

committee to inquire into food prices. It may be there will be some legislation. However, at this stage I cannot say.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: Then there is no definite argument in favour of the motion?

Hon. Mr. Martin: Yes, there is the argument of orderliness and the argument that this has been the practice during the past three years. I think this in itself is a strong argument.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: It is not very convincing, in any event.

Hon. Mr. Martin: I anticipate the continued good humour and zeal which now attends the Leader of the Opposition in the prosecution of his duties.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL CODE

ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT—QUESTION

Hon. Jacques Flynn: Honourable senators, in view of the fact that the legislation abolishing the death penalty in murder cases, except those involving the murder of policemen, lapsed at the end of 1972, I should like to ask the Leader of the Government what will be government policy with respect to the imposition of the death penalty until Parliament has made a decision regarding it?

Hon. Paul Martin: The Solicitor General will be bringing forward a measure to deal with this matter in the other place at the earliest moment.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: Yes, but I am inquiring as to what will happen during the interim—until Parliament makes a decision.

Hon. Mr. Martin: The Governor in Council will continue, as in the past, to deal with these questions on the basis of the existing law and in light of an examination of all the facts involved in each particular case.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: Do I understand your answer to mean that the death penalty will not be imposed, regardless of the law, until Parliament has made a decision?

Hon. Mr. Martin: As I said, it will depend upon an examination by the Governor in Council of the facts in each case.

Hon. Mr. Langlois: And not despite the law.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: That is a vague answer.

HONOURABLE EDGAR E. FOURNIER

RETURN TO CHAMBER AFTER ILLNESS

Hon. Edgar E. Fournier: Honourable senators, I wish to rise on a question of privilege. After an absence of 26 months it is with pleasure that I resume my seat in this chamber.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Fournier: I wish to thank honourable senators and members of the staff who tended to my care during those difficult moments.

On November 25, 1970, while having breakfast in the Parliamentary Restaurant with some members of the

house, I was suddenly, and most unexpectedly, struck with a very severe case of paralysis.

At this moment, I wish to thank the Honourable Hugh John Flemming, with whom I had the privilege to sit and who saw fit to escort me to my room. He called the Senate nurse, Miss Lepine, who made the hospital arrangements. My thanks go to Miss Lepine and Constables Hull and Champagne, who gave me my first wheel-chair ride with safety, security and dignity.

My thanks go to all honourable senators for their kind tributes of flowers, cards, visits and telephone calls; to Senator Martin, who took the time to visit me in my room in the hospital; and to Senator Flynn, with whose office I was in constant touch. I also thank many members of the staff and my secretary, Mrs. Lafrenière. I am grateful to Mr. Roger Lalonde, who made sure that my whiskers did not grow beyond the permissible Senate allowance. This is typical of the friendship one can find in the Senate.

I extend special thanks to Senator Croll. I regret very much that I became ill just at the time when the chips were down and the Poverty Committee was going through most unpleasant and difficult moments. Senator Croll was more than a father to me when I was hospitalized. I hope to have the opportunity to say a few words on this matter and thank him more generously in the near future.

To everyone my most sincere thanks. I must not overlook Dr. Preston and his staff at the Ottawa Civic Hospital, who performed a surgical operation to remove a blood clot which was lodged in an artery, and which has left me with permanent brain cell damage. However, I always knew that there was something abnormal with my brain, which has not changed very much.

Last but not least, thanks to the good Lord, for he has the last word and controls our destiny. May I only say that I consider myself privileged, as it could have been much worse.

To further the complications, a stay in Fredericton, which was to be short, lasted six weeks. On October 22, 1971, I had a stroke, known as an acute inferior wall myocardial infarction, mainly due to an excess of effort, both physical and mental, in trying to recover from the paralysis. I had to start from zero, not being able to even write my own name.

So, honourable senators, while I may not have too many visible marks except difficulty in speaking, I now have to adjust myself to living with some 30 per cent permanent disability in writing, and walking with the assistance of a cane. I have lost 70 pounds by following a very severe diet.

[Translation]

Here in a few words, honourable senators, is the summary of my physical condition and the efforts I have made to fight problems that will always be with me. I accept them all in good heart and I thank Divine Providence that my recovery has surpassed all expectations.

When I compare myself to some of my fellow Canadians who have known the same fate I consider myself well off and I thank the good Lord.