

impression was clearly given earlier that the calling of witnesses was just a matter of time, and that we wanted to do, for reasons of organization, some of the other things first. We wished to commence with the examination of the old accounts, and it was thought this would be a businesslike way of doing things. Well, rather than being businesslike, it has been the opposite; the committee has been given the "business", in that it practically has run out of time, and we still have not had the opportunity of getting down to the job of discussion, which we hoped we would, and which we felt we were promised at the time the committee was set up.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any comments, Mr. Chambers?

Mr. CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that I was in considerable doubt earlier in the sessions of this committee as to whether or not we should call witnesses. However, I am in no doubt at all now—and, particularly, after hearing Mr. Hellyer.

He used one interesting word, and that is the word "facts".

As I understand it, the way committees of the House of Commons have worked in the past is that they call witnesses before them to ascertain the facts, and then the members of the committee, who are sent here for exactly that purpose, resolve the opinions and the ideas from the facts represented to them.

There has been before this committee a complete disclosure of the facts of defence. As far as I can make out, no question that has been asked has remained unanswered. I think there was one exception, of a minor sort, where a question was not answered, on the grounds of security. But we have had a complete disclosure of the facts.

There has been no argument put forward—I was not in the steering committee meeting; but I do not believe any argument was put forward then—to give any support to the idea that these witnesses who are proposed could give us any additional information. They could give opinions. There are probably as many opinions as there are citizens in the country, and it is very difficult to see where we could stop.

The one thing that has come out of this committee is, that in the lengthy statements that have been made, by Mr. Hellyer particularly, there has been no evidence at all of any alternatives being put forward to the present policy. Perhaps it was hoped that some of these witnesses could bring forward alternatives that could not be produced by the members here. Surely, Mr. Chairman, that is not our job: our job is to examine what is being done in defence now, and, in our report, to make such recommendations as we find are a good idea.

It will be very interesting to me to see, when we come to the writing of the report, if Mr. Hellyer has anything constructive to offer. But there has been no evidence that these witnesses could assist us in doing that.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Smith?

Mr. SMITH (*Calgary South*): I do not think there is anything on which I want to comment. I was going to make one or two references to Mr. Hellyer's apology; but it hardly seems necessary.

Mr. LAMBERT: Mr. Chairman, to bring the matter to a head, I would move that this committee concur in the recommendation of the steering committee.

Mr. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, I should like to say a further word in respect to Mr. Lambert's and Mr. Chambers' statements.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Carter.

Mr. CARTER: To begin with, regarding Mr. Chambers' statement that witnesses could not produce facts, but merely opinions: we have heard a great