

THE SENATE.

Thursday, April 15, 1915.

The Acting SPEAKER took the Chair at 10.30 a.m.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

ABSENCE OF SPEAKER LANDRY.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN inquired:

1. Is it a fact that the Honourable Senator Landry, Speaker of the Senate, gave instructions, written or verbal, on the 8th day of this present month, April, 1915, to the Clerk of the Senate, authorizing him to declare and announce to the Senate, that he, the Speaker, would not take the Chair at the afternoon sitting of the Senate, called for 3 p.m., on the above date of the 8th instant, on account of causes or reasons that would make his absence unavoidable, either personally or officially?

2. Is it a fact that His Honour the Speaker simply intimated to the Clerk of the Senate that he, the Speaker, declined and refused to take or occupy the Chair, at such said sitting on such said date?

3. Why the Government has not filled the office of Speaker of the Senate since the refusal of the Hon. Senator Landry, on the 8th instant, to fill the Chair of the Speaker of the Senate, and to discharge the functions and duties appertaining thereto, under the Constitution, and provided for by the Statute?

4. Does the Government intend to leave the Senate in the present state of chaos until the prorogation of Parliament, and thus jeopardize the validity and constitutionality of all the proceedings and legislation that the Senate has been, or may be, called upon to adopt, or reject, since the aforesaid date of the 8th instant?

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—The Government has no knowledge whatever upon the subject upon which the hon. gentleman has made inquiry.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—Then I may state, not to the hon. leader of the House here but to the Government who are responsible that they are quite at fault. They do not know what everybody knows. That is all I have to say. The Speaker need not rise, I am going to stop right off.

The SPEAKER—No discussion is permitted on an inquiry.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—I know that, but I have a right to make a simple remark. The Speaker does not require to intervene.

VOTES FOR SOLDIERS UNDER ARMS.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN inquired:

How many, if any, of the 101,000 citizens of Canada, at present under arms, in the defence

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of Canada and the British Empire against the German, Austrian and Turkish governments and armies, have petitioned the present Government or Parliament of Canada, to pass and enact a law to secure and provide for them the right to cast their ballots at any general or by-election, for the Federal purposes of the Dominion of Canada during the present war?

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—The Government has no knowledge of any petitions such as has been referred to. As to petitions to Parliament, I cannot say anything. My hon. friend will have as much information about that as I have.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—The answer of the Government is that they have no knowledge of petitions. Have they been pigeon-holed?

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I do not know.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—The answer is not a fair one. The answer should be "We have no petitions and the Government has no knowledge of petitions." This is something like the petitions of the halfbreeds in the Northwest.

VOTES FOR SOLDIERS BILL.

DEBATE RESUMED.

The Order of the Day being called:

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for the second reading Bill 111, an Act to enable Canadian soldiers on active military service during the present war to exercise their electoral franchise.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE—I wish to correct the report of yesterday's proceedings in the Citizen this morning which has been telegraphed abroad. The report of a portion of my remarks read as follows:

The Government is anxious to wave the flag with this Bill and we do not want them to wave the flag; we do not want them to damn the flag.

Senator Pope—"I object to the language of the honourable gentleman; he says he does not care a damn for the flag."

Senator Choquette—"I did not say that. That is the reason the Bill is brought here. I say the Opposition in the other House was forced into a corner and they did a little flag waving too."

The report is inaccurate. I refer to the official report, where I find the following:

"The Government is anxious to wave the flag on this Bill and we do not want them to do that."

Then the hon. member for Compton (Hon. Mr. Pope) said "I object to the language of the hon. gentleman." I do not say who is responsible for the report in the Citizen but I wish to protest against it.