

tors at any time; it cannot be fewer than four or more than eight. It has to be one or two from each of the regions.

It is interesting that the power to appoint senators from the north is put in that part of the British North America Act that gives government power to make extra appointments over and above the normal number. That is why we are kicking around these figures. We are talking about a Senate which shall consist of 104 members but with a maximum possible membership of 112. These extra eight have never been appointed, but the authority is there.

Mr. Nielsen: That answers the question I raised with respect to membership in the Commons not falling below two for each senator.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I thought that was an argument like other arguments I have heard the hon. member for the Yukon make: it did not really hold any water. After all, if there is a senator for the Yukon and a senator for the Northwest Territories, I do not see how you can claim a floor any higher than one for each of those areas. I do not think this provision that would enable the government to appoint two extra senators for the west, two for Ontario, two for Quebec and two for the maritimes or the Atlantic—at the moment I am not sure whether it is restricted to the maritimes or the Atlantic—will help. Anyway, who wants it? As my friend for Northwest Territories says, certainly no self-respecting northerner wants it.

● (2130)

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that amuses me about what the government has done tonight is that—I know that my friends to the right, the good Tories who are here, will bear me out—time and again, when we ask for some important piece of legislation which would deal with the high cost of living, pensions, veterans or what-have-you, we are given the stock answer, “We will have to see if there is parliamentary time.” Apparently there is not enough parliamentary time for something that is really important. Yet the government can find parliamentary time for as unimportant an operation as bringing the move into the mainstream of Canadian life, bringing the move into the mainstream of the public politics of Canada, giving the north adequate access to the instruments of government.

I know it is risky saying these things because the sarcasm in one's voice too often will not be evident in the black and white on the pages of *Hansard*. I suggest that the best case for showing why this whole proposition is ridiculous and should be treated with derision was made—I was going to say by the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River, but on looking at the hon. member for Yukon I realize that maybe it was made by him. Anyway, it is a toss up. Since those two hon. members are in bed together on this, I will let them sort it out.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question on second reading referring the bill to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs?

Mr. Nielsen: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, when the bill was introduced by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), the incumbent of the chair, yourself I

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believe, asked the House whether the bill should be referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development. According to my recollection, this afternoon there was general agreement in the House to refer both bills dealing with the north to that standing committee, rather than to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, simply because it would be more relevant to conduct consideration of the two bills in the same standing committee.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am advised by the table that the reference was changed by order of the House after the motion was put to the House by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen). That was my understanding. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is rising, I gather, to confirm what I have said.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to confirm what Your Honour just said. The hon. member for Yukon must have been dozing when the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) proposed that the reference should be changed to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. The Chair at that time said something like, “I suspect I should ask the House whether there is agreement to this.” A few members said “Agreed” and it was so ordered.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the House would agree to call it ten o'clock. If it is agreeable, we will proceed with the “late show”.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed that the “late show” be replaced by an early show?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, those of us who are taking part agree, provided that the ministers or members who are to respond are present. I see nobody here from the Department of National Health and Welfare.

An hon. Member: Yes, somebody is coming.

Mr. Reid: May I ask Your Honour if we can proceed with the second and third questions which are scheduled to be called? We could take the first question when the minister has the opportunity to come down.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.