

took exception last session to this committee being appointed on the score that I did not think it was wise in a time of war to revise the rules and procedure of the House of Commons. But I have since come to the conclusion that this war may be much longer than some of us believed at the time I made that particular statement, and I think it is as well that we should at once take cognizance of the necessity of making some revisions of our rules and procedure to enable us the better to cope with legislation pertaining to the conduct of the war itself. I am prepared to say this afternoon that if hon. members are agreeable the government will, if necessary, interrupt the debate on the speech from the throne to enable committees to be appointed immediately. I am informed that the striking committee already has a list of the names of those who are to be on the standing committees, and we should therefore be in a position to have these committees constituted immediately. It is the intention of the government to have some of the committees that existed last session reestablished, namely, the committee on reconstruction and rehabilitation, and the committee on social security. I understand that the names of the members of those committees are ready to be presented to the house at any moment. There is also the committee on war expenditures and the committee on radio broadcasting.

A new committee having to do with the elections act is to be established in order to ensure adequate facilities for voting by members of the armed forces wherever they may happen to be.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Is it intended that the activities of that committee and the legislation to be brought down after it has made its report will be limited only to the taking of the soldier vote, or is there to be a general revision?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No, it is a revision with reference to the vote of members of the armed forces.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is what we understood.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think that covers the committees that the government has in mind reconstituting or appointing at the present time. Those committees may be appointed at once.

I have another suggestion which I should like to make to hon. members, and I hope they will consider it favourably. I am not putting it forward at the moment or until I learn at first-hand the sense of the house. I believe with members generally that much more of the work of parliament could and

should be done by committees, and that we would save much general discussion if that were more largely adopted as a method of procedure. We have been accustomed to sitting just half a day on Wednesdays. I believe that we would make more progress during the session if one day in the week were reserved entirely for the work of committees. Members of parliament complain that they cannot serve on committees and watch proceedings in the house at the same time. I am sure it would be a convenience to members generally if there were one day which they could devote entirely to the work of the committees.

Mr. GRAYDON: Now that the right hon. gentleman has brought up this matter, has he given any thought to an alternative scheme under which the time of parliament could be utilized to better effect with a different division of work as between the committees and the house?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, I have given a good deal of thought to it. One aspect to which necessarily I have had to give the most thought is how the government itself can adequately cope with the questions that come before it from day to day as the issues become larger and more serious, with the war reaching the stage which it has reached at the present time. As hon. members know, the cabinet is obliged to meet every day. In addition there is the war committee of the cabinet which is concerned immediately with policy in respect to all the important matters that come up in connection with the war. Ministers of the crown cannot, I believe, give the time that is needed for the careful consideration of the war and other measures that come before this parliament during a war session at the stage the war has now reached without having some day which they can regard more or less as their own for purposes of careful consideration of the different measures. I believe that if, after all committees are appointed, it were generally understood that Wednesdays would be devoted to the work of committees, we would be serving alike the interests of parliament and the interests of the nation.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The Prime Minister is suggesting that there should be no Wednesday sitting?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am suggesting that for consideration. But that would not mean for a minute that the members will not be fully occupied. I think the public would understand that there will be plenty of work for all to do. It will result, I believe, in a