

session. The honourable senator who now complains that he knows nothing about them could have made inquiries throughout that period. Not only while the session was in progress but also during the recess, he could have studied them to the last detail and could have read every word of evidence upon which each judgment was based.

I have suggested that these reports be adopted now, not because I have any personal interest in these matters—I have no more personal interest in them than any one of you. It is true that we of the committee devoted time and energy to their consideration; but we did so for the same reasons and motives that now guide you. This body has a duty to perform, a duty which is upon the shoulders of all of us, and we are trying to discharge that duty properly and decently. I did suggest yesterday that consideration be then given to these reports, and when my friend insisted on adjourning the matter to the next sitting I had no recourse and I made no protest. The item was adjourned and it is now before us.

I have said many times that I never ask for immediate passage of bills or the adoption of reports unless there is a good reason for doing so. I follow the rules, just as you do with all other bills, but when there is a reason for asking to be allowed to do otherwise, I give the reason. We of this committee merely pass on the suggestion.

The reason I ask that these reports be considered now is that they have been before us for a long time, and the petitioners whom we have adjudged as being entitled to relief have been held for all that period not knowing whether they were married or divorced. This would appear to be a piece of very inefficient justice, to say the least. Justice delayed is justice denied. The same thing applies right now.

It was my thought—not my interest, because I am no more interested than you are—that we should send these measures to the other house as rapidly as is reasonably possible. We worked overtime to re-process these 305 cases. As an indication of that, may I inform you that I have signed in that material 610 documents—610 signatures will be found in those reports. The Clerk of the Senate will sign another 610 times before these reports go to the Commons. All that detail appears routine when you see it in the Minutes, but it is not routine. Every one of these cases has been individually processed, and both our officials and the members of the committee well know that the parties are entitled to the judgments we have rendered.

I sympathize with my friend when he says he finds it difficult to keep up with us in all

our work, but I am prepared at any time to move that he be made a member of our committee.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: He can sit with us. If he does not wish to be a member of the committee and spend the time we spend in dealing with these cases and studying the facts so far as is humanly possible, let me remind him that our doors are always open, and that an honourable senator does not have to be a member of the committee to attend and watch the proceedings in every case, be it contested or uncontested. I am not responsible, nor are the members of my committee responsible, for the fact that my friend is not aware of the extensive detail included in this material. What I want to make clear is that there has been no carelessness whatever, or lack of knowledge in respect to the presenting of the reports and the passing of the large number of bills which will follow.

Now so far as an adjournment of the matter is concerned, my friends are aware, as I am, of the desirability of sending these bills to the Commons at the earliest possible moment. I think there is an urgency in this but, honourable senators, you know as much about it as I do, and I have nothing to say with regard to the motion to adjourn.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Pouliot, debate adjourned.

BANKRUPTCY ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Tuesday, October 16, the adjourned debate on the motion of Hon. Mr. Higgins for the second reading of Bill S-2, to amend the Bankruptcy Act.

Hon. David A. Croll: Honourable senators, the amendment to the Bankruptcy Act was explained by the honourable senator from St. John's East (Hon. Mr. Higgins) and it is, of course, a welcome measure in so far as it goes. But, as has already been pointed out in the house, it deals with a narrow field. On the other hand, the honourable sponsor of the bill said that there would be a general revision of the Bankruptcy Act at a later date. My hope is that it will not come too late.

I support this bill in its present form because it makes some useful provisions. It decentralizes to some extent the practice of bankruptcy proceedings in the provinces from the large capital cities, and if the county or district court clerk does not know at the beginning how to handle the administration, he will learn it in time. In any event, there is a vacuum that needs to be filled, as the