

Mr. Atkinson: I would say so, yes, but I would say in writing or through the press, through our own publication.

Senator Grosart: What about the formal notice? Has this been advertised?

Mr. Golden: Yes, on the advice of the legislative counsel, advertising has been taken in the *Gazette*. I realize that the *Gazette* does not probably go to every member, but it was thought that, because of the national character of the organization there was no particular newspaper appropriate, as opposed to any other, and the advertisement did appear in the *Canada Gazette*.

In that connection, I should point out that there might be some confusion as to the difference between amalgamation—the amalgamation which the Senate is being asked to deal with today, and what I call *de facto* amalgamation which took place as a result of these conventions over a year ago.

That getting together, the formation of a national farmers union, the transition between the federation and a direct membership federation, was widely known. It was widely debated and discussed. It was not exactly the object of controversy. The wording was not the object of controversy. But it was done in a highly publicized kind of atmosphere, including this convention and the press reports coming out of this. Prior to that, the local unions which maintained them and in which they participated very actively—it almost took on the aspect of an organizational campaign. If I may be permitted—not being a member but looking at it from the outside—it was a fairly active kind of thing, the campaign for it. That is, on the question of notice. So that the question of notice really relates more to what happened earlier when it was determined to form a national direct-membership organization. I might say that much of what is happening now is more lawyers' business. I was consulted with a view to obtaining the legal perfection what had already been done on the ground, as it were, and this required going back on what had been done previously and also required this legislation in the opinion of the department.

Senator Grosart: But the point is whether any minority dissenting rights might be jeopardized. I am not interested in the *de facto* organization. I am interested in what this Senate does or may do to the rights of somebody who might dissent, because we are in a position where somebody might say "I wanted

to belong to a provincial organization but not of necessity to a national organization." Do not our rules require notice by advertisement in certain newspapers?

The Law Clerk: That was a matter for the committee's branch and I always leave it to the committee's branch and they in turn consider each case on its merits. Of course they have specified rules which they follow.

Senator Grosart: What are our rules in this case and have they been followed? I do not want to give the impression I am critical or in any way opposed to this, but I would like to know what the situation is.

The Law Clerk: Perhaps it might be desirable to have Mr. Hinds come in.

Senator Grosart: We should have it on the record that notice has been given as required by the Rules of the Senate. I say this because I would not like to think we were setting aside a rule that was for the protection of somebody.

The Acting Chairman: In the meantime, Mr. Hopkins, have any objections been received?

The Law Clerk: No objections have been received.

Senator Grosart: I appreciate that, but in my view in this kind of situation we should have evidence from the Committees Branch that the requirements so far as notice is concerned have been met.

Senator McDonald: Mr. Atkinson, you mentioned that the membership had been notified by letter or through the newspaper. Do you now have a National Farmers Union newspaper?

Mr. Atkinson: Yes.

Senator McDonald: Then so far as your mailing list is concerned, have you members who are also members of provincial organizations?

Mr. Atkinson: Yes.

Senator McDonald: Does that include all the ex-members of, say, the Saskatchewan Farmers Union?

Mr. Atkinson: Every member who has taken a membership directly in the National Farmers Union or who held a membership in a provincial farmers union and that means every member of the amalgamating groups. I