask the Leader of the Government why, in view of the program we have before us and the great accomplishments made on Friday last, the Senate was convened for today?

Hon. Mr. Martin: That is the usual type of question the Leader of the Opposition puts to me at this juncture in a session. If he will read *Hansard* of the other place for Friday last, he will see the reason why we have not even received the pensions legislation. That legislation was held up because of the actions, I take it, of only one member of a particular party—much to the annoyance of the majority of the members of that party. However, I know that the purpose of Senator Flynn's question at this time was more tactical than it was information seeking, and I will have to treat it as such.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: I just wanted to see whether the Leader of the Government is still suffering from over-anxiety.

Hon. Mr. Martin: Oh, I am always cautious.

NATIONAL FINANCE

INFORMATION CANADA—CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the consideration of the Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance on Information Canada, tabled in the Senate on Tuesday, 30th April, 1974.—(Honourable Senator Langlois).

Hon. Mr. Langlois: Honourable senators, I am pleased to yield at this time to Senator O'Leary.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tem*: Has the Honourable Senator O'Leary leave to proceed at this time?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. M. Grattan O'Leary: Honourable senators, first let me thank Senator Langlois for his courtesy. I spoke to him last week about my desire to say a few words on this matter.

Hon. Mr. Croll: You made a speech last night.

Hon. Mr. O'Leary: This is a subject about which I am supposed to be an authority. Before I disabuse you of that quaint idea, I should like to begin by congratulating Senator Everett. Senator Everett has added enormously to the power of debate in this chamber. But there was one fault I had to find with his speech the other day. Some historian once said that the difference between the great orator John Bright and Mr. Gladstone was that while Bright sailed from headland to headland Gladstone explored every inlet. The trouble with the speech the other day, the splendid speech of Senator Everett, was that he failed to explore every inlet.

● (1410)

To my way of thinking there is one fundamental fault with Information Canada. What Information Canada really needs—what I would do with it myself had I the power to do so, and what Mr. Stanfield should do with it—is to get rid of the whole shebang, pass an act of Parliament or even an order in council defining the duties, the obligations and the limitations of Information Canada, and start all over again. Get rid of the whole shebang and start anew with new people.

I remember when Information Canada was set up and a long-time friend of mine, Mr. Jean-Louis Gagnon, was put at the head of it. I have great admiration for Mr. Gagnon. I remember when he was editor of *Le Soleil* and he had the courage, in Quebec at that time, to oppose General Franco. Later he came with me, with a party of Canadian journalists, who were invited by the British Council, to look at Britain's war effort. This was not a very easy task. O'Connell once said of the Englishman that he had all the qualities of the poker except its occasional warmth. They did warm to Jean-Louis Gagnon and he became a hero, but he was not the right man to put at the head of Information Canada. Mr. Gagnon had too much of gay cynicism in him to put him in a position of that kind. Besides that, I am sure he felt that public money grew on trees.