

Transportation

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have been encouraged to speak tonight because of the extension of hours. I judge that that is what the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) wanted. He wanted to hear from more people with regard to this bill of his in which he takes considerable pride, so—

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I would have asked to have the hours extended until midnight had I suspected that that would bring the hon. gentleman out.

Mr. Churchill: If the minister interrupts me as he has interrupted almost every speaker up to this point, then what I have to say will be extended. But I like to accommodate the minister. I do not rise to praise him, sir, as many members who spoke earlier in the debate have. I have known him longer than some of the members in this house and I realize that he does better without too much praise. Consequently I will not praise him for his efforts; in fact, during the course of my remarks I will point out some of his deficiencies.

Somewhat left-handedly though I think I should say of our hon. member, who may be transported to another place, that I will miss him if and when that happens.

Mr. Pickersgill: Let's go together.

Mr. Churchill: Just think of the loss to the House of Commons. Nevertheless it is a thought that I will turn over, and perhaps I will consult him about that. I will miss him in the House of Commons because he is a stimulating influence and keeps people, whether they be on the government side or on the opposition side, on their toes, to make sure he is not carrying out some action which deserves a second look. That is rather euphemistically phrased, I think, but I believe the minister will get my idea. I always examine every proposition that the minister makes to the house, every bill that he presents and every question that he brings forward to see where the hidden meaning is. I suggest, sir, that this is the type of activity that keeps people in the House of Commons alert, and for this I pay my compliment to the Minister of Transport.

Now and again he does something I like very much. When he was speaking the other day he commented upon the question of keeping politics out of transportation. He had apparently seen some article in the paper that was critical of this, though I did not see

the article myself. The minister gave a defence of politics and said there are two kinds. If I may quote him, he said that there is the one where the house attempts to get some kind of consensus about what will be suitable to bind this country together. The second type of politics was—if I may quote him again—the kind that tempts all of us to see the selfish interests of individuals, groups, or sometimes even of regions above the broader interests of the whole community. I think it is useful for people to understand what is meant by the term "politics", and in this house his first definition would mostly apply.

There is, of course, nothing new about this. The minister is as interested in history as I am and he will not mind if I direct his attention to the situation in the House of Commons on April 11, 1919. At that time the house was discussing transportation and considering a resolution to incorporate the Canadian National Railway Company. During the course of the debate on the resolution the leader of the opposition at that time, Daniel D. McKenzie, member for Cape Breton North and Victoria, used these words, to be found at page 1397 of *Hansard*:

Politics is the science of government. When people say: "We must take this matter out of politics," they mean that it shall be taken away from patronage, graft, or mismanagement. I am willing that works of this kind shall be taken out of politics in that sense, but I do not agree that the people who own and operate enterprises shall have nothing to say about their management. Politics must exist in public ownership in so far as that involves the fullest possible control by the people.

I draw that to the minister's attention simply to show that he is following in the footsteps of parliamentarians of the past who had a similar idea with regard to the meaning of politics, and the fact that you cannot divorce politics from a consideration of matters of public concern.

When we were summoned to the house some time ago the impression was given both to us and to the public that we had two important and urgent pieces of legislation to put through because a railway strike was going on in the country. Quite obviously the bill to terminate the railway strike which we dealt with last week was of very great urgency, and you can imagine my surprise when during the course of one of those debating days four members of the Liberal party filibustered their own bill. It should have been passed very quickly.