

*Privilege*

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the hon. member. The hon. member for Edmonton Northwest.

**Mr. Murray W. Dorin (Edmonton Northwest):** Mr. Speaker, having been a participant in the committee during the period in question and even longer, I would submit that in fact there is no question of privilege involved here.

There may be a point of order about procedure because, as has been mentioned by others earlier, there is no doubt that from time to time the procedure in that particular committee, and I would argue in all committees, does not exactly follow all of the established procedures. However, as has been stated before, the fact is that committees are masters of their own destiny and whether or not anything occurred in that committee to be of such a serious nature that someone's privilege has been violated.

**An Hon. Member:** He already ruled on that. He said he could.

**Mr. Dorin:** I realize that. This is the issue. I listened while you made your point.

What occurred last night in the finance committee, as has been noted by others, was based on a somewhat similar situation which occurred in the justice committee, which you, Mr. Speaker, have acknowledged you are familiar with, having been a member of the committee at that time.

The chairman of the finance committee may not be quite so eloquent as the chairman of the justice committee, Mr. Lachance, was at that time. The current finance committee chairman, the hon. member for Mississauga South, is not noted for eloquence, but he did in fact invoke a very similar procedure.

**Mr. Milliken:** And he had the honour to resign.

**Mr. Dorin:** I will deal with that shortly.

I would just like to point out that in events leading up to this particular measure, we had a number of occasions where procedures of the committee were held up for a variety of reasons. For example, the proceeding of the committee governing the holding and conduct of meetings, as adopted by the committee on April 19, 1989, simply states that the chairman be authorized to hold meetings to receive and authorize the printing of evidence, when a quorum is not present. It is the chairman

alone, which I acknowledge is somewhat different from many other committees of this House.

That procedure was followed in fact prior to the bill being referred to the committee when on Wednesday, January 31, finance committee MPs agreed in an *in camera* meeting that should the bill be referred, the chairman would be authorized to call meetings for February 12 and February 13.

When that bill was referred to the committee on Wednesday, February 7, those meetings were called. Following that, the first public meeting was called on Wednesday, February 19, at which time two members, who are not usual members of the committee, appeared and called into question the authority of the committee to conduct those meetings with the witnesses that had been organized for that day.

At that time the hon. member for Nickel Belt stated that the committee could not proceed at that time, and that the only way it could proceed was by a motion of the steering committee, laying out the procedures and the witnesses. All of these things are laid out and are passed by recorded motion. There is then a report to the full committee and the full committee determines the action. That is the proper procedure.

Following that, there was a considerable amount of debate and meetings, which I will not go through, and another filibuster which resulted in a procedural motion being adopted that provided for televised hearings of witnesses and also provided for two weeks of witnesses.

**Mr. Langdon:** Not true. Two weeks was not the motion.

**Mr. Dorin:** At the end of that time and during that final week—

**Mr. Langdon:** Be accurate.

**Mr. Dorin:** The committee members asked that any other witnesses to be heard be called and advised any members who had additional witnesses that they wanted heard to submit those names to the staff of the committee so it could be organized.

We were in the final time of completing hearing of the witnesses. We had circulated during the previous week a motion for procedure that suggested an additional 10 days to be given for consideration of the bill. We circulated the motion the previous week. We suggested