

able to do this afternoon. Would that be satisfactory?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Blois: Honourable senators, I still do not think I have made my point clear. This is a bill that affects the companies hiring the men, and surely it is not going to be passed without their having an opportunity to present their views. That cannot be done in a hurry, having regard to the difficulty in travelling at this time. It would be very unfair, in my view, for this chamber to pass this bill today.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): I do not object to what the honourable senator has said. This is the point Senator Paterson raised. What I suggest is that the bill be considered by the committee this evening. If the honourable senator has the same feeling after the committee has heard the minister, then he can make his point to the committee, and the committee can decide what should be done.

Hon. Lionel Choquette: Honourable senators, I fail to see the reason for the rush in sending this bill to a committee and having it dealt with tonight, even with the presence and counsel of the Minister, because it cannot be given Royal Assent today. We are having Royal Assent at quarter to six this afternoon, and that is in 20 minutes' time. Would not the honourable Leader of the Government be satisfied, having given his explanation, that the bill be read the second time and then be referred to the committee which will sit next week?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): The bill cannot receive Royal Assent today, not only because that comes up in 20 minutes' time but because the bill has to be passed by the House of Commons. We are not going to be able to dispose of it finally, in any event. It has to go to the House of Commons, so the question of Royal Assent does not enter into the picture.

What I am concerned about is having the committee sit tonight and deciding whether the minister's explanation is satisfactory. We might then resume our sitting this evening and read the bill the third time, instead of sitting tomorrow. But, if it is the desire of the committee to adjourn in order to hear further witnesses then, of course, it will be up to the committee to say so.

Hon. Mr. Blois: May I ask the honourable Leader of the Government one other question? Have the shipping companies been informed of this bill? Do they know anything about it?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): I think that is a more appropriate question for the minister, but I would think that the shipping companies know all about this bill.

Hon. Mr. Blois: We have not seen the bill ourselves, and I am wondering how other people have been able to see it.

Hon. Malcolm Hollett: Honourable senators, in my view it would be a mistake to rush through a bill as important as this. There are many questions that have to be resolved. If I am a longshoreman and I have worked only nine months this year, who pays, and in what proportion, for my holidays? If we are a responsible body—and I think we are—then we must hear from the shipping companies. We must not rush this bill through under any circumstances.

Hon. W. Ross Macdonald: Honourable senators, I understand from what the honourable Leader of the Government has said that there is a situation on the west coast that is causing some concern. It seems to me that his proposal is a very reasonable one. He is not necessarily suggesting that we should give the bill third reading tonight. All he is suggesting is that we should obtain the advantage of the minister's opinion this evening. It may be satisfactory, or it may not, but in either case we will be better informed.

Hon. Mr. Reid: What about our receiving a copy of the bill? I have not seen it.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): I am sure we will be able to see the bill between now and this evening. My point is that there is no disadvantage to anyone in the committee's meeting this evening and hearing the minister. We can decide what to do after hearing him. It seems to me that is the procedure we should follow.

Hon. Jean-François Pouliot: Honourable Senators, I shall have to come with an olive branch in my hand.

We were called here to deal with the bill to amend the National Housing Act, 1954, and that bill has been discussed and passed. There followed then an innocuous and routine bill providing for the extension of the provisions of the Bank Act, and that has been disposed of. But, in the notice we received to assemble here today there was no mention of the bill now before us, and perhaps some of our colleagues who are not present today would have attended this sitting had they known that this matter was to be discussed.