

The late Field Marshal Smuts

Accordingly the house went up to the Senate chamber.

And being returned:

Mr. Speaker informed the house that the Deputy Governor General had been pleased to give, in His Majesty's name, the royal assent to the following bills:

An act to make temporary provision for the regulation of consumer credit.

An act respecting materials and services essential for the purposes of defence and national security.

An act to amend the Income Tax Act.

An act respecting payment of sessional allowances and transportation expenses to members of the Senate and the House of Commons.

An act to amend the Excise Act, 1934.

An act to amend the Excise Tax Act.

An act to amend the Customs Tariff.

An act for granting His Majesty aid for national defence and security.

THE LATE FIELD MARSHAL SMUTS

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I might be permitted to refer to the fact that the validity and vigour of our parliamentary institutions is being made evident in this city today in the memorial service that is being held for the late Field Marshal Jan Christiaan Smuts. I believe his great career is a symbol of the vigour of the political institutions derived from those British roots, and proof that they are suited not only to one nation but to men of good will all over the world. This gives some reason for the hope that ultimately similar systems will prevail in the world, allowing peoples everywhere to live, under benign Providence, the kind of lives we all hope to provide for those who will come after us.

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in joining with the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) in paying respect to the memory of one of the truly great of our time, I should like also to emphasize the fact, which has been referred to by the Prime Minister, that in his life Jan Christiaan Smuts demonstrated the very thing that all of us hope may be possible in the years ahead. I doubt if there is a more dramatic story in the whole history of free men than the record of a one-time enemy who engaged our own forces in the field of battle becoming the strongest advocate of the very system which he had sought to destroy by force of arms. It was probably a unique experience for men in similar positions for both Field Marshal Smuts and Mr. Churchill to sit down at the council table together during the last war as prime ministers of two of the partner nations within this fellowship

[Mr. Claxton.]

of ours, and recall the time when Mr. Churchill has been interrogated as a prisoner of war by Field Marshal Smuts, then a junior officer in the Boer army. He fought gallantly with the Boers for the things in which he believed. He accepted the situation which resulted after that war, and from then on not only became one of the great advocates of our parliamentary system, but also gave leadership, perhaps unequalled, in the formation of those two great international bodies which have sought to play their part in preserving peace.

I believe it is a matter of record that the name "League of Nations" was in fact suggested by Field Marshal Smuts. Furthermore, he had some thought of the dangers inherent in such an organization when he went further and suggested at one time that it might be called the "League of Free Nations." In that very suggestion there perhaps may be a thought worthy of consideration today. Again, because of his own vast experience and personal recollections of the great hopes and the tragic failures of the league, he was one whose views were regarded most highly at San Francisco, in 1945, because, out of the hope and then the discouragement, along with his great experience, he was in a position to warn of the weaknesses of the earlier covenant.

Field Marshal Smuts was a great leader in his own country, and a leader amongst men. No man has contributed more to the strength of the commonwealth of which we are a partner. I think all of us today will not only wish to join in expressing the sympathy that is being extended to his family, but will hope that in South Africa and throughout the rest of the world his life, and the friendship which grew out of strife, may be an example to all mankind.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FEBRUARY 14, 1951—MR. SPEAKER'S ATTENDANCE AT OPENING OF NEW BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS CHAMBER

Right. Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I move that this house do now adjourn until three o'clock p.m. on February 14, 1951, subject to parliament being called to meet earlier if Your Honour should come to the conclusion that the public interest requires it.

Knowing as we do, sir, that you have some plans for the immediate future, I think all members of the house would wish me to say on their behalf that they tender to you their very best wishes for a happy and fruitful voyage. I understand that next month you will attend, on our behalf, ceremonies in connec-