

Canadian Wheat Board, is here. Maybe some of us have questions for him, but I suggest that the greatest number of questions will be directed either to the Leader of the Government or the Minister of State for Economic Development, who holds a rather broad portfolio.

In any event, as I indicated previously, possibly the Senate should have dispensed with the sitting this week, given what little there is before the Senate itself. The only questions that are really relevant today are those questions we might put to Senator Argue, because even if we put the questions to Senator Frith, he will just take them as notice, and in that case we will not get an answer until next week when the ministers will, we hope, be here.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): That would depend on the questions.

Senator Flynn: So I do not see the use in putting any questions, except those to Senator Argue, or those addressed to Senator Hays in accordance with the ruling the Speaker just made a moment ago. The question I wanted to put to Senator Hays is: Is it his intention to have the Senate approve the decision of the committee to ask for leave to have its deliberations televised?

● (1415)

Senator Frith: Under the Speaker's ruling I do not think that is in order.

Senator Flynn: I am asking whether the committee decided to ask leave from both houses to have its deliberations televised, and I am asking Senator Hays if he intends to ask that permission of the Senate today.

Senator Frith: I guess the first question to be asked is whether the committee did so decide. I don't know whether they did or not. I don't think they did so decide.

Senator Flynn: If I am wrong, then I think Senator Hays can correct me.

Hon. Harry Hays: Honourable senators, it is my understanding that insofar as the televising of the committee's proceedings is concerned, this question will be dealt with by the House of Commons and by the Senate. As far as the committee is concerned, we have no intention at the moment of changing our decision. It is up to the House of Commons and the Senate as to how they want to proceed insofar as televising the committee's proceedings is concerned. The committee has not asked for permission to be televised.

Senator Flynn: As I understand it, the committee has not made a decision; it has not asked for anything.

Senator Hays: No.

Senator Flynn: Then do I understand that there is a possibility that the Commons may instruct the committee to do that?

Senator Frith: Perhaps I can help. I understand that a motion is going to be presented in the other place, using the word "authorized", not "instructed".

Senator Flynn: Yes, but what is the exact situation? Are we going to be invited to join in that exercise?

Senator Frith: My instructions are—

Senator Asselin: You have been instructed?

Senator Frith: No, I have not. I am always glad to concede that I am being instructed if in fact that is the case. I suppose that the use of the phrases, "according to my instructions," or "I am instructed," is an occupational hazard, since it is an expression that is used in court. I apologize for using it here in that way.

In this case, in any event, neither in that more esoteric sense of the word, nor in its general sense, am I instructed. I am, rather, informed that the plan is for a motion to be introduced in the other place, probably within half an hour from now, and the motion will propose that the committee be authorized to televise its deliberations. I am further informed that the motion finishes with the words, "that a message be sent to the Senate," asking the Senate to concur in the motion so to authorize the committee.

That is my information. I understand the motion is to be presented at the end of Question Period in the other place.

Senator van Roggen: Did you use the words "authorized to televise"? Or is the motion to the effect that they are to be directed to televise?

Senator Frith: I was told that the word to be used is "authorize." My understanding is that they will be authorized to do it; that is, they will have authority to do it, if they wish. I cannot tell you anything more than that I was told today that the word would be "authorized." It may turn out that it will not be that word, in which case I hope honourable senators will not feel that I have tried to mislead them. I am simply telling you what I understand the plan was in the other place.

● (1420)

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to refer to the use of the word "authorized" in the resolution which my honourable friend opposite anticipates. In my opinion the word "authorized" should be replaced by "instructed," because in the first instance, when this committee was set up, we were under no misapprehension as to what it was being asked to do. It was not authorized to do something; it was being instructed to do something. It seems to me the same reference ought to be used in connection with this motion that is being forecast.

I think that some weight may be added to that argument when one knows that the committee has itself already declined, after a very vigorous debate, to approve the introduction of television, radio or other electronic media to its proceedings. This would merely authorize the committee to do something, which they may nor may not decide to do. If they adhere to their present frame of mind, they will not do it. In fact, one wonders whether they have the right to reconsider a matter that has already been decided.

I leave that open for the experts to decide. But it seems to me advisable, if this house believes that television and radio