

did not include that one portion referred to by the hon. member.

I therefore ask Your Honour to give serious consideration to referring this matter to the standing committee on privileges and elections in order that we may clear up this particular matter once and for all.

I plead with Your Honour to do this. If committees are to perform useful functions—and no doubt hon. members are well aware of the debate that is to come before us—then committees must be given authority to pass resolutions and motions that will be recognized by this house. If they are not recognized by this house and voted on by members of this house, there is no useful purpose in having any committees under our system of government.

Mr. Albenbrack: This is the just society.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I merely wish to say a few words in support of the motion which has just been moved to refer the second report of the committee on transport and communications to be committee on privileges and elections.

I was very much surprised, on November 28 last, to hear the chairman of that committee making an awkward attempt to explain on TV what happened during the committee meeting.

Mr. Speaker, it will be remembered that, on that day, the house adjourned in order to allow a larger number of members to participate in the proceedings of the committees, and if that motion was adopted in the transport and communications committee it is due to the absence of the members of the party in power. To my mind, that proves the weakness of the party in power with regard to committee work, and that is one of the reasons why this report should be referred to the committee on privileges and elections for a more thorough study of the matter.

● (3:00 p.m.)

A little later on today, we will probably consider the special committee report on the procedure of the house, and I note that this report intends to give a greater responsibility to the committees of the house.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, if such things are allowed to happen in committees, if members of committees who are members of the opposition, are given so little consideration I am

wondering why we should give greater responsibility to these committees for consideration of departmental estimates or bills that are referred to them.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion made by the hon. member.

[*English*]

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I think the question before Your Honour is a very simple one. The allegation is that, at best, there has been a misrepresentation of what has happened in this committee. A committee report must reflect the true state of affairs with regard to resolutions which have been carried by that committee. If here we have, say, an innocent omission, that would be an innocent misrepresentation. On the other hand it has been alleged, and Your Honour must take cognizance of this, that there has been a deliberate omission of a resolution carried in the committee. Under the circumstances I submit it is not for Your Honour to decide whether there has been either a deliberate misrepresentation or an innocent misrepresentation, but whether there is a *prima facie* case of an abuse of the privileges of hon. members of this house.

After all, it is a report of a committee of this house which had been charged with the examination of a certain subject matter. If the committee report is a misrepresentation, innocent or otherwise, of the conclusions of that committee then there must be an examination, because there has been a breach of the privileges of this house.

I put it to Your Honour that this is the limited question you have to decide. With the greatest respect, I suggest to Your Honour that the motion is well founded.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): I would have thought that by now the Prime Minister or someone on behalf of the government would have made your task easier, Mr. Speaker, by agreeing to the motion. If there was nothing wrong in what was done, then the government members of the committee on privileges and elections would be able to show that this was so and the matter could be cleared up.

Mr. McIlraith: No. There would then have to be the resignation of the member making the charge.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Lewis: If there is something wrong, the thing has been done and I would think the