

THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 11, 1981

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

Prayers.

THE CONSTITUTION

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE—CHANGES IN COMMONS MEMBERSHIP

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that messages had been received from the House of Commons to acquaint the Senate with changes in the list of members appointed to serve on the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada.

(For text of messages, see today's Minutes of the Proceedings of the Senate.)

DOCUMENTS TABLED

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government) tabled:

Report of the Superintendent of Insurance for Canada, Volume II, Annual Statements of Property and Casualty Insurance Companies, for the year ended December 31, 1979, pursuant to section 8 of the *Department of Insurance Act*, Chapter I-17, R.S.C., 1970.

Report of the Superintendent of Insurance for Canada on Trust and Loan Companies for the year ended December 31, 1979, pursuant to section 8 of the *Department of Insurance Act*, Chapter I-17, R.S.C., 1970.

Report of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1980, pursuant to section 22 of the *Department of Regional Economic Expansion Act*, Chapter R-4, R.S.C., 1970.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

BRITISH COLUMBIA COAL—EXPORT AGREEMENTS BETWEEN CANADA AND JAPAN—STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF STATE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, Senator Olson wishes to make a statement, copies of which have been circulated. It might be the subject of some questions during Question Period.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of State for Economic Development): Honourable senators, I would like to make a statement to the Senate respecting the signing of a protocol in Vancouver yesterday respecting a huge coal development for western Canada. What I propose to do, if the opposition agrees, is to

read the statement that I made at the ceremony, which will take me less than five minutes—

Senator Marshall: How long did it take you in Vancouver?

Senator Olson: It took quite a bit longer, because it had to be translated into Japanese along the way. I think that was a very useful thing to do, since there were a lot of people there who understood it better under those conditions—

Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Senator Olson: You are tempting me to make a different kind of speech. This is just a factual statement, but the project is such a great economic development for Canada that I could redesign it and give it that way. But if honourable senators would like me to read it exactly as I gave it in Vancouver, I will do so.

Senator Asselin: Why do you not stick to your text?

Senator Olson: Honourable senators will realize—

Senator Frith: The opposition do not want to be part of history unless they are making it.

Senator Olson: You will realize, as I read the statement, that it was designed for, and, of course, targeted to, the audience that was at the ceremony, which means that it will sound slightly different from the way it would have sounded if I had designed it to be read in the Senate. The statement reads:

I am here on behalf of Prime Minister Trudeau and the Government of Canada to congratulate the Canadian and Japanese companies on their successful negotiation of the largest export agreements ever achieved between our two countries. I endorse Mr. Nemoto's remarks both now and during the negotiations of the importance of these agreements to the healthy and growing trade relationship between Canada and Japan.

It has been an honour for me to lead the federal government's involvement in this project. I had the constant encouragement and support of the Minister of Transport, Jean-Luc Pepin, who, while he cannot be here today, has ensured the full co-operation of the National Harbours Board and Canadian National Railways for which he is responsible. In Senator Perrault, who will be making his own comments in a moment, I want to say that this project and British Columbia have had an effective spokesman.

I have just released to the media a copy of a telex I sent to the companies and the B.C. government yesterday outlining the basis for the federal government's involvement in the northeast B.C. coal project.