

## THE SENATE

Tuesday, March 12, 1985

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

### THE ESTIMATES

#### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

**Hon. Philippe Deane Gigantès:** Honourable senators, I rise on a question of privilege. On February 20, 1985, I said in this honourable chamber, as appears at page 572 of the English version of *Senate Debates*, that I was puzzled by the crisis over the estimates, and asked why the government was making a crisis when there was evidence that the estimates had already been printed.

At page 575 of *Senate Debates* of the same date, the Honourable Senator Roblin said:

To put it very bluntly, I am afraid Senator Gigantès does not know what he is talking about.

On February 27, 1985, at page 2544 of *Commons Debates*, bottom right hand corner, the Honourable Warren Allmand asked the Honourable Flora MacDonald, Minister of Employment and Immigration, why certain figures, and in particular those for Challenge '85, did not appear in the estimates.

The press release issued by the Honourable Flora MacDonald on Challenge '85 was circulated on February 6, and the minister said the following, in answer to Mr. Allmand:

As the Hon. Member very well knows, those Estimates were in print before the \$205 million was announced for Challenge '85.

I do not ask for an apology nor do I expect one, but I simply wanted to put that on the record. I am prepared to accept that the Honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate does not occupy himself with such mundane details as to the printing of the estimates and, therefore, might not have known that they were in print when I said they were.

**Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I am not aware of the question of privilege, unless it is that the honourable senator is objecting to my describing him in the way I did.

I regret I cannot retract my statement, because the minister's quotation about the estimates being in print in no way invalidates what I have said. It is a long way from her estimates being in print to the ultimate approval of the estimates for distribution to Parliament. I do not really rise to enter into a discussion on that point, because I think we have other things to do.

### THE LATE KONSTANTIN CHERNENKO

#### CONDOLENCES

**Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I think it appropriate for this chamber to take note of the fact that there have been significant developments in the wide world in which we live, none being more significant than the death of the President of the U.S.S.R., Mr. Konstantin Chernenko. This is certainly an occasion on which people across the world, regardless of their political views, may offer their condolences to the government and the people of the Soviet Union on the loss of their leader.

I think, perhaps, it would be appropriate to say something more because a new leader has been chosen, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev. I pronounced his name in the Canadian fashion, as members of this chamber will recognize. This is a significant development for us, if only for the fact that the new head of the Soviet Union represents a new generation of leaders in that country. While I think it would be optimistic to expect to see changes of a substantial nature in their attitude toward their own problems and toward their neighbours of the world, I think, perhaps, to do so would be premature. Nevertheless, I think we can be hopeful that some new and more relevant views may be brought by that great nation to the problems which concern us all.

While it is inappropriate for me to offer any advice to the new leader of the Soviet Union, it is not inappropriate to express the hope that there may be more flexibility which will be reciprocated by other states in this great world of ours, particularly in respect of the question of disarmament and relations with the United States. I wanted to make that remark on the passing of the head of the Soviet Union and the assumption by a new leader of that post.

**Hon. Hazen Argue:** Honourable senators, on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, I want to join with the Leader of the Government in expressing our regrets and condolences at the passing of Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko. We extend our condolences to the Government of the Soviet Union, to the people of the Soviet Union and to the family of Mr. Chernenko.

As the Leader of the Government has said, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev has succeeded as leader of the Soviet Union. I had the honour and distinction of being host for part of the visit of Mr. Gorbachev to Canada approximately two years ago. I found him very friendly, very intelligent and, I believe, a man of rather moderate views. At least, that is how I found him in our discussions. I believe he is a friend of Canada. We made it clear to him and, through him, to the Soviet Union that we were prepared as a nation to exchange agricultural technology