

Mr. WRIGHT: My question is on 85 (3) which states:

A corporation shall, as soon as possible, but within three months after the termination of each financial year submit an annual report to the . . . minister.

And then it states: The minister must within fifteen days after he receives this, or if parliament is not in session, within fifteen days after the commencement of the next ensuing session thereof, lay the report before the House.

Some of these corporations today are handling very large sums of money and their annual statements are laid before the House, but it is very difficult to get all of the information which I think some of use would like from the minister on his estimates. That is the only place where we would have an opportunity of questioning him. He might have the members of the corporation before him or he might not when he is being questioned, and it seems to me a much more direct method of keeping check on corporations and a much better method of getting information would be to have these corporations appear before some select committee, some select standing committee or some select special committee of the House. The time has come when the government is in business in a big way and parliament has a responsibility to the people of Canada with regard to these Crown corporations.

I think our responsibility can best be carried out by having these corporations appear annually, as is the case with the Canadian National Railways, Trans-Canada Air Lines, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, before some select standing committee or special committee of the House wherein the officers can be questioned.

Take, for instance, Eldorado Mining and Refining Company. It not only operates a mine but it has a department which does exploration work. They have many aeroplanes in parts of Northwest Canada and in some of the provinces. They have a refinery and several subsidiary companies. It is very difficult in the House, as the minister knows, to get information which might be useful to members of parliament.

I would like to move that in Section 85 there be a further section which would be better, I think, to come in as number 4, renumbering subclause 4 as (5):

That at each session the annual reports laid before parliament for that year of companies in schedules C and D shall be submitted to a standing select committee or a special committee of the House for consideration.

I think the companies in those two schedules are corporations whose business we should, as members of parliament, have fairly close knowledge of, and I do not know of any way we can get that close knowledge except by having them appear before a select committee of the House.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I open the discussion I will read the motion again.

Mr. WRIGHT: Perhaps you had better let me read it, my writing is not too good.

The CHAIRMAN: It is all right.

It is moved by Mr. Wright that a further paragraph which would carry the number 4 be included after paragraph 3 of Section 85 reading:

At each session the annual reports laid before parliament for that year of Crown corporations shall be submitted to a standing or select committee of the House for their consideration.

The discussion is open and, after the discussion I will give a ruling on the motion. My ruling will not be open for discussion so that any member who is about to speak now may assume that the ruling might be that the motion is out