

THE SENATE

Friday, August 7, 1964

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

Prayers.

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 8, 1964

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-116, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the financial year ending 31st March, 1965.

Bill read first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. John J. Connolly, with leave of the Senate, moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: Honourable senators, when we last met I informed the house that as soon as the bill for interim supply had been passed in the other place, the Senate, as has been its practice, would assemble immediately to deal with it. As honourable senators know, this bill was not available until very late yesterday afternoon. Immediately upon its receipt I consulted with His Honour the Speaker, and as a result the Senate was summoned to meet here this afternoon at three o'clock.

I apologize for the shortness of the notice given to honourable senators. I am not, of course, implying that this was due to any fault of mine or that I could have or should have given any longer notice. All honourable senators know the circumstances prevailing. However, I do thank all of you who have responded to the telegram sent by the Clerk on behalf of Mr. Speaker. This is a matter of importance, and the Senate is aware of the fact that the bill should be dealt with as soon as possible.

The bill before us is Bill C-116, to grant to Her Majesty interim supply for three months ending October 31, 1964.

Supply has been granted by Parliament up to July 31 of this year, and this bill will cover the three months of August, September and October.

First, I want to say, as I always do on such occasions, that in no instance is the total amount of any item being released by this bill. Secondly, I say that the bill is in the form that is usual for interim supply bills. There are no surprises in the draftsmanship of the sections or the schedule.

Thirdly, I give the assurance that the passing of this bill by the Senate will not prejudice the right of any honourable senator to criticize or discuss any of the items contained in it, or, indeed, in any of the main or supplementary estimates that are before the house.

I should like to add that since Easter, as all honourable senators are aware, the Standing Committee on Finance has had referred to it the main and supplementary estimates. Any of the items in either the main or the supplementary estimates are available for discussion before that committee. There is a vast difference between the position we were in at Easter and the position we are in now. The Standing Committee on Finance will be meeting just as soon as the Senate is again on a regular schedule of sittings. That is some assurance to all honourable senators that if all of the information required on the various items affected by this bill is not given, or the bill is not adequately explained by me today, there will be opportunity for further study of any of those questionable items when the Finance Committee meets.

I should add that I propose to deal with the items in the schedule—perhaps not fully but I hope in sufficient detail to satisfy honourable senators as to their meaning. In this way I can alert honourable senators as to the items in which they might have an interest. I do this purposely so that if one desires to pursue a further investigation into any one of them, that can be done in the Finance Committee.

I have been following the practice on the last few interim supply bills we have had here to lay before each honourable senator a memorandum showing the position with respect to supply which has been voted already by Parliament and what can be reasonably expected to come in the foreseeable future.

Honourable senators who have the memorandum which I have had distributed today will see that the total Government spending proposed in the main estimates and in supplementary estimates, both of which have been tabled for this fiscal year, amounts to \$7,217,102,244, exclusive of payments from the old age security fund, which is another matter.

Hon. Mr. McCutcheon: It is still money.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Of that total, the statutory amount of spending is \$2,860,819,997. The total amount to be voted for the main and for the Supplementary Estimates A—and these are the only ones Parliament has before it—is \$4,356,282,247.

Already we have had four supply bills, and this is the fifth. The total amount which will