

any sanitary conveniences or arrangements or water supply. We can well appreciate the mess that would result if they were allowed to camp there. Of course the people in the interior where they came from did not want them either and were quite willing to see them move elsewhere.

I oppose the motion to set up the proposed committee, because I feel the Doukhobors, that is the Sons of Freedom, are definitely against any kind of government or control by government. I am afraid that if a committee of the Senate were set up its investigations would have no effect at all as the Doukhobors would look upon it as government action. I am sure they would not know the difference between Parliament and the Government. The committee would go out from here as a Government body, and in my opinion only trouble would result.

However, if any committee is to be set up I would suggest that it be composed of representatives of churches, labour, industry, chambers of commerce, farmers, and women's institutes, and let them go out and see what they can do. I repeat, I would not be a party to a committee of Parliament being set up because its members would go out there as total strangers to the problem. The committee would have on it only one or perhaps two senators from British Columbia, and the others would know nothing of the destruction caused, or how troublesome the Sons of Freedom are now and have been in days gone by.

I think we should give the suggestion of setting up a Senate Committee a great deal of serious thought. On the other hand, if the committee were set up to function only in Ottawa I do not think it could get a witness from around the area concerned to appear and testify. They would be afraid of being bombed or having their houses burned. You cannot blame them. One really has to go out there to appreciate what is happening and to realize the serious problem that exists.

I was in the city of Nelson at the time the Doukhobors were holding a parade, and I saw a girl of twenty-two standing on the steps of a bank. This girl had been employed for four years in that bank and was a respected citizen. As the parade passed she ran down the steps past me, and all of a sudden her clothes were off and she was in the parade with the others. Can you explain that kind of mentality? Nobody can tell why they do these things.

It is my opinion that if a committee were sent out west it might not have anyone attend to give evidence. The Doukhobors would be very suspicious, for a Senate committee would be labelled as part of the Government of Canada.

I do not know what the cure is. I am very much surprised at the amount of support these people get from certain quarters such as university professors and those highfalutin boys who think they have brains, but many of whom have little, and who try to speak as with the voice of wisdom. These are the people who are damning the Government for not doing something more. But what can the Government do? Very little action can be taken unless the Doukhobors do something wrong. Seventy of them have been put in jail for their crimes.

Since the beginning of June, 170 homes have been destroyed in their sprawling shack villages hidden away in the Kootenay mountains in western British Columbia. Most of the arsonists are female members of the band of 4,000 fanatical Sons of Freedom. They are against the Government; they will have nothing to do with it.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): Would they burn their own homes?

Hon. Mr. Reid: Yes; I can show you pictures of what they have done.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Brantford): Or, did they burn other people's homes?

Hon. Mr. Reid: They burned other people's homes too, with the result that their neighbours became afraid to speak out against them. It was mostly the women who burned their own homes, and always burned them at break of day—it must have been a kind of ritual with them. After the houses were ablaze they stripped off their clothes and stood before their burning houses. The destruction of 160 homes is a big loss. I want to point out to those who are sympathetic with these people that everything possible has been tried to make real Canadian citizens out of them. The Government has not been using military or police force against them. I feel sure no one in the Senate would say they should not be taken to court for the damage they have done; nor do I think anyone would support the view that nothing can be done.

I may say that I would not like to be a member of a committee from this chamber because I know it would not get very far with the Sons of Freedom. As I said, they would look upon the committee as a Government body and they would almost be willing to sell their lives to block any action by the Government.

Honourable senators, I may have wearied you somewhat with the figures I have given, but I wanted to lay some of the facts before you and to let the Senate know at least where I stand on the question.