

THE SENATE

Tuesday, November 24, 1964

The Senate met at 8 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

CONSUMER CREDIT

JOINT COMMITTEE—CHANGE IN COMMONS MEMBERS

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons stating that the name of Mr. Saltsman has been substituted for that of Mr. Orlikow on the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Consumer Credit.

DOCUMENT TABLED

Hon. John J. Connolly tabled:

Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1965. (English and French texts).

CANADA PENSION PLAN BILL

FIRST REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE

Hon. Muriel McQ. Fergusson, Joint Chairman of the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons appointed to consider Bill C-136, to establish a comprehensive program of old age pensions and supplementary benefits in Canada payable to and in respect of contributors, presented the first report of the committee:

Your committee recommends that its quorum be reduced to twelve (12) members, provided that both houses are represented.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

Hon. Mrs. Fergusson: With leave of the Senate, I move that the report be adopted now.

Hon. A. J. Brooks: Honourable senators, first, I should like to congratulate the honourable Senator Fergusson on her appointment as co-chairman of this committee. I would like also to ask her who the other co-chairman is, when and how often the committee proposes to sit, and why it is recommended that the quorum be 12 and not a larger number.

Hon. Mrs. Fergusson: The other co-chairman is Mr. A. J. P. Cameron of Toronto. No final decision has been reached as to how

often the committee will sit. The next meeting will take place tomorrow afternoon at 3.45. It is hoped to have meetings on three days per week, with usually two meetings in one day.

As to the reason for the reduction in the quorum, it was thought that this would be a reasonable number of members to expect to attend in view of the large number of committees meeting at the same time. Of course, both houses must be represented at the meetings. Originally the quorum was fixed at 20 members, but the committee decided to ask that this be reduced to 12, as it was thought it would be easier to get the attendance of that number rather than the larger number.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: It is a very important committee.

Hon. John J. Connolly: Honourable senators, if the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Brooks) had not been so agile on his feet—he is younger than I am, and much more able to rise quickly—I would certainly have preceded him. I rise now primarily to say that I am sure all honourable senators are gratified that one of our number, and particularly one of our ladies, should have been selected by a very important committee to be one of its co-chairmen.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: And also one from New Brunswick.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): The Leader of the Opposition is beating me to the punch every time this evening. Certainly, the fact that Senator Fergusson comes from the Atlantic region is important, and the fact that she comes from the very green province of New Brunswick is of great significance. I am sure we all wish her, and the other members of the Senate who are on this committee, success in the work they will carry out.

On the point as to the reduced quorum, may I add, without in any way wishing to embellish what Senator Fergusson has said, the normal practice on joint committees has been—and I recall the one that sat in connection with the affairs of the National Capital Commission a number of years ago—to reduce the quorum to ensure that the work of the committee can continue. However, I think, and this should be on record, that the attendance on the part of representatives from both houses at these important committee meetings is usually extremely good. In the case of emergencies, however, when representatives are called to their respective houses or to other committees, it is the part of prudence to have a smaller quorum so that the work of the committee can continue.

I simply conclude by saying that I hope Senator Fergusson and her colleagues from