

THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 12, 1965

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

Prayers.

DOCUMENT TABLED

Hon. John J. Connolly tabled:

Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Study of the Economic Unity of Canada, dated April 30, 1965. (English and French texts).

PRIVATE BILL

PRINCIPAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA—FIRST READING

Hon. Donald Cameron presented Bill S-9, to incorporate Principal Life Insurance Company of Canada.

Bill read first time.

Hon. Mr. Cameron moved that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading on Tuesday next.

Motion agreed to.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

MOTION TO EMPOWER COMMITTEE TO MAKE INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from yesterday the adjourned debate on the motion of Hon. Mr. Thorvaldson:

That the Standing Committee on External Relations be authorized to inquire into the question of Commonwealth relationships with particular reference to the position of Canada within the Commonwealth;

That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to sit during sittings and adjournments of the Senate; and

That the Committee be instructed to report to the House from time to time.

Hon. M. Grattan O'Leary: Honourable senators, before the close of the last session, in a few words which I spoke on the occasion of the flag debate, I ventured to say that I thought that a good fresh look should be taken at the United Nations and perhaps at the Commonwealth. Therefore, I suppose that

you will bear with me in a few ill-chosen words on this motion moved by Senator Thorvaldson.

I would like to join with Senator Roebuck in the tribute he paid to Senator Thorvaldson for his informed and intelligent interest in external affairs; but I must add at once that I am not happy with the wording of this motion. I fear that, if carried out too literally, it will lead to the thing which he himself deplored, namely, that we might get into the bog of an exercise in futility. And I am not relieved of this uneasiness by Senator Roebuck quoting last night some support for this motion from the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. John Bright used to say that he never felt sure he was right until the *London Times* said he was wrong. For myself, having followed the ramifications of the *Globe and Mail* for the past year or two, excellent newspaper though it be, I would almost be sure that I was wrong if the *Globe and Mail* said I was right.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Other people feel somewhat the same way about other newspapers.

Hon. Mr. Choquette: But with not as good reason.

Hon. Mr. O'Leary (Carleton): Another thing about which I feel a curious unease is that this motion is concerned only with the Commonwealth. Why restrict any inquiries we may have to make to the Commonwealth and to our relations with it? Surely if there is anything urgent or of moment in our external relations it is not with the Commonwealth. What about Cyprus? I shall have a few words to say about Cyprus later on. What about NATO? What about the United Nations? What about Viet Nam? But before coming to these I do wish to say a word about the Commonwealth. What is it today?

I remember the famous English editor, Mr. J. A. Spender of the old *Westminster Gazette*, who used to refer to the old Commonwealth as an Act of Faith. I am very much afraid that the faith which many people had in the Commonwealth has diminished in recent years, and for very clearly defined reasons.

I attended my first Commonwealth Conference, then called an Imperial Conference, 45 years ago. I went there, as a correspondent for the *Canadian Press*, with Arthur Meighen, who at that time almost single-handedly was opposing the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. In passing I may remark that in the light of the pomp and circumstance of the