

Q. Of course, this committee has not the time to do it properly. Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest again with regard to these Crown corporations some of which have the power to borrow public funds, and many of which have the same special immunities which are enjoyed by the Crown—some of them I know are concerned with our war effort, and their efforts I think will probably become more serious if we do reach a stage of war—surely, Mr. Chairman, it is not unreasonable to ask that these companies should come before a parliamentary committee of some kind. I think that is the recommendation we made, and I think we should make it again, definitely; if we can as a result of suggestions save the Canadian taxpayers maybe hundreds of thousands of dollars. I think we should make it imperative that some scrutiny should be given to them, and this Public Accounts committee cannot do it properly or adequately.

Mr. MACDONNELL: May I just say that, as you will recall, a recommendation of that kind appeared in the report of this committee. The committee spent a lot of time and did a lot of work on that phase last year. I think you are perfectly correct in saying, Mr. Sellar, that you cannot answer for the government on matters of policy, but might we not expect after all the work which was done by this committee, that after they make a recommendation of that kind we will at least get an answer and not have to go and raise the question on the orders of the day or put it on the order paper in the House. I mean, it makes one wonder whether these committees are taken as seriously as we would like to think they should be.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I would suggest that the matter is one which might very well be brought up when the revision of the act is up in the House later this year. I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the committee, that certainly suggestions made by a committee of this sort are very very carefully studied by all those dealing with these matters; and, speaking for myself, I can assure you that that is so.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not for me to suggest to members that they should ask questions in the House, but I do think that Mr. Thatcher's question is one which should have been put to the Minister of Finance in the House, or to the Prime Minister. It is not for me to say whether they intend to carry out these suggestions or recommendations. The committee has gone as far as it has powers to go in making the recommendation that it did. It is a question of government policy and, as I see it, it is not one that comes within the scope of our authority at all. So, as you have mentioned it, I suggest that you might ask the Minister of Finance, or whoever it is, in the House whether it is the intention to comply with the recommendation made last year by this committee, to refer these reports to a special committee. It is not open to us to act on it any more than we did last year. We made a report. As Mr. Macdonnell graciously said, I made the first draft myself and I included that in the first draft and then it went before the committee. It is your view that it might be appropriate that these matters should be referred to a special committee; but I just want to point out that it is up to the government to decide what they are going to do, and only a member of the government can indicate what their intention is.

*By Mr. Thatcher:*

Q. I wonder if Mr. Sellar could tell the committee in round figures what the total investment of the taxpayers is in these different companies?—A. I am sorry, sir, I haven't got the figures. I can bring them together for you.

Q. I wonder if you could get that information, for instance, in connection with the Polymer Corporation. There are millions of dollars invested in that Corporation, and so far as I know, there is no way of going over their revenues