

"5. The Committee on Transport and Communications, composed of not more than seventeen Senators.

17. The Committee on Finance, composed of not more than seventeen Senators.

19. The Committee on External Relations, composed of not more than seventeen Senators."

And by adding a new Rule 78A, as follows:

"78A. The Senators occupying the positions of Leader of the Government and Leader of the Opposition in the Senate shall be ex officio members of all Standing Committees of the Senate."

Hon. J. H. King: Honourable senators, when I rose last night during the debate on this motion I tried to make it clear that it was not my intention particularly, to delay the matter before us, but rather to take exception to an attempt at the opening of the session to set aside one of the most important rules of the Senate—the rule which requires two days' notice of a motion to amend the rules. I thought it rather unwise to proceed unless we understood exactly what was involved, and I therefore moved the adjournment of the debate. From my own experience here I know that a motion of this kind is very rare; if my memory serves me, it is usually moved a short time before the prorogation of Parliament. The leader of the government then gives two-days' notice that the rules are to be amended so that government business may have precedence over private business. That is a proceeding with which we are all familiar, but I have not known this kind of motion to be presented as early in the session as this one has been.

I repeat that it is not my intention to delay action in this matter. I am in full sympathy with what has been suggested by the leaders; I concur in it; I understand it is the result of consultations among various members, representative of the entire chamber. Nevertheless, I thought it fitting to bring to the attention of the house the point that the rule with respect to notice should be abrogated only under great stress of necessity. Two days' notice is not too much to ask in respect of a change of the rules of the Senate. I have nothing further to say: I concur in the motion.

Hon. Salter A. Hayden: Honourable senators, I have no definite views as to whether the numbers of the three committees mentioned in this resolution should remain as at present, or should be reduced to seventeen each. Several years ago we thought it advisable, for the purpose of giving more representation to the membership of the Senate, to increase the numbers of members on these committees, and the three committees which are particularized in the motion were enlarged so that at the present time there are fifty members of the Finance Committee, fifty of the Transportation and Communications Committee, and thirty-five of the

External Affairs Committee. For the two first-named committees the quorum established at the beginning of each session was, I believe, nine: what it was for the Committee on External Relations I do not recall. But the size of the quorum is a matter for the committee to establish each session, at its first meeting after its constitution. As I have said, three years ago we thought that the larger numbers would enable more members to participate in the hearing of evidence and in discussions, so that more senators would be informed on the details of the subject-matters inquired into. The fact that this resolution is now before us forces the conclusion that the change has not worked out in accordance with expectations; that information obtained in the committees did not percolate down to all members, as it was hoped it might; and it is now supposed that these committees will be more workable if their numbers are reduced to seventeen each.

As far as my view goes, I cannot see how committees can be made more workable and more efficient with a membership of seventeen than with a membership of from forty to fifty. I think there is a possibility that with the larger membership, and more honourable senators having the right to attend, sit at the table, and enter into discussions, more will in fact attend, feeling it their duty to be there, and that consequently more will be informed of what goes on. However, whether the numbers on a committee be seventeen or fifty, it will require the will and the effort of all its members to make it function well. As far as I am concerned, I am satisfied with the work of these committees in the past three years. They have done a good job, whether their numbers fell to a bare quorum or there was an attendance of 95 per cent; and I believe that, whether the membership is reduced to seventeen or not, this record will persist.

My reason in rising today has nothing to do with the inherent right of the Senate to change its rules and to reduce or increase the number of the members to be assigned to committees. My purpose in speaking is to deal with some of the reasons which were given by the leader of the government and the leader of the opposition in support of this resolution. The leader of the government thought that as a result of his motion the Senate committees would get more work, and that this would result in more work for the Senate itself. My honourable friend the leader of the opposition thought that this new system would provide what has hitherto been sorely lacking, namely, a public-informing discussion of legislation. The leader opposite also thought that senators would