

tion relative to the subject matter of our negotiations to be made public." What then? There may be other instances where definitely it would not be in the public interest to disclose information. I think we might proceed on the broad principle that all information, commitments, obligations and national situations as we know it (with certain well expected reservations) will be made available to the Convention; but we are not to forget that there may be negotiations which no government, no matter how willing it is to take the people into its confidence, can disclose. Take a Water Street merchant who may have some negotiations with the government that are pending conclusion. He won't want to have the situation publicly canvassed until it is concluded, and I don't think it would be fair that the matter be publicised under those circumstances. We have to bear in mind these exceptions to the general rule that all information will be made available to the Convention.

Mr. Crosbie I quite agree. But you might ask a lot of questions, 15 or 20. You meet Mr. X, commissioner, in conference and he says, "Gentlemen I don't want you to make this public." If the answers can't be made public, why should the questions be asked?

Mr. Hollett It is most unfortunate that they have taken this attitude. Do you think that they can give us information, 45 men or so, not sworn or anything, and not expect it to leak out? Are the persons of the Commission of Government not to be allowed to come and see us in public? They defeat their own ends by refusing to come before the public. In any case, if an official comes here we know that if he is not allowed to disclose something he is not going to. I think it is most unfortunate, and gentlemen I submit that there is nothing for us to do but take it gracefully and hear the commissioner in committee of the whole.

Mr. Chairman Perhaps it might be wise if we did not anticipate difficulties. Nothing may be discussed by the commissioner in regard to which there is any necessity for confidence or secrecy. Why not cross the bridges when we meet them, and perhaps we will not have any trouble at all.

Mr. Dawe There is a method of finding information — information from the Canadian government.

Mr. Cashin The point I have been trying to make is, Mr. Wild may say, "We will speak to

you as a committee of the whole, but we will not speak to your committee with the public there." Why? They have not explained the reason why they won't do that. They have some reason for it, and I think they are playing their cards very badly, because the public can say, "There must be something wrong, what is it?" Are they afraid they will be asked an embarrassing question which they don't want to answer? We delegates were to enquire into everything and the sessions were to be open to the public, and now we find that if Mr. Wild comes here we have to bar that door, and John Citizen cannot get in while Mr. Wild tells us how he handled this or that. If Mr. Wild was across the House and was asked a question by a leader of the opposition he would have to answer it. Now he says, "Bar the doors". That is not democracy. We can't make them come, but if they don't come publicly they should stay out altogether. With your permission I put an amendment in this form, that when this invitation goes to Mr. Wild he be asked to come to this House tomorrow afternoon, and that when he does come the House will be in public session, and ask his reply to it. He can only say no, and then we know where we are.

Mr. Smallwood This is in connection with his address, not necessarily in connection with the cross-examination he is to get later on.

Mr. Cashin I know I can't cross-examine him tomorrow because he won't have those answers ready, but in any case I believe it should be open to the public, and I want a justification from the commissioners as to why they won't come before the public. Are they so scared? Are we too insignificant? That is the attitude they are taking.

Mr. Smallwood Don't forget they are a dictatorship, you know!

Mr. Chairman Perhaps before we get any further stirred up we might take this amendment. Major Cashin kindly read your amendment.

Mr. Cashin I don't have it written down, but I want when this invitation goes to Mr. Wild to have it inserted that he make his address in public.

Mr. Chairman Perhaps you mean to have the words "in private" deleted.

Mr. Cashin Yes, take out "in private" and put in "in public session" and be sure of it.

Mr. Ashbourne Did I not understand from you, Mr. Chairman, that it had been decided by the Commission that they were not prepared to meet