

Hon. Mr. Molson: Honourable senators, I am a strong supporter of NATO and I am glad that this country is going to make facilities available to it. That is a very desirable action, and something that should be encouraged.

I would like to remind the deputy leader that we had quite a debate a couple of years ago on the use of this chamber. The honourable Senator Roebuck precipitated that debate by suggesting that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Rules Committee, the Senate chamber be used by his committee. Some of our most distinguished senators objected, in fact quite strenuously, to this, and his motion was never acted upon. In the course of that debate—which commenced on March 19, 1969 and continued on March 20, 1969—as reported at page 1236 of *Hansard* of that year, His Honour the Speaker addressed the house. I shall not read his remarks in full but only those which I think pertain to this question.

There were some questions asked as to the past practice with respect to the use of this chamber. I have had some research done, and can now inform the Senate that when Parliament is not in session—and that includes, of course, both houses of Parliament—it has been left to the best judgment of the Speaker to decide whether the chamber should be used for meetings of an international character. In this respect I refer to the meeting that will be held in September, when Canada will be the host to a meeting of the Speakers of the Commonwealth Parliaments.

In a subsequent paragraph His Honour said:

When Parliament is sitting—and all honourable senators may not be aware of this—any honourable senator can use the desk which bears his name at any time of the day. So, when Parliament is sitting this chamber belongs to all honourable senators, and only the Senate itself can give permission for another use to be made of it.

Honourable senators, I do not wish to make this in any form an objection to the use of this chamber by NATO, but I do wish to call attention to the fact that His Honour the Speaker has already pointed out that the use of this chamber is at the disposition of the individual members. I believe that if at any time it is contemplated that the chamber be on loan to an international or any other worthwhile organization, the members of the Senate should be, if not consulted—perhaps that is too difficult—at least advised at the earliest date of the possibility, which I think would be good enough for all of us. To hear rumours that it may be used for such purposes is, I believe, not quite adequate for the dignity of this chamber.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Honourable senators, I must admit quite frankly that I knew of the reference which Senator Molson has brought to our attention, but it had certainly escaped my thinking processes until this very moment

[Hon. Mr. McDonald.]

when he brought it our attention. I distinctly recall the occasion that he has referred to.

Honourable senators, a further word of explanation may be helpful. When Canada volunteered to be the host nation for the North Atlantic Assembly meetings this fall, it was done with the understanding that Parliament would not be in session. These meetings normally are held later in the year, generally in November, but because of certain things that will be happening in the month of November in the country south of us, there was a desire to move the North Atlantic Assembly meetings to an earlier date. Canada was in favour of this, as it would not have been possible for her to be the host nation in November because Parliament is usually in session during that month.

When the invitation was extended to NATO it was felt that Parliament would not be in session in September. However, the events that have taken place since the invitation was extended to NATO have meant that we are back in session at an earlier date than was anticipated.

It was originally anticipated that the plenary sessions of the North Atlantic Assembly would take place in the chamber of the House of Commons. The House of Commons is also currently in session, and in order to solve the dilemma in which we find ourselves, it is hoped that honourable senators will make the physical facilities available for the plenary sessions to be held in this chamber.

I am pleased that the honourable Senator Molson has brought this matter to our attention, because I had completely forgotten the discussions which were held, I believe, in March 1969. Perhaps I owe honourable senators an apology for not having brought to their attention the request for the use of this chamber. It is my hope that we may have the co-operation of all honourable senators in order that we may proceed with our work as the need arises, and also to accommodate the North Atlantic Assembly meetings and fulfill the commitment which our country made to NATO.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM 1971

PROJECTS SUBMITTED BY BOY SCOUTS OF CANADA— SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER

Hon. Paul Martin: Honourable senators, on June 28 Senator Langlois tabled on my behalf answers to certain questions that had been asked at an earlier date by the honourable Senator Molson about the Opportunities for Youth Program 1971, with special reference to the Boy Scouts of Canada.

I have before me now a supplementary reply that was not ready on the earlier occasion. Perhaps I might put it on the record for the benefit of the honourable Senator Molson and other honourable senators.

The Secretary of State advises me that the Citizenship Branch provides annually up to \$15,000, plus the moneys available to them through the Young Voyageur program.

In addition to the annual citizenship development grant which goes to the national Boy Scouts Association, the