

and Mr. Mathieu, the assistant deputy custodian, will be here to deal with things since the start of the war, and to answer any questions with respect to their operations since the start of the war. They will cover the procedure adopted in carrying on the work of the custodian. As you know, there have never been any accounts filed in the House. I do not think that it was desirable to do that while the war was on but I see no reason why the accounts should not be filed annually now. The accounts are audited by private firms and they have been audited by private firms since the custodian's office was first formed in 1920. I feel it is a matter that the Auditor General should take over and I have arranged with him that he will, for the year 1947, and continuously thereafter, do the auditing of the custodian's office. I do not think there is anything more that I want to say except, if possible, we would like to get the bill reported as soon as possible even if the entire work of the committee cannot be completed in the short time that remains until May 15.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Colonel Gibson. You have heard the statement by the minister, and there are two courses open as I see it, gentlemen. One is to proceed with the bill and come back for a thorough overhauling and discussion with regard to the custodian's methods of carrying on; and also we could hear witnesses in connection with that overhauling; and the other course is to refer the matter to the steering committee for them to decide as to the procedure we should follow.

Mr. SMITH: I move that be done. I think it is the way it should be handled in order that we might get along faster.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: That is you mean we should refer it to the steering committee.

Mr. SMITH: Yes.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Chairman, could the steering committee also consider asking the House to extend the terms of reference so that in view of the rather limited terms that exist now the reference might be enlarged to include questions of the accounts and the administration of the office of the custodian.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: I think so, but it is a matter for the committee to decide. Would Mr. Smith be good enough to include that in his motion?

Mr. SMITH: I was assuming that is the way it would be put forward.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: You have heard the motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Fleming, that the matter of procedure be referred to the steering committee for action.

Carried.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN: Those are the items of business for this morning gentlemen. Now, instead of immediately referring this matter to the steering committee, may I have an expression of opinion as to what days would be suitable to the members of the committee for our further sittings. There are a large number of committee meetings being held.

(Discussion on this point followed.)

The meeting adjourned at 12.00 o'clock to be reconvened at the call of the chair.