

the actuarial report which was tabled yesterday afternoon, which honourable senators can see is not double spaced, is in foolscap size and contains 23 pages.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): And the White Paper.

Hon. Mr. McCutcheon: I was about to add that I could not put my hands on the White Paper, to complete the volume. There is another document we have not got as yet—the Economic Report. Why the minister was not prepared to table it and make it public at this stage, I do not know. It will be available to members of the committee, but if there is to be intelligent discussion before the committee it must be available also to people who wish to make representations to the committee, and under circumstances in which they can have a reasonable time to develop their views and present their arguments.

Honourable senators, I am supporting the motion. I have nothing more to say than that the proposals in this bill are of great economic importance and may be of great social importance. Therefore, honourable senators who are subsequently appointed to this committee will have a heavy responsibility to see that all persons who wish to make representations are given an opportunity to do so, that serious consideration be given to those representations, and that the members of the committee apply their minds to developing the best possible report.

I merely insert a caveat, which probably is quite unnecessary. The Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West), said that in the setting up of the joint committee we would avoid duplication, and that it was important there should not be duplication. I agree that that is important. On the other hand, many bills are reviewed in both the Banking and Commerce Committee in the other place and in the Banking and Commerce Committee of the Senate. I would not want it to be assumed that I was accepting the fact that because we shall be associating with members of the other house in a joint committee that would preclude us from a thorough study of the matter in a committee of this house.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Honourable senators, I am most grateful to the honourable Senator McCutcheon for the remarks he has made.

First, I should say it is the intention of the Government that there shall be a thorough study of this extremely intricate measure. Indeed, I think the volume of material which has already been made available indicates that if a study is to have any meaning at all it must be thorough. Much work has already

been done, and reports upon various aspects of the bill have been made. Frankly, these will take a great deal of understanding, because there are questions of financial commitments, matters of judgment, and mathematical aspects. A great deal of time will have to be spent before judgment can be passed as to how sound or unsound are some of the proposals. This is the task of the legislator, the man or woman who will sit on this joint committee.

May I say in passing that even though we appoint only 12 members of the Senate to the committee, it will of course be open to any honourable senator to attend the meetings of the committee. I am sure there will be no difficulty arranging for any questions to be asked, should any honourable senators desire information not otherwise made available to the committee through the mouths of witnesses or from other sources.

In answer to the other point raised by Senator McCutcheon, so far as I am concerned—and I am sure so far as the Government is concerned—what is done by the joint committee will not tie the hands of the Senate. The Senate has to take its own responsibility with respect to this measure, and after it has been dealt with in the other place and comes to the Senate for consideration, we will cross the bridge at that time—and we in this chamber are pretty good at crossing bridges in our own provident way.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: I wonder if I might ask the honourable leader what proportion in numbers from either side of this house will be represented on the joint committee? As the honourable leader pointed out, this will be an important committee, and I think we should have that information as soon as possible.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): In similar situations I think the approximate proportion of about two to one was applied. It might be appropriate if we had eight from this side of the house and four from the other side. However, perhaps the honourable Leader of the Opposition and I can discuss this question; in any event, we shall have a consultation before a motion is made actually naming the senators concerned.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT BILL

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-72, to provide for the establishment of electoral boundaries commissions to report upon the readjustment