

ter undertook to give special attention to the problem areas that were pointed out by the committee.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I should like to move the adjournment of the consideration of this report because there are some questions raised, in my mind at any rate, about exactly what we can expect as a result of what has been proposed by the deputy chairman of the committee. Particularly, I want to find out what undertakings have been given by the government to make the changes.

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): It is a difficult technique.

Senator Roblin: I want to find out just when the revision of the statutes, which I believe was the mechanism referred to, will take effect.

In other words, my thought is that, if we had an undertaking that the machinery is sufficient to make the changes the committee wished for within a reasonable period of time and without prejudice to anybody else, other things being equal, that would be adequate. But I am not sure that that is the case.

In any event, just having received this report I would appreciate the opportunity of reading it closely. Perhaps I could then phrase my questions a little more carefully, and we might have some answers from the committee with respect to it. Therefore, I move the adjournment of the discussion.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, is that procedurally the right way to do it? I think we should have the answers, but we are really not debating the report.

Senator Flynn: We gave the deputy chairman of the committee leave to make comments.

Senator Frith: I understand that. I do not wish in any way to suggest that we should not proceed with exactly the objectives raised by Senator Roblin. Technically, however, I do not think we should be debating this report. It would be better for His Honour the Acting Speaker to ask, "When shall this bill be read the third time?" and for us to say, "At the next sitting," and then have these questions debated on third reading. Otherwise, in effect, we are debating a report from the committee, and that is not in order.

Senator Flynn: When a bill is reported without amendment, of course, there is no debate. That is agreed. In this case, however, the deputy chairman, or should I say the deputy chairperson, has mentioned some comments in the report and has commented on those comments. We gave her leave to do that. Therefore, I suggest that comments from this side, or from anywhere else in the chamber, are warranted and should be accepted. There is no suggestion that the report not be accepted. We simply make comments, as did Senator Bird.

[Senator Bird.]

Senator Frith: I have no quarrel with the idea that because comments were made that gives rise to further comments, but the rules do provide that the report presented to the Senate be received without debate. I believe we can achieve the objective suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and by the Leader of the Opposition, with which I do not quarrel, simply by raising these questions on third reading. At that point we will have before us the second reading debate, the report itself, and the explanation of it for which leave was given, and there would then be nothing to restrict our discussion of the very matters we are talking about now, and we would not run against rule 78(2), which provides that a report presented to the Senate shall be received without debate. It is just a matter of doing it in a way that seems more orderly.

Senator Roblin: My honourable friend may be quite right, but he should have made his comments before Senator Bird spoke, because if we give leave to the senator presenting the report to enter into what is in substance a debate it then becomes difficult to decide where the limitation ought to be. Surely, if a report is submitted to the Senate without debate, that means "without debate." Debate is any comment. If we allow comment, then, in effect, we have allowed debate.

I do not think it is important enough to detain the Senate for very long, but it seems to me that on this occasion it would be perhaps consistent to agree that the matter be discussed a little further in the present form rather than to adhere to the procedure recommended by my honourable friend. The time for him to have raised his objection was before Senator Bird was granted leave.

Senator Frith: That may be so. Perhaps any comment can be considered debate.

Senator Roblin: Not "considered;" it is debate.

Senator Frith: The problem I am raising—regardless of whether I ought to have raised it earlier—is that if we do proceed in this way we will be setting a precedent. Perhaps that is what we want to do. If a chairman ever wants to give any explanation, then that chairman, in effect, would be in breach of rule 78(2). He ought not to comment because, as Senator Roblin says, any comment is debate.

Senator Flynn: Leave was granted, however.

Senator Frith: I agree. Perhaps we should not ask for such leave. Perhaps a chairman should say that the committee reports the bill without amendment, but he would like to make comments on third reading. Perhaps that would be the best way of proceeding.

Certainly, I do not think it is the end of the world, but it just seemed to me that this was a better way of doing it. Perhaps I ought to have raised that point earlier, but I suggest that that is another way of doing it. I am not trying to thwart any discussion at this time.

Hon. G. I. Smith: Honourable senators, I understand the view of the deputy leader and I do not particularly quarrel with it. However, as a chairman who has once or twice asked for the same leave as was granted to Senator Bird, I expected