

Hon. Mr. Gladstone: Honourable senators, the very foundation of the success of the Red Cross Society is voluntary service by the organization's supporters. As to the proposal for removing the restriction on the value of the society's real estate holdings, we should remember that no company is ever granted a charter entitling it to an unlimited capitalization. I find it difficult to understand why a bill containing such a proposal as this should have been presented to parliament at all.

The Hon. the Chairman: Does the honourable gentleman appreciate that in striking out section 1 of the bill we have dealt with the proposal to remove the limitation on the value of the real estate holdings?

Hon. Mr. Gladstone: I do appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. What I have been saying is really an aside to the remarks that I wish to make on section 2, which would empower the central council to increase the number of its members to sixty, although five members would still constitute a quorum of the executive committee. Passage of this section would make possible the giving of decisions on very important matters by a mere handful of representatives of the great contributing public of Canada.

I heartily agree with what was said by the senator who immediately preceded me (Hon. Mr. Nicol). I think we should pass only the third section, which specifies what the name of the society shall be in the French language, and that the other two sections should be rejected. If the society's officers wish to have those two sections introduced at another session, let them come here prepared to give information that should be given, in the public interest.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Honourable senators, I find it difficult to disassociate myself from the position of leader of the government in the consideration of a private bill. Though I am in sympathy with the difficulties in which the sponsor finds himself, it seems to me if there is any question at all of the unanimity of the house on this matter, he should accede to the suggestion made by the honourable senators who have just spoken. I of course do not wish to handicap in any way the work of the society, but it would seem that no serious harm will result if this suggestion is followed. I feel that it might be in the interest of the society—the very foundation of which is public confidence—to allow the matter to stand. I realize the responsibility that places upon the honourable gentleman who has sponsored the bill, but I offer the suggestion for what it may be worth.

Hon. Mr. Turgeon: Honourable senators, I of course realize that this bill is under discussion now only through the courtesy of every member of the house. In view of the objections raised by the honourable senators from Wellington South (Hon. Mr. Gladstone) and Huron-Perth (Hon. Mr. Golding), and the suggestion made by the honourable leader of the house, I wish now, in fairness to the association, to put on the record the reasons behind the section dealing with the Central Council and the Executive Committee. The explanatory note on the constitution of the Central Council reads:

This amendment is required generally to give increased representation on the governing body of the Society to the various provincial divisions, including the new province of Newfoundland.

On the constitution of the Executive Committee there is this explanatory note:

The purpose of this amendment is to remove the limitation on the number of members of the Executive Committee in view of the increase in the maximum number of members of the Central Council.

With that explanation on the record, and bearing in mind that the house will meet again within two months, I offer no objection to the deletion of this section, and would move that section 2 of the bill be struck out.

Section 2 was rejected.

Section 3 was agreed to.

The preamble and the title were agreed to.

The bill was reported, as amended.

THIRD READING

Hon. Mr. Turgeon moved the third reading of the bill, as amended.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill, as amended, was read the third time, and passed.

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

At eight o'clock the sitting was resumed.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 7

FIRST READING

A message was received from the house of Commons with Bill 224, an Act for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of the financial year ending the 31st March, 1950.

The bill was read the first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: Honourable senators, this is the seventh appropriation bill to come before us