

THE SENATE

Thursday, June 19, 1969

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY

GREAT SLAVE LAKE RAILWAY—LOSSES TO CONTRACTORS—PRIVILEGE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, yesterday the honourable Senator Argue raised a question of privilege regarding an inquiry which he had presented respecting the Great Slave Lake Railway, and which stood at the time in the name of the honourable Senator McDonald. Senator McDonald spoke when the order was called but his speech was not followed by a motion for adjournment of the debate. The order, in such a case, was considered as debated and consequently was dropped from the Orders of the Day.

An inquiry is not a substantive motion, and according to the rules no reply is allowed. A senator cannot, therefore, have such an order stand in his name or adjourn the debate after he has spoken on it, except by unanimous consent.

May I add that I had the impression after Senator McDonald's remarks that there were no more speakers on the inquiry in question, as he indicated that the question raised by Senator Argue was being thoroughly reviewed in a standing committee of the House of Commons.

In light of this brief explanation, if the honourable Senator Argue feels that his inquiry should be replaced on the Orders of the Day, he should so move with leave of the Senate. If there are no other speakers on the inquiry, he may, with leave of the Senate, have the order stand in his name and speak on it again. Having pondered all these possibilities, if the senator still wishes to reinstate his inquiry on the Order Paper, he should make his motion under Notices of Motions.

As this inquiry was initiated by honourable Senator Argue, I am sure that, as a matter of courtesy, honourable senators would allow him to comment briefly.

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Hazen Argue: Honourable senators, I wish to thank the honourable the Speaker for his ruling and for the work which has gone into preparing it.

I have no objection to the course that this inquiry has taken. Had I realized that Senator McDonald intended to make the short statement he did, I might have arranged for some other senator to ask that the inquiry stand, so that it could be considered at a later date. Honourable senators know that this whole question is being discussed by a committee of the House of Commons, and perhaps progress will be made toward the end for which many of us hope.

However, as a member of the Senate, and having seen what has happened, as stated by the honourable the Speaker, I would personally be quite happy if unanimous consent were given to have the item placed once again on the Order Paper, so that, if this question is still before the public at a later date, the Senate might proceed to debate this inquiry. However, if it is satisfactorily dealt with elsewhere, I would see no reason for that being done. Therefore, with leave of the Senate, I would request unanimous consent to allow this item to be re-instated on the Order Paper.

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-197, to amend the Criminal Code.

Bill read first time.

Hon. Paul Martin moved that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading on Wednesday next.

Motion agreed to.

FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT
LOANS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Hon. A. Hamilton McDonald, for Hon. Salter A. Hayden, Chairman of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, reported that the committee had considered Bill C-195, to amend the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act, and had directed that the bill be reported without amendment.