

Senator Guay: That is, I hope that I will be given a chance to explain my point without any hollering or yelling.

Senator Smith: We are no louder than you, Joe.

Senator Guay: I attended the meeting of the Official Languages Committee on Thursday, March 11. I arrived at the meeting room, Room 371 in the West Block, at two minutes before 2 o'clock. Senator Wood and Senator Hastings were also present. It was well after 2 o'clock before the joint chairman or Senator Tremblay arrived. When the joint chairman arrived and the meeting commenced, I rose on a point of order. As it is reported in the report of the committee of that day at page 37:39, I said:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that I also felt the meeting had been postponed, because you did not take the Chair until almost seven minutes after 2 o'clock.

It is unfortunate that my presence at that meeting was not recorded in the *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Senate* for that day, because I notice tonight that Senator Murray and Senator Tremblay are recorded as having been present in this chamber. This is a typical example of the chairman calling a meeting for 2 o'clock when he cannot make it himself.

I do not agree with the comment of the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate that a committee proceeding under such circumstances is legal. I have spent almost 15 years in both this and the other place, and I can say that I never attended a meeting of a committee that went ahead when both parties were not represented. Even when the Creditistes were represented in Parliament, we would wait for their representative to appear before beginning a committee meeting.

Senator Perrault: That is not the Tory way.

Senator Guay: My point is that it is shameful for the Joint Chairman of the Official Languages Committee to call a meeting, to present himself to the Senate, thereby being recorded as present that day in the Senate chamber, and then to leave us sitting waiting for the committee to begin, without the same privilege of being able to present ourselves in this chamber first. For this reason, I do not believe that committee meetings should convene at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

I would also inform honourable senators that the steering committee of that joint committee, which was agreed to by both joint chairmen, indicated that all the testimony by witnesses was to be heard before Easter. That proposal was approved by the committee, and it was agreed that we would not deviate from that procedure.

● (2040)

Just this last week alone, a joint chairman of that committee had taken it upon himself to call a meeting for the day after which the regular meeting takes place.

Senator Flynn: That's not true.

Senator Guay: I think that that is shameful—and that is the word I think the Leader of the Opposition used—particularly when my presence will not be noted in the *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Senate* for Thursday last.

Senator Flynn: That's up to you.

Senator Guay: It is obvious, honourable senators, that the joint chairman of that committee is playing games. As I said before, if he is advising the Conservative Party in the same manner in which he is advising the members of that committee, I can see why the Conservative Party is in a great deal of trouble.

Senator Stollery: Honourable senators, I see that Senator Tremblay has taken his seat in the chamber, so I shall address my question to him.

Was an election held for a new joint chairman at the meeting which took place this afternoon?

[Translation]

Hon. Arthur Tremblay: Honourable senators, I can testify that this afternoon, an acting chairman was elected by the committee members present and that there was a quorum for this purpose. The election took place under the direction—the word is perhaps not entirely appropriate—of the only person who was in a position to do so, namely, the clerk of the committee. In fact, he merely asked the committee members present whether they were agreeable to designating a chairman *pro tem*. They were, and they decided to do so right away. And that is why I was chairman *pro tem* of the committee which sat this afternoon. The committee meeting had been duly called by a decision of the committee itself, which had met the week before. I wish to emphasize that it was the committee's own decision. I was present last week when the committee decided to sit Tuesday this week in order to hear representatives of the Atomic Energy Control Commission. So that is why I was chairman *pro tem* of the committee, to hear the witnesses appearing before the committee and the group accompanying them. To answer the senator's question, there was a proper election, as a result of which I was chairman *pro tem* of the committee.

[English]

Senator Stollery: My supplementary question, honourable senators, would be supplementary to the questions I asked last week. I was at the door—

Senator Flynn: Were you there?

Senator Stollery: Yes, I was.

Senator Asselin: He was at the door!

Senator Stollery: Yes, I was.

It is interesting to see how the Leader of the Opposition, who sits, after all, 100 yards from the other end of the building, can pursue with a straight face the theory that somehow we ignore what is taking place at the other end of this building, particularly as it relates to a joint committee. That proposition is so ridiculous that it should not be taken seriously.

Senator Smith: By you.

Senator Flynn: You were not appointed to the Senate for that reason.