

The CHAIRMAN: It has been customary to have a sort of proportion on the sub-committee.

Mr. COLDWELL: We have had only five on this committee, and we have never had any difficulties at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, I am here just to comply with the wishes of the committee. If the committee wants a steering committee I have no objection at all, but then it means postponing decisions because the members of the steering committee will also have to consult their fellow members to see if any date is appropriate. But I have no objection; if anybody wants a steering committee I will have one with pleasure. The point is this: to expedite matters I think that we might proceed along these lines for the moment, and if it was not agreeable or if it did not fit the general arrangements, then we should later on appoint a steering committee, and that for the moment I would consult one representative of each of the three parties to decide on the next order of procedure. But if there is a motion for a committee, I have no objection personally.

Mr. Low: All I can say is that the experience that I have had with a small steering committee has been, I think, very good, and it has convinced me that it helps in the dispatch of business. It was chosen by the chairman himself. He asked each one of the parties to name one of the members of the committee to act on that steering committee.

Mr. COLDWELL: I will move that we have a steering committee of five, as we have usually had.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you want to fix it at five? I am quite certain that your steering committee in the last two years was made up of nine members.

Mr. COLDWELL: If you want to have seven or nine, I do not mind.

The CHAIRMAN: If you agree, let us say that we will have a steering committee and I will try to have it in operation before the next meeting.

Mr. COLDWELL: I think it is useful to have this committee not only because of the arrangement of meetings but also for discussion of whom it would be desirable to call next as witnesses and so on. We have never had any difficulty with this committee in the years during which it has been set up.

Mr. STICK: What about a vice-chairman? We had one before.

Mr. COLDWELL: I think we could dispense with that.

The CHAIRMAN: There is one thing that I would like to say before you go any further, that we have on the tables microphones that are connected to a recording machine. It is just, shall we say, an experiment for the first time in this committee. It does not mean that it will be carried on. This is in practice in some of the legislatures in the United States and it has been thought that it should be tried at one time or other and that we might try it at this committee. It is not intended to do away with the reporters' staff. It is just a test that is being made, and even if successful, it is hard to say if it would at any time be instituted as things take quite a long time to be decided in parliament. It is just a test, and I am asked to point out that even if this should be carried on, one day or another, as a permanent part of our committee set-up, it would not do away with the need for reporters. There is no other way to identify the members who are speaking because the machine does not take a picture nor can it recognize the voices of all members. So it would not do away with the staff, at least the staff that is here at the moment. It might reduce eventually, in years to come, part of the reporters' staff, but it is not contemplated that, even if this were carried on, it would in any way alter the present set-up of the reporters' staff.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Chairman—