

THE SENATE

Thursday, September 1, 1966

The Senate met at 11 a.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

TIME OF MEETING CHANGED

Hon. John J. Connolly: Honourable senators, a meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds was called for 11 o'clock this morning. On behalf of the Chairman, Senator Dessureault, I would ask all members of that committee to take notice that the committee will meet immediately after we rise this morning.

Hon. Mr. McCutcheon: That will be at 11.15.

DIVORCE

APPOINTMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEE TO HEAR APPEAL

Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck: Honourable senators, I wish to make an informal report on behalf of the Standing Committee on Divorce. We had a meeting this morning and a resolution was passed authorizing the chairman to appoint a committee to hear the appeal that is before us and which was discussed at some length yesterday.

Honourable senators will be interested to know that I have nominated such a committee. I am sure honourable senators also will be interested in the personnel of the subcommittee. The chairman will be Senator J. Campbell Haig, a very experienced and thoroughly competent lawyer who has had nothing whatever to do with this case so far.

The appeal is by a woman. I do not know that that should make much difference but it is a circumstance, however; and one of the members of the subcommittee will be Senator Muriel McQ. Fergusson, a woman and a lawyer by profession. The third member of the subcommittee will be Senator F. W. Gershaw, a medical doctor.

I submit to my fellow members of this chamber that a stronger and more experienced group could scarcely be found if

one searched all Canada to find it. I am very pleased indeed that we are able to produce such a subcommittee of talent, of integrity, of knowledge and experience as the three I have just mentioned.

Honourable senators, while I have the floor, may I make an apology to the chamber for a mistake I made yesterday. I was asked whether the evidence in this case had been transcribed and I said I was fairly sure it had not.

It was transcribed, and I think I ordered it to be transcribed. However, I do not know that any significance attaches to this fact, but in the interests of accuracy I would like to correct my statement of yesterday.

Honourable senators will remember that our honourable leader made a suggestion yesterday afternoon with regard to the criticism levelled not only by Senator Walker but by others and which has also been in other minds, my own included, that it was not quite right in principle or in appearance that the body which passes upon a case should also be the body to hear an appeal against its decision. It is fundamental; it is elementary, but it is certainly not applicable in the present instance since the members of the committee just named had nothing to do with the case under discussion; however, for the sake of appearances and principle I think we should make some change. The Leader of the Government, Senator Connolly, suggested that we divide the committee into two sections, one of which will be known as the Appeal Division. This suggestion has met with the unanimous approval of the committee, and we will draft the necessary amendments to the rules of the Senate during the recess and action will be taken as soon as we reassemble in October.

Hon. A. J. Brooks: Honourable senators, may I congratulate the honourable Chairman of the Divorce Committee for his quick action in connection with this matter. I understand that he had a very early morning meeting of the committee and that these matters were determined at that time.

May I also say I agree that his committee has made a very fine selection of a subcommittee to look after this problem. They are all well qualified, and I am sure the selection will meet with the approval of all members of this Senate. I might also say to him that he need not apologize to a body of this kind for his lapse of memory with respect to the transcript having been prepared because all, or at least many of us, are