

be better informed about important legislation before it was brought into this house, because it would first be fully inquired into in committee.

What I desire to point out is that the recommendations which have been made in support of this resolution could equally well be made whether the committee is comprised of seventeen, twenty-five, forty, fifty, or the entire membership of the Senate. Everything depends, first, on whether or not the subject matter to be considered is referred to a committee. Secondly, the benefit to be derived is dependent, not on the size of the committee, but its capacity and the effort it puts into its study. As a matter of fact, I feel that if a committee has only seventeen members, with a quorum of five or seven, there might be some feeling of frustration on the part of witnesses summoned to appear before it. They may say "The Senate feels that a committee of five or seven is sufficient to consider these important matters which may be the foundation for legislation". How are senators going to be better informed because committees are smaller? They can only be better informed if, as happens at the present time, a bill is reported back to the house and opportunity is given for debate. The present procedure allows ample opportunity for discussion, so that everything which has been elicited in committee may be brought forward and discussed in the house. In this way, any honourable senator may acquire information that has been developed in committee.

So far as the lack of information in the Senate is concerned, I feel that honourable senators who have explained legislation in this house have given a full and fair development of the subject matter under discussion. There has always been considerable catechizing of the person explaining legislation. Why has it been introduced? Why does it have to go as far as it does? Such questions can be unlimited, the only limit being in the ability of the person explaining to answer them.

As I have said, I have no fixed view as to the numbers who should serve on the various committees. That is entirely a matter for the majority of senators to decide. It may be fifteen, seventeen, twenty-one or fifty. I am impelled, however, to speak earnestly about the reason stated for reducing the committees, namely, that it will enable senators to become better informed and will overcome the present lack in getting enough information to senators when dealing with legislation that comes before them in this chamber. In my opinion that assertion is 100 per cent wrong.

Hon. Thomas Reid: Honourable senators, it was not my intention to take part in this

debate, but after listening to the remarks of the honourable senator from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden) I feel that I should say something at this time. I am not the sponsor of this motion, of course, but I support it. Many of the statements which have just been made could be applied contrariwise. I have not been a member of the Senate for very long, but I think I have done my fair share of committee work, and I have been very glad to do it.

I have done much committee work since first coming to parliament in 1930, and I do not agree with the remarks the honourable senator from Toronto has made about witnesses being summoned before small committees of five or seven members. I have sat in at meetings of Senate committees where the membership has been fifty, and I have seen witnesses speaking to only seven members. I always wondered where the rest of the members were. Therefore, so far as that part of my friend's argument is concerned, it works both ways.

This is the way I understood the remarks of the leader of the government, and the remarks made in committee before the Senate met. The suggestion was made that legislation forecast in the Speech from the Throne would be sent to these three committees, and that they would do something which has not been done before—they would find out the complete particulars of the legislation before the bill came to this house, which is not the case now. Then, when the bill was referred to committee and reported back to the Senate, there would be six or seven senators, who had been on the committee who would be in a position to answer any questions about it. It was suggested also that when legislation is reported back to this house the Senate will sit in Committee of the Whole in full view of the public and the Press Gallery. In this way they will know that we are really earnest in our efforts to thoroughly examine legislation that comes before us. If I am wrong in my understanding of this motion, I should like to be put straight. For the reasons I have given, and others, I intend to vote for the motion presented by the leader of the government.

Hon. Norman P. Lambert: Honourable senators, I am sorry I did not hear the discussion on this motion yesterday, but I have read the report of the debate in *Hansard*.

I should like to point out that Rule 5, which it is proposed to change, has reference to the Committee on Transport and Communications, which has a membership of fifty. The history of this committee has been very different from that of some of the other