

The first sitting of the Committee on this reference is being held to-day.

If it would facilitate matters, I would be pleased, with your permission, to place on the Senate Notice Board advance notices of the meetings.

Yours respectfully,

R. Arsenault,
Clerk of the Committee.

Hon. RAOUL DANDURAND: Honourable members have heard the invitation of the Banking and Commerce Committee of the House of Commons to members of the Senate who happen to be free, to attend the hearings of that committee on the Central Mortgage Bank Bill. I may say it had occurred to me that considerable information could be gathered there, and that, if we were not engaged in committee work of our own, a certain number of our members might well attend the House of Commons committee in order to hear the representations made. I do not know how long the discussion of the Bill in that committee will take, but it would perhaps be difficult in any event for our own committee to obtain a repetition of that evidence before prorogation. If the Bill comes to us, we shall, of course, take all the time necessary for an examination of it, but there would be an advantage in having certain senators attend the House of Commons committee and secure such information as will be given there.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN: Honourable members, this is a quite distinct departure.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Yes.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I have no recollection of any other occasion upon which this House has received an invitation to attend a committee of the Commons. At the moment I feel disposed to welcome the invitation. Doubtless it is addressed to us at this time with a view to reducing to a minimum the consideration which will be necessary at the hands of our committee, such action probably being thought necessary because of the imminence of prorogation. It is unfortunate the invitation has been addressed to us in the midst of the deliberations of the Commons committee. Already very important witnesses have been heard.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: To-day?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes. I know the honourable member from Winnipeg South-Centre (Hon. Mr. Haig) has been attending the committee—without invitation, I suppose—and he has told me about important testimony that has been given. Consequently

it will not be as useful to honourable senators who attend that committee now and try to keep up with the evidence. However, I think our proper attitude would be to welcome the invitation. That might lead later on to consideration of the right of ministers of either House to speak in the other House on their own measures.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I will send a request right away to the secretary of the committee, asking that, if the evidence is being printed, copies be sent day by day to honourable members of the Senate.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: I am not objecting to acceptance of the invitation, but I should like to ask the honourable leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) just what position we should be in if we did attend the committee. We should not be able to vote there of course. Should we be free to send the Bill to our own Banking and Commerce Committee afterwards, if we so desired?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I take it for granted that we should be perfectly free to send the Bill to our own committee, and to call before us the same parties who give evidence to the Commons committee, if we wished to do so. But it would help us if we first heard the evidence given over there.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: Honourable members, I did attend the Commons Committee all day to-day. I went there and asked the chairman if it was permissible for me to attend. If in that way I have broken any rules of this House, I apologize to honourable members, but I must say I did not know of any rule to prevent my attendance at that committee. I listened to the evidence and found it very important. Evidence was given by a representative of the Dominion Mortgage and Investment Association, whose membership is made up of 51 companies, which have a total of \$581,000,000 on loan in Canada. He was on the stand from a quarter after eleven until one, and from four to six, when the committee adjourned, to resume at 11.15 to-morrow morning. The Association was asked if it would furnish one witness to speak for life insurance companies, one for mortgage companies and one for trust companies. The committee is not calling these people, but will permit them to give evidence if they wish to do so. I must say that I got a good deal of useful information at the committee to-day.