

carried on in the house, members of the committee will show, or should be able to show, that they know their subject, and those who are not on the committee will gain an understanding of the subject which they have never had since I have been a member of this house. Speaking only for myself, I think the suggestion is worth trying. It may not work. I recall a rule which was made some years ago, and to which I was bitterly opposed, which was never acted on, and has since disappeared. It may be that the present proposal, after a two or three year period of trial, will prove unworkable. Well, then, surely we are big enough and our work is important enough and the problem is large enough for us to adopt some other system which will better serve our purpose.

I do not favour this change merely for the sake of change. I am in favour of it because the Senate will be better informed about important legislation before it is brought into the house, and our committee having made a full examination of a particular bill, will be better able to advise the rest of us and, incidentally serve the public without regard, I hope and trust, to any bias on political or other grounds.

**Hon. Mr. Euler:** May I ask my honourable friend a question, which could be more readily answered, perhaps, by the leader of the government? I want to get the matter clear in my mind. I think the honourable leader of the opposition made the statement that when railway bills go before the House of Commons they are referred to a committee of that house. That, of course, is so. But I understood him also to say that members of the Senate committee may appear in the committee of the House of Commons, ask questions and examine witnesses. Is that the fact? I doubt it very much.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** I think that the government leader should answer that.

**Hon. Mr. Robertson:** Members of a Senate committee cannot take part, except by invitation, in the proceedings of committees of the other house. But there is precedent for such an invitation. In 1940—I believe, in August—when I was not a member of this house, the Unemployment Insurance Bill was introduced in the other place. It was referred to a committee of that house. That committee invited members of the Senate to attend its sessions, to discuss the subject, to cross-examine witnesses, but not, of course, to vote. That is the incident which I believe the honourable leader of the opposition had in mind. I am sure that, if a committee of this house desires to participate an invitation could be obtained from the committee in the other place, addressed either to members of

our committee or, as was the case in 1940, to all members of the Senate. I repeat, however, that such participation would be only upon invitation, and would not entitle our members to vote.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** Referring to a point which arose today in conversation with one of the honourable senators from Newfoundland, may I say that nothing in this suggested procedure will take one iota of authority from this house. A bill will come here from the other place, as heretofore, for first reading; it will come before us for second reading; it can be sent to whatever committee this house chooses to send it to, and I hope, if it relates to railways it will be remitted to this Transportation Committee. The committee will proceed to hear witnesses and will call for all such evidence as its members require. When it is reported back to this house, instead of immediately receiving third reading, as has been customary in the past, it would go to Committee of the Whole and be the subject of a thorough discussion.

**Hon. Mr. Euler:** I fully understand that the bill would come to this house, go to committee, and be afterwards returned to this chamber. What struck me as rather peculiar was that members of our committee would be entitled to go before a committee of the House of Commons, ask questions and elicit evidence. It is a natural course, and one to which I suppose no member of the House of Commons would object, for any honourable senator to go to a meeting of a committee of the other place and listen to the evidence and proceedings; but that he or any member of our committees should take part in all activities of that committee in the other place, except for voting, is almost unprecedented. I hope it is so.

**Hon. Mr. Robertson:** I happen to have in mind this particular incident, because it was mentioned to me, and I had the Clerk look up the facts. A specific invitation, not from the House of Commons but from its committee, was extended to members of the Senate to participate in the proceedings. Not many honourable senators attended. I think there were five of them at the first meeting and seven or eight at two subsequent meetings. One of them was the honourable senator from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden), who took a leading part in the examination of witnesses. Of course he did not vote. But, as I have said, our colleagues were present by invitation.

**Hon. Mr. King:** I do not wish to hinder or delay the adoption of the proposal. I concur largely in the remarks of the government leader (Hon. Mr. Robertson) and sympathize with him in his desire to enable the members