

Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation

Mr. Fulton: Will you tell me how you came into the chair in the absence of an order of the house?

The Deputy Chairman: Will the hon. member just wait—

Mr. Fulton: Will you tell me how you got into the chair in the absence of an order from the house, when no such order was passed by the house and no such order was put to the house?

The Deputy Chairman: I will be glad to tell the hon. member that, if he will kindly let me complete my sentence. I said, when I was interrupted, that I was not in a position to rule on any proceedings prior to my assumption of the chair. The hon. member claims that I am in the chair wrongly. While I understand that the house does not know officially what the committee does until it is reported to it, I think the reverse is not so and a committee of the house does know the proceedings of the house. There was a proposition put and voted upon earlier in the day that the house would revert to the position at which it was—

Some hon. Members: No; there was no motion.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I did not say that there was a motion. There was a proposition which was put and voted upon that—

Mr. Coldwell: What was put? What was the motion and what was put?

The Deputy Chairman: If hon. members will kindly permit me to complete my sentence, there was a proposition put before the house and voted upon this morning—

Mr. Fulton: "Proposition" is right.

The Deputy Chairman:—that the house would consider itself at a certain place at which it was yesterday at approximately 5.15, and that was carried. As a result of that—and it could not be otherwise than as a result of that—an appeal has just been voted upon from a ruling which I made yesterday in the chair and which it would not be possible for the house to have voted upon if we had not reached this order of the day. Clause 4.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Fulton: I appeal your ruling.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, before that appeal is dealt with, may I point out that if you, sir, were informed that through some inadvertence you had been called to take the chair and that no effective proceedings had taken place in this house before that

time, I submit that you would be bound then to refer the matter to the Chair and ask for a statement from the Chair as to whether you are correctly acting as chairman of this committee.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I do not know what the message is that you have received, but what I do want to point out is that when it is stated to you on the responsibility of a member—and this is stated to you on the responsibility of many members of this house—that no order was called and that no proceedings under our rules have been taken which justify your now sitting in the chair, it is not, I submit, within your power to decide that question. What I submit is that it is your duty, then, to submit the matter to the Speaker for a statement as to whether in fact the proceedings were properly followed. I now ask you to submit the question to Mr. Speaker as to whether you are properly sitting as chairman of this committee.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether we can get a point settled because I at least am confused. I understood, in my time in the house, that we voted on a motion of this house and that when the motion was voted on and carried it was a decision of the house. But I understand now there is a new procedure and that we vote on propositions. If we do, what is the authority for it? No one moves it. Am I to understand that the Speaker takes it upon himself to put questions before the house on which he asks for a vote of the house? That, too, is something new. Let us be sure where we are.

Mr. Castleden: Let us be sure where we are going.

Mr. MacInnis: I do not know whether we can be sure where we are going or not, but of one thing I am sure: we are going in the wrong direction. Let us find out what is the authority for voting on a proposition, and, if there is no authority, let us give it the deserts it merits, the deserts of no authority; but let us not carry on this sort of thing any longer.

May I say that in my opinion it is no concern of the Speaker of the house what business comes up in this house. That is the concern of the leader of the house and of the Prime Minister. The concern of the Speaker of the house is to see that you and I and every other hon. member of the house are accorded all the rights and privileges that the rules of this house afford us. Beyond that he has no concern at all.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Chairman—