

Transport and Communications

argued that all members did not attend the committee meeting, and said that parliament can change any of these things no matter what committees do. He also said, "We have a majority." What he really said, was, "As long as the executive wants something, then the members of the Liberal party, who are in a majority, will ram it through."

Mr. Perrault: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has been engaging in utter distortion of the intent and substance of my remarks. I think hon. members would like to have him speak to the other amendment before the house instead of engaging in this highly partisan dissertation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. There is no question of privilege.

Mr. Woolliams: In reply to the hon. member I could only say, "Woh wad some power the giftie gie us to see ourselves as others see us."

Mr. Ambrose Hubert Peddle (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I had some doubt about whether I was going to be recognized in time. Now that I have the floor, and assuming the house closes at ten o'clock tonight, I can assure you that I will have the last word on this matter tonight. I am sorry that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) is not present. I do not know where he is and I do not care where he is, but I do want to say that I have been thinking a lot about him lately. The more I think about him, the less I think of him. I am beginning to think he is one hon. member who stands for anything he thinks people will fall for.

I am getting a little confused, Mr. Speaker. The initial motion was that the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, presented to the house on March 19, be concurred in. Now it has been amended, and the amendments have been amended, and the amendments to the amendments have been amended so often that I am not sure what I am talking about.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Peddle: Mr. Speaker, since I have been a member of this house may I say that I have never seen any hon. member opposite admit that he did not know what he was talking about.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Peddle: The house leader has attempted to keep this report from being adopted on the grounds that the transport committee had no right to make this recommendation to the house. That was his first contention and Mr. Speaker found his argument spurious, or at least invalid, and ruled accordingly. Maybe "spurious" is too strong a word, but the Speaker did rule against the President of the Privy Council.

Now, we have an amendment that the report of the committee be not concurred in and that the committee be instructed to go back like good little boys and do as they have been instructed. The President of the Privy Council comes in swinging, with his pugnacious look, with his shoulders up and his guard up, and he says that one of his little committees in his innocuous, watered-down committee system has dared to recommend something to the government.

The underlying reasoning of hon. gentlemen opposite seems to be, "look, after all this government has a majority. As we have a majority, how dare you recommend something to offend that majority." But, Mr. Speaker, the government also has something like a two to one majority on the committees of this house.

Some time ago, one hon. member opposite sent a circular to his constituents telling them that he had been instructed on exactly how to behave on committees. I doubt very much if an hon. member would print thousands of copies of such a circular and say something like that unless there was some justification for it. In any event, I believe it. I have a copy of the circular.

Mr. McGrath: Identify the hon. member.

Mr. Peddle: I don't know his constituency.

Some hon. Members: The hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto).

Mr. Peddle: The hon. member for York East.

When I and other new members first came to this house we were put at ease by the President of the Privy Council when we asked questions as to how we would get our views across. He used words to this effect, "Have no fear. Go into the committees and you will have every opportunity to put your views across. Don't worry about it. This is a new streamlined system; the new society, the just society. We are on the ball. You fellows need have no worry."