

## THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 25, 1977

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

### DOCUMENTS TABLED

**Senator Perrault** tabled:

Report of the number and amount of loans to Indians made under section 70(1) of the Indian Act for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1977, pursuant to section 70(6) of the said Act, Chapter I-6, R.S.C., 1970.

Copies of Orders of the Administrator under the Anti-Inflation Act, pursuant to section 17(3) of the said Act, Chapter 75, Statutes of Canada 1974-75-76, respecting compensation plans between The Health Sciences Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba and certain employees, represented by the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 827. Orders dated May 20, 1977.

Copies of a Summary of Ocean Dumping Permits issued under the authority of the Ocean Dumping Control Act in the calendar years 1975 and 1976, pursuant to section 28(3) of the said Act, Chapter 55, Statutes of Canada 1974-75-76.

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

#### HELSINKI AGREEMENT—CUSTOMS DUTY ON GIFTS TO U.S.S.R.— QUESTION

**Senator Thompson:** Honourable senators, I would like to ask the Leader of the Government a question.

Since the signing of the Helsinki Agreement, has the customs duty levied by the Soviet Union on gifts sent by citizens of Canada to relatives in the Soviet Union increased or decreased? If so, by what percentage?

**Senator Perrault:** Honourable senators, I must take that question as notice because of its detailed nature.

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**Senator Perrault:** I should like to advise honourable senators that it is expected the Senate will sit on Monday evening. I hope that this notice will enable honourable senators to make the appropriate travel plans.

**Senator Flynn:** Is there any special reason?

**Senator Perrault:** It is because of the great volume of work being advanced by the government on behalf of the country.

**Senator Flynn:** Have you nothing other than that platitude to offer?

### SOLAR ENERGY APPLICATION BILL

#### SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from yesterday, the debate on the motion of Senator Austin for the second reading of Bill C-309, respecting the domestic and industrial use of solar energy.

**Hon. Allister Grosart:** Honourable senators—

**Senator Perrault:** Let there be light.

**Senator Grosart:** Let there be energy.

Bill C-309, which was introduced by Senator Austin last week, is entitled "An Act respecting the domestic and industrial use of solar energy." It is a unique bill; certainly one of the most unusual that has ever come to us in my time here. In the first place, the bill was originally a private member's bill, and still is a private member's bill originating in the other place. As we all know, it is very seldom that a private member's bill gets through the mill of the Commons and reaches us. I have, of course, no criticism to make of the fact that a private member's bill has come to us. As a matter of fact, in my view it would be a good thing if far more such bills got through that mill.

However, I would not include this bill in that generalization. This is probably the worst kind of bill that should be presented to the Senate after passage in the House of Commons. I say that because Parliament, by this bill, is asked to establish an institute to be known as the Institute for Solar Energy Application.

• (1410)

I think I will pause for a moment until Senator Argue and the leader have concluded their business. My voice is not as strong as that of Senator Argue, and I have difficulty sometimes hearing myself over him.

**Senator Croll:** That is a good example of energy.

**Senator Grosart:** I will not match mine with Senator Argue—not at my age.

**Senator Argue:** You are doing very well.

**Senator Grosart:** This bill asks Parliament to establish an institute in the private sector. Why this should require an act of Parliament is beyond me. We have reached the stage at which even a bank can be incorporated by ordinary legislation, and if we were to pick an institute that requires whatever prestige may flow from incorporation by Parliament, it would certainly not be this one.

This measure deals with solar energy, and I believe all honourable senators would agree that the subject matter is good. It is very important to Canada that we proceed as quickly and as efficiently as possible with an examination of