

THE SENATE

Monday, September 14, 1992

The Senate met at 8 p.m., Senator Gerald Ottenheimer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair.

Prayers.

SENATOR'S STATEMENTS

GENERAL ELECTION

NUMBER OF DAYS LEFT IN CURRENT TERM

Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators will be pleased to hear that the election clock is still ticking. There are 67 more days for democracy, but 453 days for those cowardly and contemptuous of democracy.

THE LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE PAUL MARTIN

TRIBUTES

Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, earlier today we lost a great Canadian. Though that is a term frequently used, I use it without reservation because when Paul Martin died this morning, he left behind a bright trail of accomplishments and achievements.

At a dinner in 1984 to establish the Paul Martin Chair, an endowed professorship at the University of Windsor, former U.S. ambassador G. Mennen Williams said: "To try and pay tribute to Paul Martin is like trying to describe the Crown jewels—there are so many different facets to his career." In reviewing all of the activities in which he was involved, the accomplishments he made in his 89 years, I, too, found it difficult to determine what to say and what to emphasize.

Paul Martin's education was most liberal. He was educated at the University of Toronto, Osgoode Hall Law School, Harvard Law School, Trinity College at Cambridge and the Geneva School of International Studies. He was awarded honorary degrees from a number of universities including Michigan, Dalhousie, Toronto, Laval and Queen's.

The list of awards Mr. Martin received is far too long to list completely. However, he was awarded the Sir Alfred Zimmern Scholarship in 1930, named an honorary life member of the Royal Canadian Legion in 1936, and awarded the Christian Culture Award in 1956.

Paul Martin began his career in the House of Commons when he was elected in the general election of 1935. He was re-elected to the House of Commons in the next nine elections and served as the member of Parliament for Essex East for 33 years until 1968. On April 20 of that year, he was summoned to the Senate and appointed Leader of the Government, a position which he held until his retirement in 1974.

In Parliament, he held many positions of great importance. He first became a member of the Privy Council in 1945 when appointed Secretary of State. One of the first acts he was instrumental in passing was the first Citizenship Act which declared Canadians to be Canadian citizens, and no longer British subjects.

From 1946 to 1957, he was Minister of National Health and Welfare. It was his work during this period that prompted Mitchell Sharp, his successor at External Affairs, to say this morning that Paul Martin was the father of our social security system. It was Paul Martin who was largely responsible for many of the social programs we value today, such as universal family allowances and the federal old age security program. Though not the responsible minister for medicare, we are told that his ceaseless advocacy in cabinet for the program was crucial to its introduction in the early 1960s.

In 1963, he was appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs. In this capacity, he headed many delegations to NATO and the United Nations and was involved with the Auto Pact negotiations and the establishment of U.N. peacekeeping forces in Cyprus.

Of the 33 years served in the House of Commons, Mr. Martin served 24 years in the cabinets of Mackenzie King, Louis St. Laurent, Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau. These were then followed by 6 more years in the Senate as Government Leader.

In his first speech in this Chamber, the honourable senator said:

I came here to continue, in co-operation with senators on all sides, to work for the national good. My aim—and this I should state at the beginning—is to contribute as best I can to the activity and the strength of this chamber, which I recognize, as well as the Government of Canada.

He went on to discuss the importance of the Senate and of preserving the Senate. He did not believe that we had to wait for Senate reform to improve the Senate, but that it could be done through hard work.

The last time he spoke in the Senate, which was on his retirement on October 30, 1974, Mr. Martin talked about his faith in our Canadian parliamentary system:

My wish is to speak in favour of our Canadian parliamentary system. We must not lose faith in that system. Let us defend it, against those who feel it is obsolete. We must of course define it and find new ways to improve it, but the principle is good.