

*Privileges and Elections*

In this particular instance, the regular, normal and legal procedure based on an immemorial practice was followed, and our friends across the way can only blame themselves if they do not know the procedure, or did not know what they were supposed to do in the committee. Surely it was not the responsibility of the chairman to tell them what they had to do. But what is even more amazing is that subsequently they did not even bother to ask the chairman or some other person about what was to be done. All they did was to blame the chairman of the committee, who had only done his duty in presiding the committee meeting.

On December 10, charges and innuendoes were made against the integrity and efficiency of the chairman by the use of terms—and I refer the hon. member to the official record in *Hansard*—such as “deliberate omission”, “reprehensible conduct”, “hanky-panky”, etc. Now, as the hon. member has not brought forward any evidence to support his charges, I believe he should resign, according to the practice in this house, or at least withdraw his words, instead of merely congratulating the hon. member—who was really ill—on his recovery. In fact, I think he should set an example for other members who, on that occasion, went a bit too far and were too hasty in their assertions, without knowing the main issue.

Mr. Speaker, we have before us a motion for concurrence of the committee's report, a matter that involved no difficulty whatever and as the report is short, logical and precise, it should receive the approval of this house.

The hon. member did not deal with procedure in his argument, but he availed himself of that opportunity to talk about the importance attached to that question by the Newfoundland people. Obviously, the chairman of the committee, the hon. member for Montmorency (Mr. Laflamme), has ably presided over the meetings of the committee and brought the discussion into its true perspective, according to the terms of reference proposed, for if we had gone off on that side-issue, we could easily have replied to the hon. member that if the question was of such interest to him, nothing prevented him, as well as the other members of his group, to appeal from the decision of the Canadian Transport Commission.

Or, if they were interested that much, why did they not refer again the question to the committee on transport which had hearings on the following days? However, I do not

intend to discuss this matter further since the report of the committee did not deal with that point. But if we had engaged in such discussions, we could have given some very easy answers.

Speaking of the report, the hon. member hinted at some undue pressure. Now, the chairman and the secretary of the committee gave clear evidence before the committee that they had never met anybody, that the report had been tabled, according to the rule, on the chairman's desk, that they had not been subject to any pressure on the part of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald)—whom moreover they have never met about that subject—nor on the part of anybody else, and that the proceedings had been carried on as usual, as they have been carried on for several years, in any committee.

A while ago the hon. member also talked about the President of the Privy Council. Indeed, there was some talk that he should appear before the committee, as suggested earlier, but that request had been withdrawn by the honourable member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) who admitted, after Mr. Ollivier told him that it was he who had informed the President of the Privy Council, that he doubted that the resolution was in order.

When the President of the Privy Council made a speech on December 6 and 10, he made quite clear that he had not looped into the matter, but that he had been informed of the irregularity and of the illegality of this resolution, and it was indeed.

The President of the Privy Council did not testify; not because he had something to hide, but only because all the members of the committee had agreed, at a certain time, that, following the evidence of Mr. Ollivier, it was useless to hear the President of the Privy Council. And even then, it would have been outside the scope of the terms of reference, because those events happened long after the question of privilege mentioned by the honourable member had been raised.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the problem was very simple. The committee on privileges and elections had to decide whether the regular and normal procedure had been observed. Following the evidence given, all the members of the committee except two ruled that there was no question of privilege, that the regular procedure had been observed, that the president of the committee had performed his duty, and that, consequently, he was in no way to blame in all this. I hope that the