

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: Honourable gentlemen, it is evident that we cannot very well finish this discussion to-night; so I move that the Committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again at the next sitting.

Progress was reported.

#### CUSTOMS ACT AMENDMENT BILL FIRST READING

Bill 3, an Act to amend the Customs Act.—  
Hon. Mr. Willoughby.

The Senate adjourned until to-morrow at 3 p.m.

### THE SENATE

Thursday, September 18, 1930.

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

Prayers and routine proceedings.

#### POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE SENATE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION

Before the Orders of the Day:

Hon. R. DANDURAND: Before the Orders of the Day are proceeded with, I crave permission to make a few remarks with reference, perhaps primarily, to myself, and also to the general atmosphere of the Senate. I noticed last evening that some honourable members of this Chamber spoke of myself as "the leader of the Opposition." During the eight years that I sat in the seat which my honourable friend (Hon. Mr. Willoughby) at present adorns I refrained from the use of that expression when speaking of him or to him, because I did not think that there was in this House an Opposition in the same sense that there is in the House of Commons. I do not believe that the Senate was created with the idea that in it there should be two parties facing each other. I had the very great honour of being selected leader of the Liberal party in the Senate. As I have said before, I recognize that in the country, and perforce in the Senate itself, there are two trends of thought, a Conservative trend and a Liberal trend, which must necessarily appear in our discussions; but here there is not, as there is in the House of Commons, what is referred to as His Majesty's loyal Opposition.

Some public man in Great Britain has said that it is the duty of the Opposition to

oppose. I do not intend to weigh the value of that opinion, but I desire to declare that, as I see it, that is not the part to be played by the members of the Senate who happen to sit on this side of the House. I do not remember having had occasion to mention before that in January, 1922, when the elections had favoured the Liberal party, I suggested to Sir James Loughheed that he should remain on the side of the House where he had previously sat, and that I could lead from this side of the House, because I could not see that we of the Senate ought to take notice of the change occurring elsewhere. He appreciated the opinion that I expressed, but disliked the idea of not following tradition.

Again we have followed tradition, but I have heard the opinion expressed by members of this Chamber that while the leader and some of his principal lieutenants might very well have changed seats, the senators generally might have been left to sit on one side or the other, as they pleased.

I make this statement simply in order that my friends on both sides may refrain from mentioning the leader of the Opposition. I said when I took the leadership of this Chamber that I recognized no followers and shunned the party whip. Our function is to criticize and improve hasty legislation. I know what the Fathers of Confederation said in this regard, and with that in mind I have given expression to this opinion.

Hon. W. B. WILLOUGHBY: Honourable members, I shall refrain from using the expression "leader of the Opposition," as my honourable friend feels that it does not properly describe the role of the leader of any party in this House. I have no doubt that in the conduct of the group whom my honourable friend represents he will adopt an entirely independent point of view. While that point of view may not always be our own, the remarks that he has made lead me to assume that in any event it will not be partisan, and I am grateful to the honourable gentleman, because it will make my task simpler than it otherwise would be.

Right Hon. Sir GEORGE E. FOSTER: Honourable members, whilst I sympathize in general with my honourable friend's (Hon. Mr. Dandurand's) statement that he is not here to lead a factious opposition, and that the Senate does not partake of the rather marked partisan spirit which prevails in another place, yet there is a little difficulty. How are we to discriminate between the Liberal party in the House of Commons and the Dominion,