

Hon. Mr. Power: My inquiry is simply directed to ascertain what steps were taken by the Comptroller of the Treasury under these peculiar circumstances. We are entitled to know what constitutional procedure was followed. It was something which had not happened before, to the best of my historical knowledge—perhaps that is not very great—for over 300 years. It has been 300 years since the Crown has been able to appropriate moneys of the people of Canada or of any British country without having to appeal to the people and without having such moneys voted by Parliament. So if there is a new procedure, we want to know what it is. The last man who did this lost his head.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I think the same procedure was followed in 1926.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: The Honourable the Leader of the Government says the same procedure was followed in 1926?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: That was my information.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: Why was it followed in 1926? We can't go back to 1926, but the honourable gentleman from Gulf (Hon. Mr. Power) has asked a question with respect to this unusual procedure, and I think we are entitled to an answer. I can understand that the Leader of the Government may not have the information today. I do not want to hold up this bill now, but I feel that before the next appropriation bill comes down the Leader of the Government should obtain this information. It took a month for us to get information respecting clause 4 which was inserted in the last appropriation bill, and I think the house is entitled to the information now requested by the honourable gentleman from Gulf. As far as I am concerned, I certainly reserve the right to bring forth this matter again when the next appropriation bill is before us, and at that time I will expect an answer.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I am sorry that I cannot give any further information at the present time, and I will do my best to satisfy honourable members opposite as soon as possible.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I wonder if the Honourable the Leader of the Government could give us a statement now as to the financial standing of the country at the end of the fiscal year 1957-58. It would seem that before we pass these or any other estimates we should have a knowledge of what the financial standing of the country was at the end of the last fiscal year. I certainly think all honourable senators would welcome that information.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: It is impossible to give it now. It will be disclosed when the budget is brought down.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Could the Honourable the Leader of the Government tell us when that will be?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I would like to say to my honourable friend that if I knew I would be very glad to give him the information, but I do not happen to know.

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

THIRD READING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: With leave of the Senate, I move the third reading now.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read third time and passed.

CANADA AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS STANDARDS BILL

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-17, to amend the Canada Agricultural Products Standard Act.

Bill read first time.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Next sitting.

ROYAL ASSENT

NOTICE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform you that I have received the following communication:

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Ottawa

June 5, 1958.

Sir:

I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable Patrick Kerwin, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada, acting as Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General, will proceed to the Senate Chamber today, the 5th June, at 5.45 p.m., for the purpose of giving royal assent to certain bills.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. F. Delaute,
Secretary to the Governor General,
(Administrative).

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate,
Ottawa.