

THE SENATE

Thursday, December 11, 1947.

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

SANTOIRE DIVORCE CASE

RELEASE OF EXHIBITS

Hon. JOHN T. HAIG, with leave of the Senate, moved:

That the following exhibits, namely:

No. 5, Letter

No. 6, Hotel registration card,

filed during the last session of parliament at the hearing and inquiry into the petition of Joseph Edmond Gerard Santoire, praying for a Bill of Divorce, be released to the petitioner.

He said: Honourable senators, the two exhibits referred to in the motion were filed by the petitioner during the taking of the evidence in this case before the Senate Divorce Committee. They are required in a lawsuit commencing tomorrow in Montreal, and it is quite proper to release them for the trial.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Will they be returned for the records of this house after the trial?

Hon. Mr. HAIG: They will be returned when the trial is over.

The motion was agreed to.

TARIFFS AND TRADE

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE AT GENEVA APPROVAL OF GENERAL AGREEMENT

Hon. WISHART McL. ROBERTSON moved:

That it is expedient that the houses of parliament do approve the general agreement on tariffs and trade, including the protocol of provisional application thereof, annexed to the final act of the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment held at Geneva from April 10 to October 30, 1947, together with the complementary agreements of October 30, 1947, between Canada and the United States of America and between Canada and the United Kingdom; and that this house do approve of the same, subject to the legislation required in order to give effect to the provisions thereof.

He said: Honourable senators, during the time that I have occupied the responsible position of government leader in this house, there have been many occasions when I have had the great honour and privilege of presenting legislation for your consideration. But however long I may be honoured with such opportunities, I do not believe that it will fall to my lot to present in this chamber pro-

posals which, because of their intrinsic importance and their implications, are greater than those contained in this motion.

This motion relates to a matter in which I have not only a general interest as a Canadian, but which appeals to me personally in greater degree than any other question of public policy. I do not know why I should be particularly interested, in a general sense, in freeing the channels of world trade; but from the first moment that I was able to appreciate anything in the home in which I was brought up, on the south shore of Nova Scotia, I remember that, rightly or wrongly, we associated the position in which that part of the country found itself with what had occurred in previous years to interfere with the free flow of international trade. I remember spending my boyhood holidays in Lockeport, near the wharf where years before my grandfather had been engaged in the shipping trade. There was a time when his business had progressed to such an extent that sometimes four or five seagoing brigs were moored to one little wharf, and these vessels would carry the commerce of the world back and forth between Nova Scotia and other countries. Two of my mother's sisters were married to my grandfather's sea captains. That was the atmosphere.

With the passing of time I always felt that the various impediments that had developed in the way of free international trade had rung the death-knell of all that we had thought so important, and I hoped that one day some major turn of public opinion would serve to re-open the channels of free trade, not only for the benefit of Nova Scotia but for Canada in general and the world as a whole. I remember thrilling to a speech that was made by my honourable friend from Churchill (Hon. Mr. Crerar) during one of the election campaigns in Antigonish. I am not sure that I recall his words accurately, but the purport was that the growing impediment to the free flow of international trade had taken the breath of the sea from the nostrils of Nova Scotians. I recall how I thrilled to that statement, and how completely in accord with it was my own viewpoint.

Honourable senators, the documents which have been tabled in this house and to which we shall give consideration, represent the various agreements reached at Geneva. I shall enumerate them now because in due course they will be considered in detail.

First there is the general agreement on tariffs and trade, published in four volumes by the United Nations, and signed on October 30, 1947, by representatives of the following