

Senator Perrault: It seems to me that Senator Murray should be encouraged to proceed in agreement with representatives of the other parties represented on that joint committee, so that it will truly be a balanced reflection of the views of both houses of Parliament.

Senator Flynn: He rose in order to invite senators from all sides to attend.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of State for Economic Development): It is a joint committee involving the House of Commons and the Senate.

Senator Flynn: Yes, but the house was represented.

Senator Olson: The members of the other place do not attend committee meetings when they have been summoned to the chamber.

Hon. G. I. Smith: How do you know?

Senator Olson: I was there for 10 years.

Hon. George van Roggen: Honourable senators, I should like to direct a question to Senator Murray in his capacity as joint chairman of the committee. If there were a vote called in this chamber at the time a committee was meeting, is he suggesting that the committee would not be entitled to adjourn and that it should not adjourn for the purpose of taking a vote in the chamber?

Senator Flynn: For the purpose of taking the vote, yes. Make your joke elsewhere.

Senator van Roggen: It is not a joke!

Senator Flynn: Yes it is. You are a joker.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Why, then, are the bells ringing over there? Is that not why they are ringing?

Some Hon. Senators: Order!

Senator van Roggen: If I may, honourable senators, I will ask a perfectly proper question of the chairman of a committee, to whom I am entitled to address a question. If he were chairman of that committee and if it were sitting at a time when a vote was to be taken in this chamber, would he advocate that the committee not adjourn for that vote?

Senator Murray: With great respect, the honourable senator is not asking me a perfectly proper question. He is asking me to interpret the rules of this chamber.

Senator Frith: Under the rules, if the question deals with the proceedings of the committee of which you are the chairman, it is a proper question. That is exactly what the rules say.

Senator Flynn: It was for your information; if you don't want to come, don't come.

Senator Olson: How about an answer?

Senator Smith: How often have you refused to answer a hypothetical question, Mr. Minister of State?

Senator Olson: I have attended a lot of committee meetings, and they adjourn when the division bell rings.

[Senator Flynn.]

[Translation]

HEALTH, WELFARE AND SCIENCE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding Rule 45(1)(a), I move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science have power to sit at four o'clock in the afternoon tomorrow, Wednesday, March 10, 1982, even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that Rule 76(4) be suspended in relation thereto.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Arthur Tremblay: At what time?

Senator Frith: At four o'clock in the afternoon.

Honourable senators, the motion has to do with a bill that was referred to this committee. The vice-chairman, Senator Bird, has asked me to propose the motion so as to enable the committee to continue and, if possible, complete consideration of the bill this week.

● (2015)

[English]

Hon. G. I. Smith: Honourable senators, I wish to speak to this motion for a moment. I attended a meeting of all chairmen of committees of the Senate just last week. I understood then that the question of when committees meet is of great importance in terms of space, staff and services, and that one should consult with the honourable senator who has undertaken—upon request, of course—to correlate these meetings so that there is not a duplication of demand. Before we are asked to vote on this matter I should like to know whether or not the consent of the Honourable Senator Lafond has been obtained.

Senator Frith: Honourable senators, I must say that Senator Smith has laid a good foundation for his question. I agree with what he has said, both as to what took place at that meeting and as to the fact that we had agreed that that procedure would be followed.

I must also say that I assumed the committee clerk had checked with Senator Lafond before I was asked to put the motion. If that is not correct and I made that assumption on insufficient ground, then I apologize.

If I may have permission of the Senate, I can find out from Senator Lafond now whether that procedure was followed. It certainly ought to have been.

Hon. Florence B. Bird: Honourable senators, I must apologize for not consulting Senator Lafond, but my problem was that it was getting rather late. The deputy minister was there to speak to us, and two committee members requested that he return for a further meeting. We want to deal with the matter expeditiously because we are most anxious to get to the people the pensions that will be put into effect by this bill.