

opening and closing hours of the restaurant? I have in mind particularly the closing of the restaurant all day Saturday.

Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck: Honourable Senators, I too would like to have that information. Present indications are that a retrograde step has been taken with regard to the restaurant hours. Honourable senators who do not remain in Ottawa over the weekends, as some of us are forced to do, perhaps do not realize how serious a matter it is to find, after having worked in the buildings on a Saturday morning, that the restaurant is closed against you. I think that honourable senators and members of the other house who stay in Ottawa over the weekends are entitled to service in the restaurant, and I trust that question will be given consideration by the committee.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Honourable senators, I will ask the honourable senator from Hastings-Frontenac (Hon. Mr. White), who is a member of the committee, to answer the question.

Hon. George S. White: Honourable senators, this matter was carefully considered at a meeting of the Restaurant Committee. I cannot say offhand how many senators were present, but there was a good turnout. The matter was thoroughly discussed, and the committee had before it a report covering the last three to five years showing the number of patrons of the restaurant for breakfast and for lunch. The average number present for breakfast on a Saturday did not exceed eight, and generally the number present for lunch was between 20 and 25 or 28. In many cases the number that turned up for breakfast or for lunch was fewer than the staff required to serve them. After very thorough consideration a motion was put and passed that the restaurant be closed on Saturdays.

Hon. Mr. Haig: It is not going to open on Saturdays?

Hon. Mr. White: No.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: When was the motion passed?

Hon. Mr. White: The record will show whether my honourable friend from Provencher (Hon. Mr. Beaubien) was there or not.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: I understand that the Senate members of this committee were only appointed today.

Hon. Mr. White: This is not something that has been done this session. The meeting was held last session and the motion was made then. It will be very easy to get the record and to see who was there.

Hon. John T. Haig: Honourable senators, the point is that this restriction affects

senators who do not live in Ontario and Quebec. Senators from these two provinces, in the main, go home on Saturdays and Sundays.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: The change would affect some from Ontario who stay in Ottawa.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Most senators from Ontario and Quebec go home for Saturdays and Sundays, but senators from the rest of Canada have to stay in Ottawa. Those of us who come up to the Parliament Buildings to work on Saturdays would have to go home for lunch and then come back here.

I have been a senator for a good many years, and I was at one time a member of this committee, but I became tired of sitting on it and had to get off. However, I think it is only fair that the people who live in those distant provinces should have something to say about what is done with the restaurant. I missed the opening of this session, but no committees have been authorized by the Senate until today. Therefore, the Restaurant Committee had no power to act at this session. It could act nominally, but its decision would have no binding effect. Before deciding to close the dining room on Saturdays the committee should have consulted honourable senators who live in the Maritimes and in the Western provinces and have to remain here in Ottawa over the weekends. If you give us transportation by air whenever we want to go home, I will be very pleased. We get two trips by air now, and it is very pleasant. On Tuesday morning this week I had my breakfast at home, and on Tuesday evening I made a speech in the Senate. I like that kind of an arrangement. When I go by train I waste two days. If after the meeting of the Senate on Thursday night you are able to fly home in eight or ten hours and stay there for the weekend visiting your family and friends—and, incidentally, do a little work at the office—there is no cause for complaint. Of course, honourable senators from Ontario would not do business on a Saturday because they know it is a holiday in the Senate and they should not work. That would apply also to those from Quebec. But, the rest of us, if we were at home on a Saturday and a Monday, might do a little work, and we would be able to leave there on Tuesday morning and be back here for the meeting of the Senate on Tuesday evening. That would be very convenient. I will take the risk of saying on behalf of the other senators from Manitoba that we are willing to ride in an aeroplane in order to have Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays at home.

I think the committee did not do its duty towards the Senate. No doubt the majority of the committee were from the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. They did not realize