

Mr. RHEAUME: On a point of order, if the member for St. Lawrence-St. Georges is going to act as a lawyer, I insist upon being called as one of the members of the jury.

Mr. TURNER: We are all sitting as members of the jury, trying to evaluate the testimony; and I suggest the testimony of Mr. Justice Sissons is only worth as much as the constitutional validity of what he says.

Mr. RHEAUME: When you begin reading things about the disfranchised adult Indians—

Mr. TURNER: This is what the statute says.

Mr. RHEAUME: What we were discussing were the principles in the bill, the kind of government not the specific clauses and subclauses. This kind of reading into the record of specific clauses and subsections of the act is designed to draw a smokescreen across the path of what the witness is trying to tell this committee.

The CHAIRMAN: If I might make reference to the point of order raised, we are studying the subjects of the bills. We are not studying the principle of the bills necessarily, but rather the subjects of the bills, and these entail everything that these two bills will bring about. In discussing them we have heard evidence on the constitutional aspects this afternoon, as the witness indicated to the committee, and as the committee understands it; that is to say, bearing on the type of government which is suggested by the witness. I feel that the committee should be enlightened if possible, through questions by members of the committee.

The members of the committee may not agree with what is said, or with what the questions are based upon. I am very interested in the remarks of Mr. Justice Sissons, and I am also very interested, and I hope the committee is too, in questions which may bring about some enlightenment concerning what we are here for. I trust that the members will not squabble about the fitness of any question, unless such questions are absolutely out of order for reasons which the members may think are outside the order of reference which we have. But since we have spent many minutes this afternoon on constitutional matters surrounding possible types of government for the Northwest Territories, I believe that if any member has anything which he feels that the committee should be told, he may have the floor.

Mr. RHEAUME: My point was on the understanding of what the witness has said. He was discussing a form of government, and Mr. Turner started to read certain clauses and subclauses, and said that they were not in reference to what the witness had said.

Mr. TURNER: On a point of order, I admit that the questioning I am following is technical. I say that on the basis of the fact that the submission by the witness was a highly technical and constitutional one. Therefore it is open to me to examine him on that basis. The whole substance of his recommendations to this committee relate to the statute of 1872, and this he mentioned three or four times. But I submit to the committee that this statute does not exist.

Mr. RHEAUME: I agree, but I do not think everybody understands it.

Mr. TURNER: I do not know. We were referred to the provisions of a statute, which were quoted, yet that statute does not exist. The only statute to which the witness could have referred was the statute of 1875. I think I am entitled to ask questions based on that statute of 1875, and to ask if this is the type of government the witness wants in the Northwest Territories.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair has disallowed the point of order. You may proceed.