

*The Address—Mr. Kindt*

bring in measures which would improve the work of this parliament and make it more smooth and efficient. If I address a few remarks to the house along this line it might be of some help both to him and to other hon. members.

I have been critical before, Mr. Speaker, but I think that anyone dealing with a subject of this kind must be critical; one must come to grips with the problem. We were told by the Prime Minister that he is going to experiment with the use of television in committees, but he did not tell us why he wished to do so. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) suggested the use of television in this chamber so that our constituents and the people in the country could see what the members of this house are doing, what they are saying, be in a position to judge for themselves as to the attendance of hon. members and also to formulate their own opinions of the house. I see nothing particularly wrong with having television in this house, Mr. Speaker, but I do see a lot wrong with using it in committee sittings.

Let me deal with this point for a few moments. There are members of this house who, when the committees are set up, belong to three of those committees. Since there is no schedule man, there is therefore no one appointed to avoid the clashing of the times of committee sittings. Those who set up the committees simply go their own sweet way and schedule committee meetings, and if you are a member of two committees which meet at the same time, then obviously you cannot be in two places at once and have to choose one or the other.

Let us assume, Mr. Speaker, that the one you choose is not having its proceedings televised. In this event your constituents would note your absence from the other committee. The letters would start to pour in: "Ah ha, Mr. Member for East Kootenay, you were not in your seat in the committee". Of course, the reference might be to the member for Macleod or any other member. But the point I am trying to make is the practical one of avoiding conflicts and being fair to everybody. It would not be fair to the hon. member for East Kootenay if his constituents received the impression that he did not attend that committee simply because he had another committee to attend which, in his judgment, he felt of more importance. No one has yet come up with a solution to a problem of this sort, Mr. Speaker, and my guess is that no one has even thought about it.

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There are many other aspects to televising committee proceedings in order to popularize them. It might be used to force attendance of Liberal backbenchers in committees. I have attended committees on many occasions and waited half an hour before we had a quorum.

**Mr. Choquette:** Just look at the attendance over there now.

**Mr. Kindt:** I might say that we always waited for Liberal members to attend committees before we could proceed. The hon. member who has just taken his seat stated the other day—

**Mr. Choquette:** Mr. Speaker, I would just like to mention the fact that there are only four Conservative members present in the house, and I want that to be recorded on *Hansard*.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Churchill:** There is no Liberal minister in the house either.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for Macleod (Mr. Kindt) has the floor.

**Mr. Kindt:** I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that at the present time there are only ten Liberals in the house, and I want that to be on the record. There are at least a dozen Conservatives behind the curtain smoking and listening.

**Mr. Danforth:** And there are no cabinet ministers.

• (5:10 p.m.)

**Mr. Kindt:** I am trying to deliver a talk here with some principles in it which will assist in the running of this parliament. The people who are laying down the ground rules for television are doing so to ensure the attendance of Liberal backbenchers and all other backbenchers. I am one hundred per cent opposed to using public money to buy T.V. time in order to ensure that backbenchers in the Liberal party attend committee meetings. Hon. members opposite can laugh and snort all they like, but he who laughs last laughs best. I am only telling them the truth.

Why is attendance at committee meetings so unsatisfactory? What is the basic cause of the failure to attract backbenchers? I will tell the house what the trouble is. These committees are not set up in such a way as to allow people to take part and feel that they are making a real contribution. That is the problem. This is a situation which has existed for