

been some justification for the committee not reporting the bill back to this house for third reading. But that did not happen.

I might also say, honourable senators, that I can recall no other occasion, in either house, of a bill having been referred to a committee and then not being reported back to the appropriate house for consideration on third reading, especially an important bill of this kind, and particularly a Government bill.

When it is remembered that there are hundreds of divorce bills reported to this house every session for our consideration I would think, honourable senators, that a bill of this importance should be given at least as much attention on third reading as are bills of divorce.

I should also like to point out that the Banking and Commerce Committee does not comprise all members of the Senate. There are 50 members on the committee. Twenty-six took part in the vote this morning, 19 voting against reporting the bill back to the Senate and seven voting in favour of doing so. The Senate is comprised of over 100 members, and out of all that number we find that only 19 members, less than 20 per cent, are deciding what should become of this very important bill. I say that the bill should have been reported back to this house for the consideration of all honourable senators.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): May I ask the honourable senator—

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Order!

Hon. Mr. Brooks: I know there are members in this chamber who have not had an opportunity to say either by voice or by vote whether or not they wanted this bill reported.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): Why?

Hon. Mr. Brooks: I claim that the 19 members who voted in committee should not usurp the full rights of the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: We talk about our independence. I have heard a great deal about the independence of the Senate in the short time I have been here. The honourable senator from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) made reference to whether this was a political matter or not. I am quite willing to let the people of Canada decide that. I am not going to try to decide it, although I may say I have my own opinion on the matter. But we speak about our independence in this chamber. Is it only the collective independence of the Senate which must be considered? Has not each individual member a certain entitlement of independence?

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): Certainly.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: What has happened to his independence that he has been refused an opportunity to vote on a matter which is one of the most important to come before the Senate and the House of Commons at this session?

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): When was anybody refused a vote on this bill?

Hon. Mr. Brunt: We are not going to have third reading.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: We are not going to have a vote on third reading. How can we have a vote on the third reading of a bill that is not reported back to the chamber?

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): You have the opportunity to accept the report of the committee or reject it.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: We have an opportunity to whitewash Mr. Coyne.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Yes, that's the only opportunity.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): No, it isn't. I point out—

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Order!

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Order!

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): —that the Senate has the opportunity to adopt the report or not adopt it.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: That is not a vote on the bill. By no stretch of the imagination can we say we are voting on a bill that still rests in the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce and which is not before us in this chamber.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): May I ask my honourable friend a question?

Hon. Mr. Brunt: The honourable senator is making a speech. He will have his turn later.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): If the Senate decides not to adopt the report as presented to the house, then honourable members can vote on the motion for third reading. This is a democratic procedure.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: I don't think anyone will agree with the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) that we can vote on a bill that is not before us.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): Vote to bring it before you. That's all you have to do.

The Hon. the Speaker: If the honourable Leader of the Opposition [Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford)], has a question to put to the honourable gentleman who is speaking