

The CHAIRMAN: The other important item is that we should be able to meet while the House is sitting because of the many occasions on which we would want to sit in the afternoon. That is a usual motion, to permit the committee to sit while the House is sitting, I think.

Mr. STICK: I so move.

The CHAIRMAN: On motion of Mr. Stick the committee asks leave to sit while the House is sitting.

I suppose that you will have no objection to the Secretary of State for External Affairs appearing before us this morning.

Mr. Low: Before you leave the motion that the committee have authority to meet while the House is sitting, may we explain in that in addition to this committee this morning we have the Banking and Commerce Committee, and it would seem to me that we ought to try to find some time when that conflict will not occur.

The CHAIRMAN: I am quite in agreement, but the minister plans to go to Geneva and he thought that he should be at the disposal of the committee for a number of meetings prior to his departure to cover any point which the committee may want to go into. Had we waited until next week when we will be adjourning on Wednesday we might not have had enough time. We had thought of sitting on Wednesday, but it did not meet with the approval of some of the members. I consulted some of the members of the opposition parties. We finally decided that Wednesday was out of the question, so we thought that we would sit this morning and Friday morning. Friday does not clash with any other committee. I have been told by the chairman of the Banking and Commerce Committee that unfortunately some of his witnesses were already notified to come, and that he could not postpone the Tuesday and Thursday meetings and on the other hand Mr. Pearson felt that he should be at the disposal of the committee for a number of meetings, and therefore we thought we would have to have this meeting this morning. There are about seven members out of 35 who are members of the Banking and Commerce Committee and are also members of this committee. That is unfortunate. There may be also times after the recess when we will not be able to avoid meeting on the same day. That may not suit some of the members, but the witness may not be available on a given day, and be available on the day the other committee sits. I think that the thing for me to do is to consult with one member of each of the parties to make sure whether any proposed date would be satisfactory.

Mr. COLDWELL: If you had a steering committee, could you not consult the steering committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, but, if I may be permitted to say so, my experience on the Public Accounts Committee is this: it is just as hard to get a steering committee of nine together as the whole committee. It is customary to have a representative of the C.C.F. party, and of the Social Credit party. If they have each one member, according to the number of members that were elected to the House, the Conservatives have a right to have two, and the Liberals have a right to have four or more members and the chairman above that, it makes a steering committee of at least nine. I would have a hard time getting them together.

Mr. Low: We have been operating since 1945 with a steering committee of five, and we got along very well.

Mr. COLDWELL: Can we notify them in advance?

The CHAIRMAN: Would you be willing to have no representatives from your party, Mr. Low?

Mr. Low: All we want is one.