

*Transport and Communications*

**An hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

**Another hon. Member:** I wonder why?

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, I still feel that we in the House should look at this matter a little closer in the future.

**Mr. Bell:** Here we go. You started this.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** The particular problem which concerns this committee originated in Montreal. Mr. Speaker, if there ever was a good case to be made for bringing witnesses to Ottawa, that was it.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Baldwin:** I never heard that the hon. member objected to the committee going to Montreal—

**Mr. Allmand:** I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, I did object to the fact that we went to Montreal and I refused to stay there for the whole period and did not take up my full role on the committee.

**Mr. Baldwin:** I am glad to hear that the hon. member did object. It was mooted, but we never heard it in this House. The issues were properly raised and the committee saw fit to go to Toronto subsequently.

This is a very good committee which has done an excellent job and learned a great deal during the course of its travels. In many respects I agree with the hon. member that the onus is upon the committee to satisfy members of the House that this journey is really necessary. But I think committees have become quite responsible. Certainly, the position taken by the official opposition in the early part of this session was along these lines. The members of the committee made a good case; they satisfied the House, and permission was granted.

At the present time people in this country are almost compelled to go to Montreal or Toronto in order to get to Ottawa. In my view, Mr. Speaker, some of the problems discovered as a result of the examination by the committee have now been found either to exist, or at least potentially exist elsewhere. In these circumstances, I think it is proper to allow the recommendation of the committee to stand. Although I do not deny his right, I am rather amazed at the hon. member objecting to the committee travelling elsewhere when it has virtually unanimously agreed to do so.

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I agree only partly with the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (Mr. Allmand). If we found out anything at the hearings of the Transport and Communications Committee hearings in Montreal and Toronto, it was that the problems they are facing are the same as the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) mentioned as potential difficulties. I think the committee should be looking at these problems in the four cities named, if only to avoid the ground transportation difficulties experienced in Montreal and Toronto.

Before any committee of this House leaves Ottawa, I feel that much more preparation should be done and that people concerned with the problem in the areas to be visited should be notified and invited to appear at the hearings. Too often we arrive almost unannounced and the local people only find out afterwards. I do not think there is enough advance preparation and notification. It may well turn out that when the Transport and Communications Committee arrives in Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Winnipeg the taxi companies will not even know about it. It is possible that nobody will appear before the committee in any of these cities. I am prepared to overlook that, because at least the committee will receive some education in travelling to airports and its members will find out what the hon. member for Peace River referred to as potential problems as a result of some rather miserable experiences in larger cities. These four cities are growing and traffic will increase. Therefore, I hope there will be a better job done in regard to advance notice.

Some months ago, Mr. Speaker, I was on another committee of this House. We travelled to three cities and saw only one person in each, at a total cost in excess of \$10,000. I am sure we could have brought those three people to Ottawa and given them a suite each in the Chateau Laurier for under \$3,000. In committee I was shot down in flames when I suggested that we should advertise and notify organizations and individuals who would wish to appear before us on a matter that was fundamental to our whole society, the reform of our Elections Act. We did not do it, and I think we probably wasted \$6,000, or \$7,000 of the taxpayers' money. When we left, 24 of us travelled in a 96-seat passenger airplane. That was changed for the return journey because the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) and myself moved that after the first city part of the committee should return to