

Senator CROLL: As a matter of fact, our record on the Geneva Conventions is pretty good.

Mr. WERSHOF: Oh, yes.

Senator CROLL: I think, in fairness to both governments, it was the legal eagles who just could not agree as to how this matter should be approached; whether it should be done by way of resolution or by way of a bill. They took 15 years to argue it out.

Senator POULIOT: Schedule I is the text of the convention that was signed in 1949?

Mr. WERSHOF: Yes, all four of the schedules. There are four conventions, Senator. The first one is called the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. This is usually referred to as the Red Cross convention, because that is the basis for the respect for not only the Red Cross but for the medical people in the armed forces, and for the wounded themselves. The second convention is a similar one—

Senator CROLL: On what page is that?

Mr. WERSHOF: Schedule I is at page 6, and Schedule II is at page 27. This is similar to the first convention, but it deals with the armed forces at sea—in other words, on ships.

The third convention is at page 46, and is the new Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. It is much lengthier than the 1929 Prisoners of War Convention. The Judge Advocate General, if Senators were to ask him, would be able to indicate some of the important improvements in it.

The fourth convention is at page 97, and it is for the Protection of Civilians in Time of War. It took the conference four months in 1949 to produce these.

Senator LAMBERT: These are now being ratified for the first time?

Mr. WERSHOF: By Canada.

Senator LAMBERT: Yes.

Mr. WERSHOF: But they have been ratified by a number of other countries, and I have deposited a list.

Senator LAMBERT: Have you had occasion for recourse to them?

Mr. WERSHOF: The only time it could be said that we had was during the Korean War. That is the only war that has taken place since 1949. What the Government did on that occasion was to declare that although these conventions had not been formally ratified the Canadian forces would respect the provisions of these four 1949 conventions in the Korean conflict.

Senator LAMBERT: And that would be expressed in what form?

Mr. WERSHOF: We made a public declaration, and I believe we sent a note . . .

Senator LAMBERT: The Crown would act in its own capacity, I expect.

Mr. WERSHOF: That is an executive act on the part of the government of the day.

Senator YUZYK: May I ask if there is an index to this Geneva Convention, to this present bill, as we have no index.

Mr. WERSHOF: I am sorry we were late in producing it. The index is not a legal part of the convention but simply a piece of paper that is being produced. It is not in the bill. It was distributed a little late in the day, to help members of Parliament. The French edition will be out soon.

Senator GOUIN: This index is extremely useful, as the contents are extremely long and without the index it would be hard to follow them.