

Mr. BRYCE: I would have thought that the House is quite capable of seeing that point directly.

Mr. LONG: On your balance sheet you have an accumulation of several years of these things, and the House would have no way of knowing from the balance sheet how much pertained to that particular year.

Mr. BRYCE: Only by seeing the difference which is shown.

Mr. THOMAS (*Middlesex West*): Mr. Chairman, there is rather an important point here. If the committee, in past years, has been wrong then they should amend their findings, but to have a department of the government disregarding the findings of this committee strikes me as rather important; that is, it should not be an open defiance of the findings of the committee. This is what strikes me as an important factor. If the committee is wrong then they should correct themselves, that is for sure. But when there is a matter of open defiance by a department of the government it constitutes defiance of power and, therefore, it becomes a serious matter.

Mr. BRYCE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to comment on that. This is not a question of the department defying the committee. These decisions are government decisions; they are decided by the Treasury Board in preparing the estimates, and are concurred in by the government itself. These particular items have been approved by the House in this form. Therefore, there is a difference here between what the House has approved and what the committee has approved. I think it is not a question here of right and wrong; it is a question of which is a better way of doing it. There is, of course, room for differences of opinion as to what is a better way of doing this. I do not think it is a question of right or wrong so much as what is most useful and helpful in understanding what is going on.

Mr. THOMAS (*Middlesex West*): It leads to a rather confusing situation to my mind, and there is looseness somewhere. I mean to say there is supposed to be a head to all of our governmental enterprises and somewhere authority must reign. It raises the question as to what authority this committee has; it raises a question as to the usefulness of this committee. Possibly the committee lacks the confidence of Parliament. Perhaps the committee did make a mistake, but somewhere along the line there is a looseness, an incongruity here that something is not right. At the moment I do not know how we can correct it, but there is something wrong and the weakness should be covered in some way.

Possibly, if it is government policy, and the government approves this policy, Parliament retains confidence in the government, then certainly it would appear to me that this committee is wrong; the committee must be wrong. It is all right to make recommendations, but surely the recommendations of the committee, somewhere along the line, should be dealt with and they should be either approved or disapproved. However, if this committee is making recommendations which are more or less meaningless in effect, then why should we sit?

Mr. MUIR (*Lisgar*): Mr. Chairman, may I comment on this. Mr. Bryce has suggested that perhaps there is a little area of compromise in this matter, and he is willing to insert these suggestions in the financial statement. However, in answer to Mr. Thomas, I do not think the committee has been completely