

THE SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEES

MOTION OF APPOINTMENT

Wednesday, February 2, 1949

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Acting Speaker (Hon. A. B. Copp) in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

CONSIDERATION OF REPORT

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson presented and moved consideration of the report of the Committee of Selection, nominating members to the several Standing Committees for the present session.

(See Appendix at end of today's report.)

He said: I shall not read the names of the members selected to serve, but for the benefit of those senators who are not familiar with the procedure of the house, I would say that it is customary for the Committee of Selection to go over the list of senators and to make whatever changes are necessary. Some vacancies are left on the committees for new senators whose special knowledge and ability qualifies them to serve. If honourable senators will make their wishes known in this respect, changes will be made where it is reasonably within our power to make them. It would greatly simplify matters if by unanimous consent honourable senators would accept the report as prepared, in order that it may make the necessary motions with respect to the appointment of the committees, and for further procedure.

Hon. Mr. Haig: I might inform the house that no senator has been struck off a committee of which he was a member last year. The only change in the personnel of existing committees is that some honourable senators have been nominated to other committees.

Hon. Mr. Sinclair: New members have been nominated?

Hon. Mr. Haig: Other nominations have been made, but any honourable senator who was on a committee last year is on it this year.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: When shall the report be taken into consideration?

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Now.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the Senate to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Senators: Carried.

The motion was agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Honourable senators, with leave, I desire to move:

That the senators mentioned in the report of the Committee of Selection as having been chosen to serve on the several standing committees during the present session, be and they are hereby appointed to form part of and constitute the several committees with which their respective names appear in said report, to inquire into and report upon such matters as may be referred to them from time to time, and that the Committee on Standing Orders be authorized to send for persons, papers and records whenever required; and also that the Committee on Internal Economy and Contingent Accounts have power, without special reference by the Senate, to consider any matter affecting the internal economy of the Senate, and such committee shall report the result of such consideration to the Senate for action.

Right Hon. Mr. Mackenzie: Honourable senators, may I ask a question, for information only? I understand that the specific purpose and terms of reference of the Committee on Internal Economy have been established and that at the present time we are asking that, if necessary, certain powers be given when required.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Precisely.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Honourable senators, I hardly like what has happened in the way of procedure. I have every confidence in the committee that made the report; there is not one chance in a thousand that I would wish to make any change; but I do not like the suggestion: "Open your mouth and shut your eyes and I will give you something to make you wise". I think it would be better to place these names on the record before we vote for them, unless there is some special reason why these committees should be appointed today.

Right Hon. Mr. Mackenzie: I am in complete agreement with the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck). I, too, have the utmost confidence in the personnel of the Committee of Selection. I do think, however, that it is somewhat hasty procedure to submit such a report to this honourable body, whose members at the moment, except for the honourable leader opposite (Hon. Mr. Haig), have not seen any of these names, and to ask them to accept it without having at least the ordinary democratic opportunity of expressing an opinion in regard to anyone selected, if it is thought necessary. Personally, I do not think I will find it necessary.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, the motion has already been adopted, and any remarks made in relation to it are out of order.