

an hour, or whatever the case may be, in order to get a quorum so that we can proceed. These people are busy people, and we must not hold them up like this. I now throw the meeting open for—

Mr. STAFFORD: We are one short on the Broadcasting Committee. I am also on that Committee; that is one of the difficulties, I find.

The CHAIRMAN: Now, this brings up another matter. This whole matter of Committee meetings must be reviewed so that these things will not happen. It is not fair to ask you to be at two places at once; it is humanly impossible.

Mr. STAFFORD: Would we have a quorum here if I left?

The CHAIRMAN: Would we have a quorum if Mr. Stafford leaves? Well, we will excuse you, sir, and we hope we will have the honour of your presence next time and they will be without you.

Mr. WINCH: I had the honour of being a member of a similar Committee for some twenty years when I was in the British Columbia legislature. I have had the privilege of being a member of this Committee ever since it was established here. To me the Public Accounts Committee is one of the most important committees, as important as all are in the House of Commons.

In the thirteen years, sir, I have been in Ottawa, I have always opposed a reduction of quorums; I have always opposed sitting while the House is in session. But the situation that we have now, with more committees, and our inability to obtain a quorum leads me to having to accept the responsibility—and I am the one that should accept it, in the view of what I have just told you—of agreeing to the situation which you have outlined, because it is, without doubt, of the utmost importance that this Committee function even with a reduced membership.

Therefore, sir, having outlined my objections over the years to a small quorum, my objections over the years to sitting while the House is in session—because you cannot be a member in the House and in committee—it is with a great deal of regret, but because of an understanding which I had in this Committee, I will move, if I can get a seconder, that our quorum shall be reduced to ten and that we be allowed to sit while the House is in session. If I can get a seconder to that I will move it, but I want to follow up by saying that because my views on this are so well known, I would like to make the same statement in the House of Commons, as I am making here, as the reason why I am prepared to move this motion.

Mr. McLEAN (*Charlotte*): I second it. Your remarks make common sense.

The CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Winch, and seconded by Mr. McLean. Now the motion is open for discussion. Mr. Leblanc?

Mr. LEBLANC (*Laurier*): I think we will have some difficulty in getting unanimous consent in the House to sit while the House is sitting, because such a motion was presented before by other committees and they received special permission for a few days, but I do not believe that we will get permission to sit all the time while the House is sitting.