

Committee on Railways and Shipping

himself announced that there would be a public inquiry. A report to that effect appeared in the *Globe and Mail* of Wednesday, December 22, 1954. That report indicates that the minister was quite definite that there would be a public inquiry. He pointed out that first of all there would be an inquiry by a technical board within the department, and he indicated that the results of the examinations by that technical board of inquiry would be turned over to the public board. According to Harvey Hickey, who wrote the dispatch, the minister said that no effort would be spared toward achieving this end, the end being the ascertaining of the relevant facts in relation to this crash.

As hon. members know, when the minister, on February 22, tabled the report of the technical board of inquiry and the other documents related thereto he said that although it had been his original intention to follow this inquiry by a technical board with a public hearing, he had changed his mind. He gave his reasons for that decision briefly when he said this, as reported at page 1375 of *Hansard*:

Having regard to the exhaustive inquiry made by the board and the positive nature of its findings, I have come to the conclusion that no useful purpose would be served by setting up a public board of inquiry as I originally contemplated.

That means, Mr. Speaker, that there is no dispute over my statement that it was the original intention of the minister to have the two inquiries, one by technical people within the department and the other by a public board.

Hon. members will recall that, a day or two later, I asked in the house whether, in the light of certain comments made by the president of the Canadian air lines pilots' association, the minister would reconsider the matter and have a public board. His off-hand answer was no, and nothing seems to have been done about the matter since that time. It is my contention, Mr. Speaker,—and that is the reason that I feel that I should have these few minutes in which to speak on this matter now—that the minister should go back to his original intention and set up a public board.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Will the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Knowles: Certainly.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I agree with him about having a public inquiry, but could not this matter be inquired into by this committee being set up, composed of members of parliament able to hear the evidence and thereby come to a conclusion?

Mr. Knowles: The committee could inquire into the matters that were raised a few minutes ago by the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Macdonnell) but it seemed to him appropriate to make those observations on this motion here in the house. It is my contention, Mr. Speaker, that this is a matter of such serious importance to one individual, namely the pilot concerned, and to the public that, bearing in mind the original intention of the minister, I should be permitted to make now on the floor of the house this public appeal to the minister to go through with what was his original intention. That is what I am doing now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am trying to be just as generous as I can possibly be. I have been listening attentively to the hon. member's remarks but I must confess that, in my humble judgment, I do not see how the hon. member can be in order in asking the Minister of Transport to proceed via a board of inquiry on this motion. I do not want to argue with the hon. member indefinitely about procedure, but may I say this. We are setting up a committee to investigate the accounts and estimates and bills relating to the Canadian National Railways, the Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships, and Trans-Canada Air Lines. Because of the fact that T.C.A. accounts are mentioned in the motion the hon. member says, "I am going to ask the Minister of Transport to set up a board of inquiry to go into the matter of the crash at"—was it Moose Jaw?

Mr. Knowles: Brampton.

Mr. Speaker: In any event, with respect to some crash that took place and that he has mentioned, and the pilot who was involved. I cannot see it.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, how is it that we had a two or three day debate on the motion to set up a committee on radio broadcasting? What is the meaning of standing order 38 which reads in part as follows:

- (1) The following motions are debatable:—
Every motion . . .
(j) for the appointment of a committee,
(k) for reference to a committee of a report or any return laid on the table of the house . . .

If it is in order to debate the proposal to set up a committee—which means that one can argue for it or against it—surely in doing so it is in order to discuss matters that relate thereto, as well as matters covered in reports that have been laid on the table as indicated in that motion. In this case the T.C.A. report has been laid on the table and the report, at pages 6 and 13 thereof, makes reference to the crash that occurred