

Electoral Boundaries Commission

Mr. Knowles: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Churchill: Yes.

Mr. Knowles: Will he please believe me when I say there was nothing sinister in that suggestion at all? I understood his motive as being one that would tidy things up; I think I used that phrase. I was not suspecting his motive at all when I made that remark.

Mr. Churchill: That was the interpretation I placed upon it, but people reading *Hansard* might place a different interpretation upon it. I am not lodging any further complaint.

However, in the course of his remarks this morning in support of his amendment the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre stressed the necessity of presenting an image of impartiality to the Canadian people in connection with this legislation; that we must extract this legislation from partisan politics. He is of the opinion that if the nominations to the commissions are made by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition representing the two major political parties of this country, there will be a suggestion of partisan politics. I hope that very soon somebody will define partisan politics. We are running into a great deal of criticism with regard to parliament from some uninformed people. We hear a lot in this house about partisan politics, but it is time that phrase was defined.

I believe it is quite wrong for members of this house to object to the clause in the bill under which authority will be given to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to make appointments, and to object on the basis that there might be a suggestion of partisan politics. I believe such suggestions create a wrong image of parliament. The people who are making these suggestions about creating a wrong image of parliament should consider the fact that if it is suggested that because the leaders of the two great political parties are given the privilege of making appointments there will be then something a bit sinister about it, then it follows that there is something wrong with everything and you get down to the position where you need to get rid of all political parties and destroy parliament.

We have heard some of these suggestions by people commenting in the news media. In the final analysis these suggestions come down to getting rid of parliament. What do these people want to substitute for parliament? I think members of parliament have

to be careful about this. The Prime Minister of this country, the leader of the Liberal party, has the respect of parliament. The Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the Conservative party in this country, has the respect of parliament.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Churchill: I did not realize my speech was so earth shaking that it affected the lights of this building.

Mr. Pickersgill: The road to Damascus.

Mr. Churchill: I feel that these gentlemen have the respect of parliament. We differ and differ vigorously with regard to certain matters, and why not? We are not namby-pambies. The great advantage of parliament is that we have an opportunity to reply. If we had the same opportunity elsewhere we would all be very happy. We have people criticizing us, and if we ever get a reply it is buried on page 36 of the newspaper or something like that. Here you have an opportunity to reply and there is vigorous debate. I can differ with the Minister of Transport every day in this house—

Mr. Starr: But you do not.

Mr. Churchill: Yes, I do. About once a week I do differ with him, but I can differ with the Minister of Transport in this house and that does not say I do not have respect for him as a parliamentarian and as a gentleman. We are entitled to differ here—

Mr. Knowles: He might use that in the next election.

Mr. Churchill: I do not mind if he uses it. I have invited him to come out and run against me in Winnipeg, but he seems content to remain in Newfoundland.

Mr. Pickersgill: I reciprocate the invitation.

Mr. Churchill: Coming back to what I started to say, the members of parliament who criticize what they call partisan political strife are in effect criticizing this institution. They are downgrading it, and they are playing into the hands of the people who want to destroy this institution. I point that out to those who have said things like that in this house.

I disagree quite frequently with the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre who, nevertheless, has a great deal of experience in this institution. I believe this is where the hon. member should take thought about what he is doing when he suggests here, for the consumption of people across this country,